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ECA/MRAG/95/50/MR

32911



**ECA Multidisciplinary
Regional Advisory Group**

**REPORT ON MISSION TO UNDP OFFICE, ERITREA
4 - 8 June 1995**

By

**Parmeet Singh
Regional Adviser, Organization and Management
of National Statistical Systems**

ECA
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**Addis Ababa
June 1995**

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United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa
ECA-Multidisciplinary Regional Advisory Group

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I. BACKGROUND

Eritrea has a newly emerging Government, after 30 years of social and political travail. A new structure of Government is being put in place and UNDP is facilitating the Government in this task. The Economic and Financial Management Programme (EFMP) is one such initiative being facilitated by UNDP. UNDP has earmarked a contribution of US \$ 1,292,000 to facilitate the National Statistics Office (NSO) to undertake a programme of data collection to establish effective operating data bases in areas of major importance for effective management of the economy.

The UNDP office in Eritrea has been collaborating with the NSO to develop a work plan to facilitate the required data collection within the stipulated objectives and the strategy of the EFMP. The objectives and the strategy emphasize both data collection and capacity building. The NSO has developed a workplan consisting of four respective project proposals, on Rural Integrated Household Survey Programme; on Household Income and Expenditure Survey in Major Towns; on Manufacturing and Industrial Survey; and on Price Survey in Aweraja Capitals and Major Towns. These four project proposals account for UNDP's earmarked contribution of US \$ 1.2 m.

II. TERMS OF REFERENCE.

The letter from UNDP Resident Representative inviting the Regional Adviser to undertake a mission to Eritrea is here attached as Appendix I. In elaborating the terms of reference the Resident Representative asked the Regional Adviser to "familiarize himself with what is being done by the NSO to be able to advise UNDP on what kind of support and advise UNDP could give to the NSO to set up an integrated national data system". He noted that "while on the one hand data was available only on areas that had been under the control of the Ethiopian authorities, all sorts of data collection initiatives were emerging with no coordination, potentially building up towards a situation of excessive duplication and incompatibility of data collected under diverse institutional arrangements". The Regional Adviser was briefed on the Population Census, and the Demographic Health Survey under preparation by the NSO and on the four proposals noted above as the workplan to be funded by UNDP contribution to the EFMP. The Regional Adviser was asked to "review the NSO in context of this workplan and aims and objectives of the strategy stipulated for the EFMP".

III. THE MISSION

The Regional Adviser arrived in Asmara on Sunday 4 June and started his mission on Monday 5 June, with the briefing on terms of reference for the mission from the Resident Representative Mr.

Herbert M'cleod, noted above. Ms. Rekha Thapa, Deputy Resident Representative, also attended the meeting.

The Regional Adviser then met with Mr. Karl Kulesa, Junior Professional Officer, UNFPA. He is currently the only UNFPA officer assigned to the UNDP Office and works under the Resident Representative. The UNFPA Country Representative is to take up his/her position in Asmara shortly. The Regional Adviser was briefed on the census operations and on UNFPA's perceptions on the optimal institutional arrangements for implementation of a household based survey programme of data collection in the intercensal years.

This was followed by a meeting with Mr. Turhan Saleh, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, UNICEF Country Office, to review the status on data collection for compiling indicators for monitoring Mid Decade Goals (MDG). Eritrea has to formulate its National Plan of Action (NPA). Hence there are no NPA goals to monitor yet. As far as the MDG are concerned the baseline data for 1995 will all be forthcoming from the DHS to be undertaken in August/September, 1995. But UNICEF is very keen to collaborate on arrangements which would facilitate the collection of relevant data for monitoring the MDG (and NPA goals hopefully) in the period, 1996 - 2000.

Both UNFPA and UNICEF look upon the NSO's Rural Integrated Household Survey Programme as an ideal vehicle to cater for the country's data needs to monitor social goals. This sentiment was further endorsed by Mr. Tim Marchant, a Washington based Senior Economist/Statistician in the African Regional Technical Department of the World Bank. The World Bank is currently sponsoring the Eritrean Community Rehabilitation Development Fund (ECRDF) which is being set up by the Ministry of Local Government. Included in the proposal for the ECRDF is the provision for setting up of a Management Information System on the ECRDF. But Mr. Marchant also intimated the Regional Adviser of the World Bank's interest in facilitating collection of the data to compile economic and social indicators to monitor national goals. Mr. Marchant implicitly shares the Regional Adviser's and UNFPA's and UNICEF's view that the NSO is the appropriate agency within the Eritrean Government to undertake this data collection.

The Regional Adviser consulted with Mr. Marchant on various occasions during his mission. On Wednesday 7 June the Regional Adviser convened a meeting of UNFPA (Mr. Karl Kulesa), UNICEF (Mr. Turhan Saleh), UNDP (Mr. Goder Johannes) and the World Bank (Mr. Tim Marchant). The meeting endorsed the usefulness of the NSO's Rural Integrated Household Survey Programme as a vehicle for collection of data to compile social indicators. It agreed that this was best done through a core module of the proposed integrated household survey. While UNFPA and UNICEF were agreeable to

collaboration with UNDP in funding the current costs of the integrated survey programme, Mr. Marchant promised to confirm the World Bank collaboration after consulting with appropriate colleagues in Washington. That apart Mr. Saleh and Mr. Marchant also agreed to meet bi-lateraly to consider possible collaboration in the development of the management information system for the ECRDF and the Sentinel Community Surveillance System being supported by UNICEF also in the Ministry of Local Government.

Finally the Regional Adviser, accompanied by Mr. Karl Kulesa and Mr. Goder Johannes, met with the Head of the NSO, Mr. Aynom Berhanne for further briefing on the NSO's workplan particularly to seek further details on the four project proposals submitted by it for funding support by UNDP under the EFMP.

A part from these consultations the Regional Adviser reviewed the programme document on the EFMP; the four draft project proposals on, Rural Integrated Household Survey Programme; Household Income and Expenditure Survey in Major Towns; Manufacturing and Industrial Survey; and Price Survey in Aweraja Capitals and Major Towns; as well as the draft project proposal on the Population Census, 1997. All these document are being retained in MRAG Archives.

IV. MISSION OUTPUT AND RECOMMENDATION

The principle output of the mission was the memo to the Resident Representative prepared by the Regional Adviser detailing his recommendations. A copy of the memo is here attached as Appendix 2.

V. MISSION ASSESSMENT

The mission would have been more productive had the on technical details not featured in the four project proposals been available. Never-the-less the mission was successful in as far as the Regional Adviser's consultations with the UNDP office were concerned, the principle raison d'être for the mission.

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18/10/81
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**UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
ASMARA - ERITREA**

Andinet Street, P.O. Box 5366, Fax No. 873 150 7653 (SATCOM)
Telephone: 219 1 182166 291 (1) 181081

FACSIMILE

Please forward to ECA.
Thank you.

Date: March 23, 1995 Ref: PRO/303/ECA Page(s): 1 of 1

Msg No. LAH57/95

To: Mr. Chrispin Grey Johnson, ECA
Fax No.: (01) 514416/510489 City/Country: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
From: Herbert P. M'cleod, Resident Representative
Subject: <u>Support to UNDP Asmara</u>

Status: /Urgent

TEXT

Following our discussions earlier this year, I am pleased to report that the Office continues to benefit from support of members of the MRAG.

As you recall, we had tentatively discussed the possibility of Mr. P. Singh undertaking a mission to Asmara. Firstly, to have a general review with the Statistics Office to be followed up later by a longer mission for substantive support. I would be grateful if you would arrange for Mr. Singh to visit us within the next two or three weeks after which a detailed programme will be prepared.

With kind regards.

If you do not receive all pages, please call back immediately.

Handwritten notes in left margin: "Singh", "P. Singh", "18/10/81", "291", "254"

MSF-OUT-241/06

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION
FOR AFRICA
ADDIS ABABA - ETHIOPIA



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NATIONS UNIES
COMMISSION ECONOMIQUE
POUR L'AFRIQUE

FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

REF.No. ECA/MRAG/208/95

Please forward upon arrival.

Date: 9 June 1995

Number of pages in document (not including this sheet): 4

To: Telefax No. (04) 18-10-81Name: Mr. Herbert M'cleod, Resident RepresentativeOffice: UNDPLocation: Asmara

From:

Name: C. Grey-Johnson, Coordinator, MRAGOffice: UNECALocation: ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIATelephone: 51-10-51/51-66-67

Facsimile: Commercial: Ethiopia (251-10) 51-44-16/51-04-89

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION
FOR AFRICA
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05 JUN 10 AM 5:17



INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

DATE: 9 June 1995

To:/A: Mr. Herbert M'cleod
Resident Representative

FROM:/DE: Parmeet Singh
Regional Adviser

SUBJECT:/
OBJET: Re: -Mission out come

My mission effectively concluded on Tuesday afternoon with the meeting with Mr. Aynom Berhane, Head National Statistics Office (NSO). Mr. Karl Kulesa and Mr. Goder Johannes had also accompanied me in the meeting.

Given the re-structuring of the Government of Eritrea, currently underway, it was not possible to attempt a comprehensive review of the structure and organization of the NSO, during my mission. I would be happy to consult, if required, on this aspect of the setting up of the national statistical system.

The work plan of the NSO too is, as a consequence, essentially ad-hoc, focusing on selected priority fields of data collection. For now these include the Population Census scheduled to be conducted in March 1997 and the Demographic Health Survey (DHS) which is due for enumeration in August/September 1995. The Census is being under taken with advisory support from UNFPA, and the DHS is being supervised by Macro-International, an international firm who have been contracted by USAID to oversee implementation of the

survey by the NSO . Both the operations "seem" to be under control, and I donot have much to say on them.

During my mission, I have focused essentially on the work plan to be implemented with the support of \$ 1,292,000, which has been ear marked for the NSO under the UNDP funded component of the "Economic and Financial Management Programme" (EFMP). The work plan submitted by the NSO for this component of EFMP consists of four data collection initiatives. The draft project proposals submitted by the NSO on each of these four initiatives account for the total allocation of \$ 1.2m as follows:

1. Rural Integrated Household Survey Programme	\$ 743,660
2. Household Income and Expenditure	
Survey in Major Towns	\$ 303,475
3. Manufacturing and Industrial Survey	\$ 97,500
4. Price Survey in Awaraja Capitals and Major Towns	\$ <u>147,265</u>
Total	\$ <u>1,291,900</u>

The proposals are at the moment in a skeletal form and it is not possible to comment on each one of these operations. More specifically, from my point of view, it would have been of interest to me to comment on the scope, content matter, strategy and plan of operations of the surveys that the NSO is proposing to undertake under each of these four proposals. These details donot feature in the respective proposals nor were my efforts to secure them, in the meeting with the Head of the NSO, successful. Without such detail, it is not possible to undertake a technical appraisal of the proposals. It is important that the scope and content

matter and the strategy for each of the surveys be articulated to indicate the relevance of the survey plans to the objectives of the project proposals and to the development objectives of EFMP and its strategy for capacity building.

Given that I could not access the respective survey plans it has also not been possible to comment on the costing of each of the four proposals.

As you also know from the consultations that I have had with UNFPA (Karl Kulesa), UNICEF (Turhan Saleh) and the World Bank (Tim Marchant), it would seem to appear that these three institutions bear considerable interest in collaborating with the NSO in implementation of the NSO's proposed Rural Integrated Survey Programme; with inputs of funding support. Their respective inputs could be utilized to pay for survey related operational costs. I feel this opens up the possibility of re-appraising deployment of UNDPs contribution of US\$743,660, earmarked for this proposal. UNDPs contribution could in that case be more specifically deployed to promote the capacity building objectives of EFMP.

However for these three institutions to make more concrete offers of support they would need further details on the scope and content matter of the NSO's proposed Rural Integrated Household Survey Programme, preferably in context of a 5 year time span covering the period 1996-2000.

As far as considerations of capacity building are concerned, while the NSO's equipment needs seem to have been taken care of, the most immediate requirement that comes to mind, is for a comprehensive training programme for the NSO to build up the manpower capacity of the

NSO. This capacity will need to be created at the professional and middle levels, through a programme of support for training, in external institutions within and outside the region and also through in service training arrangements, particularly for middle level manpower.

UNDP inputs would be deployed catalytically and optimally , if they were to be disbursed in facilitating such an initiative.

My comments on collaboration with other institutions have referred specifically to the NSO's draft proposal on Rural Integrated Household Survey Programme. This is because UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank have indicated willingness to collaborate in the case of the proposal on the Rural Integrated Household Survey Programme. I suggest the Italian Government, which is earmarked as co-sponsor with UNDP for the NSO component in EFMP, be also consulted for similar collaboration in respect of the other three proposals submitted by the NSO. Were the Italian Government to be agreeable to fund operational cost of the surveys covered under the remaining three proposals, yet further resources would become available for capacity building at the NSO.

This possibility of collaboration, with UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Bank, and hopefully the Italian Government, opens up the possibility of re-constituting the work plan developed by the NSO, so as to re-package the four project proposals as far as their respective funding arrangements are concerned and develop an additional proposal on training.

Finally, I believe it is not too early to start consultations on the scope, content matter and the strategy for the proposed surveys, preferably in context of a 5 year work plan, at least for the Rural Integrated Household Survey Programme; and on the training arrangements.