PUBLICATION OF NIGERIA

Training and recruitment problems:
Status of Statisticians and
Sub-professional and
executive Staff

(Report submitted by the Delegation from Nigeria)
FEDERATION OF NIGERIA

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executive Staff

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Professional Grades:
- Chief Statistician
- Deputy Chief Statistician
- Assistant Chief Statistician
- Senior Statistician
- Statistician

(Responsible for planning and supervision and administration)

Sub-professional and executive grades:
- Higher Statistical Officer
- Statistical Officer
- Assistant Statistical Officer

(Performing executive duties)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Posts</th>
<th>Approved Establishments</th>
<th>Actual Strength</th>
<th>Vacancies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chief Statistician</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Chief Statistician</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Chief Statistician</td>
<td>2 (one Supernumerary)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior Statistician</td>
<td>4 (&quot; )</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistician</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Statistical Officer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statistical Officer</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Statistical Officer</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* includes the five recently interviewed for promotion.
Recruitment difficulties arise from three main causes: Firstly, the paucity of qualified Nigerians. As regards even the small number who enter the statistical service of government there is no assurance that the desire to make statistics a career is keen. This is because in recent years opportunities for accelerated advancement have been much more numerous in the non-technical sections of the Civil Service. Secondly, the general shortage of statisticians all over the world. This world shortage makes non-Nigerians unenthusiastic about statistical appointments in Nigeria as the conditions of service offered here are, comparatively, not particularly attractive. Thirdly, the grading of statistical posts. Recruitment of staff is made difficult also because the grading in the upper stratum of statistical posts is inferior to those in the administrative service for which the same standard of education is required. A raising of the status of statisticians is essential if the already difficult recruitment situation is not to be worsened.

Solution of Training and Recruitment problems

For the semi-professional and clerical staff assistance given by the Department in theoretical training has varied considerably in the last six years since a training scheme was first started. When the scheme was initiated in 1954 selected statistical clerks were given theoretical courses in elementary statistical methods and sources, by the professional members of the staff, in preparation for the Registered Statistical Assistant examination of the English Institute of Statisticians. In addition postal tuition courses from Overseas which supplemented the local effort were paid for by the Department which also provided the necessary text books. Assistance on this scale however gradually declined shortly afterwards owing to staff shortages. Because of this arrangements were made by the office for R.S.A. candidates to receive coaching from staff members of University College, Ibadan, but in 1959 and 1960 it has not been possible to continue this and 'students' are unable to receive much help from the office.

While recruitment of semi-professional staff is not a problem their retention, because the Higher School Certificate, which qualified for appointment to these grades, is also the key to University degree and professional courses. It is hardly surprising, given the great passion for education in Nigeria and the relatively large number of scholarships available, that the turn-over of staff in these grades is high. The long-term
solution would be the in-service training of staff and for this United Nations Technical Assistance has been secured for the services of a Training officer (expatriate) who is expected to be in Nigeria later in the year.

Training for the professional grades

The first professional grade is that of statisticians for which the requisite qualification is either a University honours degree in Economics or Mathematics with statistics in either case or the Final examination for the Associateship of the English Institute of Statistics. But as pointed out in section (iv) above the supply of candidates with the requisite qualifications is very short and as a short-term measure the Department has recruited some mathematical graduates with a view to giving them appropriate statistical training. The long-term plan is to produce through a departmental training programme people with the required qualifications, and to endeavour to win an enhanced status for statisticians as a means of attracting new blood of the best quality. Already, under the departmental training programme, there are now six officers on degree courses and two on professional courses overseas. Three or four of these are expected back later this year, and the others in Summer 1962. Four other junior officers will take up awards for similar courses if they are admitted into institutions in October this year.