

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Report of Mission to
Europe, United States of America and Canada
on the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA)

by

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PART II

SUMMARY

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This report is the sole responsibility of the writers. It has been submitted to the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, United Nations, which may alter or supplement the findings.

PURPOSE OF MISSION

1. The mission was undertaken with the following objectives in view ;
 - (i) To explore the possibility of some training institutions becoming associate centres of STPA.
 - (ii) Establishment of linkage between well developed statistical training institutions in the visited countries and STPA centres.
 - (iii) To discuss with donor agencies possible assistance to STPA in the areas of (a) staffing, (b) trainee fellowships at STPA centres, (c) fellowships for training of staff for the centres either in or outside Africa (d) equipment and books (e) organization of workshops, seminars, in-service training programmes and (f) general development of the centres.

Choice of countries

2. The countries visited are: United Kingdom, Federal Republic of Germany, Sweden, Belgium, France, Netherlands, United States of America and Canada. The choice of countries was primarily based on (i) the existence of institutions that have for some time been rendering statistical training services to Africa or are potentially likely to render such services, (ii) past assistance to African countries.
3. While the countries listed are not by any means the only ones that have helped Africa and may continue to do so, time constraint and other considerations have for now necessarily limited us to the selected countries. Future visits to some other countries are being seriously considered.

MAIN FINDINGS

Associate Centres

4. The following centres gave clear indication of interest in becoming associate centres
 - (i) Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex, Brighton, England
 - (ii) The University of Kent Canterbury, England, through the Applied Statistics Research Unit.
 - (iii) Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, Netherlands
 - (iv) International Statistical Program Centre, (ISPC), U.S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, D.C. United States

The Munich Centre for Advanced Training in Applied Statistics for developing countries is already an associate centre.

5. Programmes of collaborative activities with STPA centres are to be worked out particularly in the areas of staffing assistance to STPA centres and organization of workshops/seminars.

6. Other centres visited included the Bureau of Labour Statistics Washington D.C., the Bureau of Economic Analysis Washington D.C. further consultation will be held with these and some other centres not visited. The National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) Paris and the Centre Européen de formation des statisticiens économistes des pays en voie de développement (CEESD) were also visited. The CEESD is a participating centre in the STPA largely responsible for training at the Ingenieur statisticien économiste (ISE) level.

7. The idea of establishing linkage with STPA centres was generally welcome in all the places visited.

8. United Kingdom, While the future of Government's direct financial support for the programme of linkage is not quite certain, some limited form of the programme could be pursued. In this form relevant STPA centre will make some contribution towards the programme, as for example by providing travel, housing etc. to a visiting staff while the overseas institution pays the staff's salary. The Overseas Development Administration (ODA) will explore the possibility of some funding arrangement. Institutions identified as showing interest so far are the Universities of Kent and Reading.

9. Sweden; Upsala University was identified as possible centre. Following the mission to Stockholm, the Central Bureau of statistics promised to prepare a comprehensive report for submission to the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). The report will include recommendation on how the Swedish Government can help in the achievement of the objectives listed in paragraph 1.

10. Netherlands; Erasmus University, Rotterdam was suggested as a likely centre. Contact is to be made with Professor P.A. Cornelisse of the University's Centre for Development Planning.

11. United States of America; In addition to George Washington University which already has a cooperative programme with ISPC (a candidate for associate membership), land grant universities were mentioned by the Agency for International Development. Contacts should be made with these Universities by the ECA.

12. Canada: Linkage with Canadian Institution is seen as a particularly appropriate way by which the Canadian Government can give assistance to SITPA, especially as the Canadian International Development Agency, (CIDA) normally entertains requests from Canadian Institutions for such assistance. Dr. Michael Oliver, Director of the International Development office of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada undertook to start preliminary consultation to identify appropriate Institutions that would be interested in the programme.

Technical and financial assistance

13. Donor Agencies with whom discussions were held are:

- (i) Overseas Development Administration (ODA) London, United Kingdom
- (ii) Commonwealth Secretariat, Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC)
- (iii) Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) Stockholm, Sweden
- (iv) Ministry of Economic Cooperation Bonn, W. Germany
- (v) Ministry of Cooperation Paris, France
- (vi) Agency for International Development (AID) Washington, D.C. USA
- (vii) UNDP, New York
- (viii) UNEFA, New York
- (ix) Rockefeller Foundation, New York
- (x) Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) Ottawa, Canada
- (xi) International Development Research Centre (IDRC) Ottawa, Canada

14. Most of the Agencies gave clear indication of interest in giving assistance in the various areas listed in paragraph 1 especially under their bilateral aid programme where appropriate. However, from the requests which had been received in the past, it would appear that statistics in general and training in particular have been given low priority by the African Governments. As of now some agencies still have money available for 1981 and are quite prepared to consider requests made in the usual way. The procedures for making the requests are very much as indicated in the second issue of SITPA News.

15. It was emphasized that the primary responsibility for making requests lies with the requesting government or group of governments in case of regional/subregional projects. The role that ECA can play should normally be limited to helping with preparation of project Documents and identifying possible donors.

16. With the available informations on country needs now before ECA, a start can be made to prepare viable projects with countries that are ready to make requests and that need ECA assistance.