

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

REPORT ON MISSION  
TO THE  
REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI  
BY  
J.F.R. CASIMIR  
1 - 15 June 1979

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. Following a request in a note verbal dated 4 April 1979 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the Republic of Djibouti for an ECA mission to assist with national accounting work and to study the needs of the Republic as regards statistics, Mr. J.F.R. Casimir, Chief, Data Bank, and Mr. R. Rakotobe, Statistician, were sent to Djibouti on 1 June 1979 with the following terms of reference:

- (a) To undertake an analysis of the public sector accounts within the framework of the United Nations System of National Accounts
- (b) To examine the available statistics of the Republic and
- (c) To make recommendations on its statistical needs.

These staff members returned to Addis Ababa on the morning of 15 June 1979 after they had met and held discussions with a number of interested public sector personnel whose names are listed at Annex I.

2. This report deals with items (b) and (c). Item (a) will be reported upon separately.

3. After all the available statistical series emanating from the Republic of Djibouti had been examined and most of the persons referred to at Annex I consulted, a list was drawn up of statistical indicators which were considered to be a minimum for depicting the social and economic conditions of the country. Afterwards, on Monday 11 June 1979 the list was introduced at a meeting of Directors and Chiefs of various officers and services of the Republic of Djibouti, at which meeting it was approved with some modifications. After further comments had been received at a later date from the planning unit of the office of the President of the Republic (See Annex III) the list was further modified and the revised list is presented at Annex II.

4. In this report the indicators are briefly examined and recommendations are made for their implementation. Training requirements are considered and proposals are made as regards the statistical infrastructure.

5. At this point the staff members wish to record their appreciation of the excellent cooperation received from the Government of Djibouti. Everything was done to facilitate any work and all requests for meetings and documents were responded to fully. We are indeed grateful.

## II. SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS FOR THE REPUBLIC OF DJIBOUTI

### (a) General considerations

6. At Annex II a list of 86 indicators is presented classified into nine broad groups as follows: Climatology, Population, Community and Social Services, Employment, Consumption, Production and Prices, Trade, Transport and Communication and Finance and National Accounts. These constitute a minimum of items in respect of which statistical information is needed so as to provide the government of the Republic of Djibouti and others with a reasonable base for use in policy making, planning economic and social development, administration and business. Also shown at Annex II are the availability of the data indicated, the desirable frequency of publication, sources and a suggested order of priority for establishing relevant series.

7. The list was conceived from the idea that, first, a knowledge of the size and structure of the population was required as well as the changes taking place therein and the climatic conditions affecting that population. Since the members of the population have several basic requirements such as education and health care and a measure of security, most of which are provided by the centralized government services, it was thought that some indication was also required not only of the development of education and health facilities, output of trained personnel and changes in conditions of health, but also of related activities such as leisure.

8. These lead to considerations of (a) consumption by the population and (b) the labour force, and their respective classifications by function and type of economic activity, giving rise to thoughts of data on consumption expenditure, consumer prices, wages, employment and unemployment.

9. The labour force is engaged in the production of goods and of services - services for the producers themselves and for the rest of the population. Consequently there is a definite interest in studying the output in the various sectors of the economy and a corresponding need for basic statistics on agricultural and industrial production, land use, trade, transport and communications. However it must be remembered that Djibouti is essentially a port and trading town and that there is a great difference between the urban and rural population.

10. The various activities of the population involve the creation, accumulation and exchange of money and wealth. Thus every activity has a price and every output may be costed, and all values are seriously affected by the velocity of the circulation of money. For this reason there is a need not only to study and monitor the supply and movements of currency in its various categories but also to measure the total value of the output of all goods and services produced in the Republic of residents and others as well as the transfers which occur between the residents of the Republic and the rest of the world. Finally, there is a need for a synthesis of all the foregoing which can be presented in terms of consolidated accounts of the nation, duly articulated, and per capita national and disposable income. Such a body of statistical information would provide government and others with a sound basis which could assist them in formulating their policies.

(b) Orders of Priority

11. It has been estimated that about three quarters of the indicators shown at Annex II derive naturally as by products of administration. However statistics are computed in respect of only about half of them and published in respect of only a quarter. There seem to be no valid reason why all the statistical information thus compiled should not be published. In this connection it should be pointed out that the same statistics may be used by many users in a variety of ways and together with other statistics. Thus failure to publish these statistics would be depriving potential users of valuable information. Therefore the periodic publication of these statistics in the Bulletin de Statistique et de Documentation should be accorded the highest priority.

12. It has been alleged that certain other data which should be obtained from administrative activities, e.g. most education and health statistics and certain distribution statistics, are not available owing to lack of trained relevant personnel or of sufficient staff. Such statistical data are needed for planning in the appropriate fields and therefore should not be neglected. Every effort should be made to provide on-the-job training in elementary statistical compilation, analysis and report writing to the staff concerned and to ensure a viable organization. These have also been accorded the highest priority.

13. The compilation and reporting of certain other statistical information have been accorded a lower order of priority. This is because they involve censuses or surveys of various types and the use of methods which should be applied only under the direction of a suitably qualified statistician. One exception is the census of population which is most recent and is in fact now being organized with external assistance. This should be followed by a household budget survey which could best be undertaken with technical assistance from the United Nations through the administrative management of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

(c) Suggestions for improvement in existing series

14. The following remarks relate mainly to trade and transport which account for the most important body of statistics in the Republic of Djibouti at the present time.

External trade

15. The special trade system is used for reporting imports but the general trade system is used for reporting exports, so that the imports statistics do not include goods meant for export although the exports statistics include re-exports which later are not separately identified. Thus the resulting balance of visible trade figure is incorrect.

16. There is a case for reporting international trade statistics on the general trade system basis but there is an equally good case for reporting them on the special trade basis. Therefore it would be ideal to report these statistics on both bases. However an examination of the relevant basic customs forms reveal that the imports statistics of the Republic could easily be reported on either of these bases but as regards exports, since the only forms relating to re-exports are in respect of the entrepot trade it is difficult to compile the statistics on a special trade system basis. Nevertheless considering the economic importance of domestic exports it is recommended that some modification be made to the export warrant (Form 2) so as to enable the proper identification of such exports.

17. The commodity classification scheme used is a local one based on an old French classification scheme. The use of an international classification scheme widely employed by a large number of partner countries would be more advantageous since it would provide better opportunities for comparison with such countries and more effective analysis. It is understood that the use of the Brussels Tariff Nomenclature is contemplated, but it is strongly recommended that for statistical purposes the United Nations Standard International Trade Classification, Revision 2 (SITC) should be adopted as well as later on the United Nations' Classification by Broad Economic Categories. These two classification schemes provide a useful basis for economic analysis.

18. As regards the direction of trade only a limited number of trading partners are reported upon and the country groupings appear to be arbitrary. Owing to the importance given in the region to intra-African trade it is desirable that details of trade with each African country be shown. Also the use of the United Nations Standard Country Code would provide a useful basis for international comparison.

19. Finally, in addition to the data presently published in the periodical Bulletin de Statistique et de Documentation, there is a need for an annual report on external trade. This report should contain at least the following tables:

- (i) Value of imports and exports by Sections of the SITC
- (ii) " " " " " " Broad Economic Categories
- (iii) " " " " " " Provenance and destination
- (iv) Detailed imports and exports by SITC code, quantity, value, provenance and destination
- (v) Indices of unit value (prices), quantum and terms of trade.

The report should also include an analytical review of the trade situation and comprehensive explanatory notes providing, inter alia, definitions of coverage and system(s) of trade used.

#### Transport

20. The only aviation statistics published are the following:-

- (i) Touchés d'avions - Total
  - commerciaux civils
  - commerciaux militaires
  - privés et divers.
- (ii) Passagers payants - arrivée
  - départ
  - transit
- (iii) Fret payant - arrivée
  - départ
- (iv) Poste - arrivée
  - départ.

No attempt has been made to provide an analytical table from the welath of information available from administrative sources. Such a table providing cross-classifications of aircraft movements by size, country of registration and category of aircraft, showing passengers, freight and mail landed, loaded or in transit and by provenance or destination of aircraft would be much more useful to the competent authorities and other users of aircraft statistics.

21. Rail traffic statistics are published quarterly and annually as follows:-

(i) Traffic voyageurs global - nombre  
en millions de voy/kms

(ii) Traffic marchandises (en milliers de tonnes metriques)

importations en Ethiopie  
exportations d'Ethiopie  
trafic interieur de la Republique  
de Djibouti  
(en millions de tonnes/kms)

importations en Ethiopie  
exportations d'Ethiopie  
trafic interieur de la  
Republique de Djibouti

22. The importance of the railway for the Republic of Djibouti is such that it is desirable that the adequacy and efficiency of its services should be assessed and monitored. Thus there is a need for data on the available relevant facilities and services as well. In this connection it is recommended that, in addition to the foregoing series, statistics should be published annually on the following:-

- (i) The length of trackage and the number, power and rated capacity of vehicles classified according to type;
- (ii) gross receipts for railway services;
- (iii) expenditure on railway services by type of expenditure;
- (iv) gross tonnage of major categories of goods landed and loaded by registration of carrier.

23. Excellent port statistics are published by the "Service d'etudes de statistiques et de documentation" at the Port of Djibouti in the quarterly statistiques portuaires and the annual Rapport sur les activites. However the lack of explanatory notes detracts somewhat from their value and it is recommended that each issue of these publication should include the relevant explanatory notes.

The Bulletin de Statistique et de Documentations

24. This periodical prepared by the Service de statistique et de Documentation in the Ministry of Commerce, Transport and Tourism represents an excellent effort to bring together between two covers the statistical information available on a large number of important subjects. However it would be very much improved if those responsible would make every effort to obtain from the relevant offices and publish statistics in respect of the recommended additional data available from administrative sources. In addition a section should be devoted to explanatory notes and at least once a year each section should be preceeded by a brief review.

### III. ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

25. All the statistical information published in the Bulletin de statistique et de Documentation are compiled in the various substantive divisions to which they relate. Thus the statistical organization of the Republic of Djibouti is entirely decentralised except for the co-ordinating factor made possible by the publication under reference.

26. However there is provision in a decree, No. 75-145/SG-CD dated 29 January 1975, reproduced at Annex IV, for a central statistical office with responsibility for trade, transport, production, consumption and prices statistics, statistics of income, purchasing power and employment as well as responsibility for all inquiries and studies relating to the economic condition of the country. Thus it is in pursuance of that decree that the "service de statistique et de documentation" exists. This service has been established at the Ministère du Commerce des Transports et du Tourisme, but owing to the shortage of staff its activities have been limited to the publication of the "Bulletin" and to external trade statistics.

27. There is a qualified statistician, the only one in the Republic, in that ministry who has been provided under the French Technical Assistance Programme but he is altogether employed as an adviser to the minister in a very general sense and is not able to devote much time to the organization and development of statistics. Thus there is an urgent need for the recruitment of a statistician to head on a full time basis the Central Statistical Service with the following terms of reference and a junior statistician should be appointed to assist him:-

- (a) To establish a plan of action and a detailed statistical work programme for the service in collaboration with a statistical committee comprising selected senior government officials and the Secretary-General of the Chambre Internationale de commerce et de l'Industrie;
- (b) To provide guidance to the national statistical personnel in the various ministries and offices and to coordinate all statistical activities in the Republic;
- (c) To establish and implement national training programmes in statistics; and
- (d) To develop a national framework of statistical information supported by detailed studies, providing a reasonably comprehensive account of the economic and social situation of the Republic.

28. The position should be at a sufficiently high level so as to enable the command of authority without which it would be difficult to execute a viable statistical programme. If it is not possible to fill that position with the statistician already referred to above, it is recommended that the government should request the services of a United Nations expert for a period of three years for that purpose and an associate expert to assist him for a period of two.

29. After these arrangements have been completed, assistance should be requested from donors such as UNDP, EDC and France under the United Nations Statistical Training Programme for Africa so that a Djibouti national who has successfully passed the final examination of adjoint-technique de la statistique at the Institut des statistiques, de planification et de l'économie appliquées at

Yaoundé may be allowed to continue training as a full fledged statistician either at that same institute or elsewhere. At the same time the following should be sent to the Institute for training to the level of Ingenieur d'application de la statistique and adjoint-technique de la statistique respectively:-

(a) The chef de service des statistiques et de la documentation at the Direction du Port;

(b) The chef de service adjoint des statistiques et de la documentation at the Ministère du Commerce, des Transport et du Tourisme.

on their return these persons would strengthen the statistical services of the Republic so that in the medium term one of them would be able to fill the position of chef de service and the Republic should be able to boast of an effective statistical set-up.

30. The decree referred to at paragraph 24 makes provision for a documentation section in the "service de statistique". However no documentation work is being done nor is there an organised library or reference unit in that service. It is therefore recommended that the government should request that one of the typists therein employed be sent to the ECA secretariat for a three months in-service training course in filing, indexing and general library work. Afterwards on her return she should be made to undertake under the direction of the chef de service, in addition to her secretarial work, the organisation and maintenance of a reference unit for the use primarily of the statistical service. The unit should gradually develop into a full-fledged section as the stock of the material and the efficiency of the staff increased. In the meantime efforts should be made to acquire copies of the international guidelines and standards listed in the United Nations Statistical Commission paper, "Statistics of the developing countries in the second United Nations Development Decade - Development Programme for Statistics" (E/CN.3/448) and reproduced at Annex V. These publications should form part of the documentation stock.

#### IV. DATA PROCESSING

31. With the exception of external trade all the statistics of the Republic of Djibouti are compiled manually. At present the statistics of external trade are processed electronically by the Société pour le traitement de l'information et le calcul in Madagascar, but with a delay of approximately two years before the results are out. For this and other reasons it has been arranged with the European Economic Community to have them done in Brussels instead. Nevertheless it would seem wise to contemplate their computerisation in the Republic of Djibouti itself at some time in the future.

32. The manual work involved in processing much of the statistics is very time consuming. As a result some of the data required is frightfully in arrears (e.g. nombre d'employeurs et de salaries, et montant de salaries par service) and some is not even compiled (e.g. nombre de commercants par branche d'activite). Thus the computerization of some of these data in the near future should be contemplated.



33. In the Republic of Djibouti there is a Honeywell-Bull 61/58 computer installed at the Electricité de Djibouti "(EDD) and on NCR 399 at the Banque pour le Commerce et l'Industrie (Mer Rouge)". Also there are plans for the acquisition of an NCR 8100 mini-computer at the motor engineering firm, Messrs. Paul Ries and there are thoughts of obtaining some sort of computer service at the Direction de l'aéroport.

34. The NCR 399 is essentially an accounting machine and is rather antiquated. The Honeywell-Bull which was acquired in 1974 has an internal memory of 10K bytes which can be extended to 74K and is employed on the payroll and accounts of EDD as well as the rent administration for the Ariba locality. These activities are said to take 171 hours of machine time monthly. In addition, there are plans to include thereon a certain programme analysis relating to the taxe de consommation interieure which has been estimated to last nine months as from the third quarter of 1979 and, beginning 1980, the civil service payroll, and the water supply bills. Also it has been agreed that if a population census is conducted during 1980 the computer will be used for the tabulations. Thus there is a very heavy workload envisaged for the EDD computer in 1980.

35. Considering that workload together with the age and capacity of the EDD computer, the plans to obtain additional computer service and equipment as well as the suggestion to computerise certain statistics of the Republic; considering also the cost of electronic data processing equipment and the limited financial resources of the government of the Republic of Djibouti, it seems desirable to introduce some computer service sharing scheme whereby these resources would be used most efficiently. In the circumstances it is recommended that a National Advisory Board for Electronic Data Processing should be instituted immediately, comprising the main users of computer services, including the Chief of the Central Statistical Service as Chairman and the EDD computer manager as secretary, with the following terms of reference:

- (a) To advise on the acquisition of computer staff and equipment;
- (b) To initiate and monitor a computer service sharing scheme and rationalise the use of electronic data processing facilities;
- (c) To initiate policy on optimal use of computer time and
- (d) To provide a forum for the exchange of information and the expression of views on activities in the various government ministries and departments relating to electronic data processing.

The Board should meet regularly and its reports and recommendations submitted to the Prime Minister by its Chairman.

Annexe I

LISTE DES ENTRETIENS

Ministère des Affaires Etrangères

M. Daher Djama, Directeur de Cabinet  
Son Excellence M. Moumin Bahdon Farah  
Ministre des affaires étrangères  
M. Yacim Ahmed, Conseiller des affaires Etrangères  
M. Alli Dahan, Chef de Service de documentation

Ministère du Commerce, des Transports et du Tourisme

M. Mitchell Moreau, Conseiller technique pour le commerce par interim et  
Chef de service des affaires économiques et de prix.  
M. Hassan Madar, Chef de service adjoint de la statistique et de la  
documentation.  
Son Excellence M. Mohamed Said Saleh, le ministre par interim du  
commerce, des transports et du Tourisme.

Premier Ministere

M. Bié, Conseiller technique du premier ministre  
M. Bourham, Directeur de cabinet.

Ministère de Finances et de l'Economie nationale

M. Ahmed Aden, Directeur de Finances  
M. Hauret Paul, Adjoint du directeur de Finances  
M. Omar Aden, Chef de service des contributions indirectes  
M. Demus Henri, Conseiller technique du chef de service des  
contributions indirectes  
M. Ghueddi Abdoul Kader, Chef de service des contributions directes  
M. Bruna, Conseiller technique du chef de service des contributions directes  
M. Lue Aden, Directeur du trésor  
M. Boissin, Chef de Bureau  
M. Buffet, Chef du service de la Comptabilité  
M. Omar, Chef de service de l'enregistrement du domaine et du timbre  
Son Excellence M. Ibrahim Mohammed Sultan, Ministre des Finances et de  
l'Economie nationale.

Direction du Port

M. Djilane Bourhal, Directeur du Port  
M. Cherdon, Chef de service de l'exportation  
M. Saleh Abdallah, Chef de service des statistiques  
et de la documentation.

Annexe I (suite)

Régie Industrielle

M. Royer, Directeur de l'électricité de Djibouti

M. Abdul Kadir Kamel, Directeur de la Régie des eaux

Ministère du Travail

M. Issa, Directeur de l'Office de la main d'Ouvre

M. Abdi Arreh, Chef de Service par interim du Bureau de  
l'inspection du Travail et de lois sociaux.

Ministère de la Sante

Dr. Patrice de Carfort, Conseiller du ministre

M. Couzinie, Chef de service de fonds

M. Ghipponi, Paul-Mari Chef de service de l'hygiene et du l'aboratoire  
de bureau logie de l'hôpital Peltier.

Direction de l'Aéroport

M. Pierre Collet, Directeur de l'Aéroport.

Ministère des Travaux Publics

M. Gabriel Honoré, Directeur des Travaux Publics

M. Ali Cheik, Chef de la sub-division urbanisme et de l'habitat.

Ministère de la Fonction Publique

M. Sylvan Balla, Attaché de préfecture, conseiller technique

Ministère de l'Education Nationale, de la Jeunesse et des Sports

M. Souleiman Farah-Lodon, Directeur General

M. Abdourahman Saleh, Directeur de la jeunesse, des sports  
et des affaires culturelles.

Ministère de la justice

M. Pappas, Procureur-Général

La Gendarmerie

M. M.A. Kassim, Commandant de la gendarmerie.

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Annexe I (suite)

Force Nationale de Sécurité

M. Yasim, Commandant

Ministère de l'Intérieur

M. Said Obsié, Chef de Service des Affaires Administratives

Radio diffusion-Télévision de Djibouti

M. M. Ainache, Directeur Général

Caisse de Prestations Sociales

M. Ahmed Kaireh, Directeur Adjoint

M. Mohammed Ahmed Agal, Agent Comptable.

Ministère de l'Agriculture

M. Gejyon, Directeur de l'Agriculture

M. Mohammed Monsson Cheten, Chef, de service de l'élevage et de la pêche

M. D. Denis, Conseiller technique de chef de service de l'élevage

M. Daher Ahmed, Adjoint du chef de service du génie rural.

Service de météorologie

M. Galves, George, chef de service (aéroport)

Présidence de la République

M. Casano, Conseiller en planification, cellule de planification de la Présidence

M. Rabuté, " " " " " " " " "

M. Milton, Attaché de Presse à la Présidence.

Chambre International de Commerce et d'Industrie

M. Gamil, Secrétaire Général.