

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.
LIMITED



E/CN.14/CART/44
E/CCNF.43/44
14 June 1963

Original: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS REGIONAL CARTOGRAPHIC
CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA
Nairobi (Kenya), 1-13 July 1963
Provisional agenda item 7

REPORT ON CARTOGRAPHIC ACTIVITY IN ETHIOPIA

(Submitted by the Ethiopian Government)

63-2068

REPORT ON CARTOGRAPHIC ACTIVITY IN ETHIOPIA

BY

THE IMPERIAL ETHIOPIAN MAPPING & GEOGRAPHY INSTITUTE

GENERAL

Maps of Ethiopia or parts thereof with a desirable standard of accuracy and incorporating a sufficient amount of information are a rarity to this day. Most maps that are being widely used at present are small scale inaccurate maps prepared by foreign firms from second hand information.

In this age of planned development programmes the need for accurate maps and related survey data was very greatly felt by the Imperial Ethiopian Government. As a result various government ministries and agencies began setting up their own cartographic units to satisfy their need for maps. It was found out recently that there were over twenty such cartographic units of different sizes operating under various ministries and government agencies. Understanding that this would entail a tremendous waste in the form of duplication of services, equipment and personnel, the Imperial Ethiopian Government has now decided that all official surveys and mapping of the Empire should be carried out by a single government agency. To this effect steps have already been taken and that all existing cartographic units will be brought together to form a single service institution, - the Imperial Ethiopian Mapping and Geography Institute - to operate as a semi-autonomous department under the Ministry of the Interior of the Imperial Ethiopian Government. This office has been designated to be the sole government agency responsible for carrying out official mapping and related surveys of the Empire and for setting up required standards for the same. Suitable headquarters to accommodate this agency are under construction and will be ready for occupation early next year.

REPORT ON CARTOGRAPHIC ACTIVITY IN ETHIOPIA

BY

THE IMPERIAL ETHIOPIAN MAPPING & GEOGRAPHY INSTITUTE

GENERAL

Maps of Ethiopia or parts thereof with a desirable standard of accuracy and incorporating a sufficient amount of information are a rarity to this day. Most maps that are being widely used at present are small scale inaccurate maps prepared by foreign firms from second hand information.

In this age of planned development programmes the need for accurate maps and related survey data was very greatly felt by the Imperial Ethiopian Government. As a result various government ministries and agencies began setting up their own cartographic units to satisfy their need for maps. It was found out recently that there were over twenty such cartographic units of different sizes operating under various ministries and government agencies. Understanding that this would entail a tremendous waste in the form of duplication of services, equipment and personnel, the Imperial Ethiopian Government has now decided that all official surveys and mapping of the Empire should be carried out by a single government agency. To this effect steps have already been taken and that all existing cartographic units will be brought together to form a single service institution, - the Imperial Ethiopian Mapping and Geography Institute - to operate as a semi-autonomous department under the Ministry of the Interior of the Imperial Ethiopian Government. This office has been designated to be the sole government agency responsible for carrying out official mapping and related surveys of the Empire and for setting up required standards for the same. Suitable headquarters to accommodate this agency are under construction and will be ready for occupation early next year.

Mapping

Ever since its inception in March 1954, the Imperial Ethiopian mapping and Geography Institute has compiled and produced various types of topical and special purpose maps and charts for the interim use of Imperial Ethiopian Government agencies using some of the foreign prepared maps and charts as a base until such time as the required proper survey of the country is carried out and accurate base maps are produced. With the help of the aerial photography mentioned above assistance is being rendered to government agencies who badly need maps in the form of uncontrolled and controlled planimetric maps and photo-mosaics.

Training and Equipment

One of the major obstacles in organizing a mapping institution in Ethiopia was the non-availability of personnel trained in the various phases of the work and the lack of training facilities for the same. The Institute had to conduct a series of on-the-job training, and send selected personnel for training in institutions abroad. The necessary equipment and instruments for this programme are being procured gradually. There are at present scattered in the various cartographic units 3 Kelsh Plotters, 1 Kelsh diapositive printer, 5 Multiplex Units with 2 diapositive printers, 1 SEG V enlarger-rectifier, 1 Klimsch Auto-Horika Copy Camera, 3 Contact Printers and a few of the smaller stereo-instruments. Personnel are also receiving preparatory training in negative scribing on coated plastics and related laboratory operations.

Geographic Place Names

Until such time as the Imperial Ethiopian Mapping and Geography Institute acquires the capability to compile and produce standard topographic base maps some major preparatory activities are underway. Besides the training of personnel and the procurement of equipment the collection and standardization of geographic place names are of major importance.

Other sound combinations have been formed in recent years, and new unofficial Amharic letters devised to represent them. These new unofficial characters have appeared in newspapers and various other publications. The new combination characters are not considered a part of the basic Amharic alphabet; thus, they do not appear on the chart or form a part of the "Amharic to English Transliteration System" devised in the Imperial Ethiopian Mapping and Geography Institute.

For the benefit of those who use this transliteration system, certain explanations are given at the bottom of the chart in the "Pronunciation Guide":

- (a) Under Vowels each of the seven (7) sounds and an appropriate example of their pronunciation in English are listed. The first (1st) and sixth (6th) form vowel sounds do not exist, in their pure sounds, in English. The closest English sounds have been given as examples in an effort to help English speaking people in the pronunciation of Amharic place names. The first (1st) and sixth (6th) forms have a short sound and the other five (5) vowels are long. The method of underlining the two short sound vowels to distinguish them from the two similar vowel letters with long sounds was chosen mainly because it is practical to reproduce on typewriters;
- (b) Under Consonants the use of the "G" and "J" is clarified and examples for "Ny" and "Zh" are given;
- (c) Under Sounds Not Found in English are the Amharic consonants which require explosive enunciation and their identification;
- (d) The Special Notes are self-explanatory, and should be read carefully.

PLANNED OPERATION

For the realization of a programme of aerial and ground survey an agreement was signed recently in Addis Ababa between the Imperial Ethiopian Government and the Government of the United States of America. The agreement provides for a joint survey programme of the Empire of Ethiopia.