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**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL**

Distr.
LIMITED

E/CN.14/ECO/133
27 February 1978

Original : ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Executive Committee
Eighteenth meeting

Khartoum, 1-4 May 1978

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT TO IMPROVEMENT AND EXPANSION OF
THE STATISTICAL TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR AFRICA (STPA)

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THE STATISTICAL TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR AFRICA (STPA)

Project Summary and Action by the Executive Committee

The attached project request relates to the regional component of the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA) which was adopted by the Conference of African Statisticians at its tenth session, following a review of statistical training needs in Africa by a special working group. The project makes provision for the recruitment of a specialist in the teaching of statistics and a training officer. The specialist will assist member countries in the development of curricula and in the improvement and expansion of statistical training facilities. The training officer will help in programme organisation as well as in collection and dissemination of information on statistical training activities. Provision has also been made for a meeting of directors of regional statistical training centres in order to promote development of teaching programmes.

The present project request has been submitted to UNDP for funding. It covers only an initial period of two years after which it is hoped that financing will be taken over by the ECA regular budget. In accordance with the new regulations set up by UNDP, the project should receive the endorsement of African governments.

To this end, the Executive Committee is invited to consider the attached project request, to endorse it formally and to mandate the Executive Secretary to sign the document on their behalf. It should be noted that the project does not involve financial commitments by member states.

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

REGIONAL PROJECT

Title: Operational support to improvement and expansion of the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA) Duration: Two years

Number: RAF/78/ /A/01/51

Primary function: Institution Building

Sector: Economic Planning: 20

Sub-sector: Economic and Social Policy: 2010

Executing Agency: Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)

Estimated starting date: 1 July 1978
preparatory work has
already started

UNDP inputs: US \$ 250 000

Signed _____

On behalf of the
African Governments

Date: _____

For the
Executing Agency

Date: _____

On behalf of the
United Nations
Development Programme

Date: _____

PART I. LEGAL CONTEXT

1. Not applicable.

PART II. THE PROJECT

A. Development Objective

2. The project aims at developing and co-ordinating a network of facilities capable of meeting the national requirements of Africa for technically competent statistical staff who would collect, compile and analyse statistical data required for economic and social development planning. Sound development policy and evaluation can only proceed on the basis of adequate data concerning important development sectors and the ability to use these data in an integrated manner for assessing economic and social prospects and problems.

B. Immediate Objective

3. It may be recalled that the principal objective of the STPA is to ensure that the region has a permanent supply of trained statistical staff for the statistical and other services of governments as well as for the private sectors. To meet this objective, STPA was formulated as a 10-year programme which aims at making Africa self-reliant in producing an increased number of statistical personnel, improving and maintaining the quality of statistical personnel already in service, and ensuring that the centres participating in the programme become self-supporting.

4. In discussing this principal objective of the STPA, the tenth session of the Conference of African Statisticians identified the following specific requirements which should receive urgent attention:

- (a) The newly independent Portuguese-speaking countries require special help and a separate project should be undertaken because of their specific problems.
- (b) A new course is needed at the "ingenieur statisticien-economiste" level by the French-language group to complement the current operations at CESD, Paris, and the Rabat Centre. The new course could be at one of the other existing centres.
- (c) The new French-speaking centre in Kigali should introduce a middle-level course as soon as possible.
- (d) The Kampala Institute is the most difficult project in the programme. This Institute must be developed on an effective regional basis if English-speaking professional requirements are to be met.
- (e) Nigeria, the largest country of the region, has correspondingly large requirements. The country will endeavour to pay for its own training but will need expert assistance. It should also envisage an interchange of students with other African countries to avoid isolation.

- (f) Expansion of the facilities at the University of Ghana is envisaged as an important means of overcoming the shortfall in professional training for the English-language group. If the Ghanaian authorities agree with the idea, a new project will need to be negotiated.
- (g) The English-speaking Centre of Dar-es-Salaam (EASTC) which is offering intermediate and middle level courses should increase its capacity as soon as possible in order to meet increasing demands in the East African sub-region.

5. The main immediate problem is the large difference in requirements between the French and English-language groups. In order that the aims of the STPA might be achieved, it is necessary that a regional co-operating machinery be set up with the recruitment of one specialist in statistics and one training officer. The main objectives of this project are, therefore.

- (i) To ensure appropriate dissemination of information on statistical training activities including annual surveys of activities of centres comprising STPA which will cover information on number of students, curricula review, financing and any associated problems.
- (ii) To promote development of teaching programmes particularly by strengthening co-operation among the various training centres. Meetings of directors of training centres both inside and outside the region will be convened by ECA once every two years for discussions on development of curricula, equivalence of qualifications, and the need for specialized courses.
- (iii) To provide assistance to countries which wish to establish middle level training programmes. Such assistance would be in the form of help in formulating projects and in obtaining lecturers or in providing course materials. ECA will help in the development of the course materials.
- (iv) To assist in the quest for financial resources.
- (v) To carry out any other co-ordinating services which will help in implementing the STPA as set out by the Working Group and approved by the Conference of African Statisticians.

C. Special Considerations

6. The activities carried out under this project will be considered within the current effort to improve technical co-operation among developing countries (TCDC).

D. Background and justification

7. The present project request relates to the regional component of the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA), which is necessary for organizing the development of that programme in a co-ordinated manner.

8. The STPA proper represents the latest development in African efforts to provide opportunities for the training of adequate numbers of staff required to produce the statistics needed for economic and social development. It is a follow-up of a recently completed project entitled "Working Group to Review Statistical Training Needs in Africa" RAF/74/103 which was financed by UNDP. Consultancy missions were carried out to countries and individual statistical training centres in Africa as well as to appropriate agencies including statistical training centres outside the region. The Working Group was held at Munich in August 1977 and; based on its recommendations, the tenth session of the Conference of African Statisticians adopted the STPA.
9. An intensive statistical training programme was launched in 1961 by the Conference of African Statisticians at its second session to overcome staff shortages in statistical offices of the region. Emphasis was placed at that time on the training of middle-level staff, with the establishment that same year of four centres plus a fifth in 1965. Although the French-speaking countries had professional level training centres relatively early on, it was only in 1969 that the first regional centre was established for the English-speaking group.
10. It has become imperative for countries to have increased numbers and more highly qualified staff capable of producing a broader range and even more detailed statistics than in the past as a result of efforts to establish New world and African Development Strategies and a New International Economic Order.
11. Although the training programme initiated in the 1960's largely fulfilled its original targets, the staff position in many African statistical offices has remained unsatisfactory for a variety of reasons. Many qualified professional statisticians leave the national statistical services after gaining a few years' experience, or join the other sectors directly after training. The departure of middle level statistical staff is generally much less serious, but it too must be given all due attention. The Conference of African Statisticians considered that the outflow of statisticians at all levels towards other more attractive jobs should be considered in relation to the establishment of a network of training facilities capable of meeting total national statistical training requirements.
12. This results in the need to increase the number of persons under training by about 60 per cent through a co-ordinated regional training effort, as outlined in the STPA.
13. There is also a tendency for most training courses to be overly academic which means that new recruits cannot immediately begin effective work. Efforts should be made to develop training programmes oriented along more practical lines.
14. Information on training opportunities in Africa, course curricula, conditions of admission, etc. is sometimes unavailable through a lack of appropriate means of disseminating it. It is also considered useful for the various centres to provide training at comparable levels to enable the diploma holders from one centre to continue their studies in another. In addition, there are a number of training centres outside the region which are of interest to African countries, especially in specialized fields, and have to-date provided very substantial services.

15. As previously stated, it is hoped that STPA will make Africa self reliant in statistical manpower by the end of the 1980's by:

- (a) increasing the number of statistical personnel;
- (b) improving and maintaining the quality of statistical personnel in service. For this purpose it is necessary to establish a basis for existing training institutions to operate in a co-ordinated manner with a view to improving their efficiency and developing their courses along more practical lines.
- (c) ensuring that the centres participating in the programme cease to be dependent on foreign assistance.

16. To facilitate the implementation of the STPA, the Conference of African Statisticians supported the view that ECA should play a role of co-ordination and leadership. The present request deals with the establishment of a regional mechanism which will provide operational support to improvement and expansion of the programme.

17. Finally, it should be recalled that the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2054(LXII), stated:

.... "Further concerned that, because of lack of necessary financial and personnel resources, developing countries are unable on their own to set up and maintain an effective vehicle to train all levels of statisticians.

Requests the United Nations Development Programme to take a sympathetic view of the requirements of developing member States for financing of training of statisticians, especially through its regional funds, and to increase this component in its assistance with a view to fostering the long-term and lasting development of the statistical services of developing countries."

E. Outputs

18. The outputs which the project has to produce through its co-ordinating activities include the following:

- (i) Course material which will help member countries in initiating training at sub-professional level.
- (ii) Course material to be used by the Portuguese-speaking countries.
- (iii) Provisional syllabus on electronic data processing methods to facilitate the introduction of electronic data processing course in statistical teaching programmes.
- (iv) Information on statistical training activities, curriculum revision, admission requirements, etc.
- (v) Periodic report on statistical organisation and staffing in Africa.
- (vi) Biennial report on the meetings of Directors of statistical training centres comprising the STPA.
- (vii) In general, a concrete basis for the integrated operation of STPA.

F. Activities

19. The activities of the project take into account the STPA programme and the efforts which ECA has to make in order to ensure the successful implementation of the programme. As already indicated, there is a large difference in requirements between the French and the English-language groups. Makerere, which is the only English-speaking regional professional facility is now beset by many problems and these will have to be tackled. The programme envisages new regional facilities in Nigeria and Ghana to help in filling the disproportionately large gap for English-speaking professional statisticians. The Portuguese-speaking countries are also a new problem.

20. The solutions to these problems cannot be found unless ECA plays a co-ordinating role in the STPA and formulates a specific work plan to deal with problems arising out of the implementation of the programme. The description of the activities to be carried out by the project staff has deliberately been left flexible enough to enable ECA to react to any problems which might arise in the implementation of STPA.

21. These activities will include the assessment of types of curricula likely to benefit statistical offices, taking into account the level of their development and their priorities for economic and social planning. This will enable the development of course material along more practical lines while maintaining the quality of training. It will also be necessary to identify areas of weakness in order to make existing training programmes more effective. In this connection, the Conference of African Statisticians has already drawn the attention, at its last session, to the need for statisticians to participate actively in EDP work.

22. In addition, an annual survey of the centres comprising the STPA and a periodic survey of statistical organization and staffing in Africa will be conducted. These surveys will involve the use of questionnaires and the collection of information during country visits undertaken by the project staff. Meetings of directors of training centres both inside and outside the region will be convened every two years to discuss development of curricula, equivalence of qualifications, the need for specialized courses, etc.... Finally the project staff will assist in the formulation and implementation of individual projects, e.g. in obtaining lecturers for countries wishing to establish in-service training programmes and rendering assistance to these centres in locating financial provision.

G. Inputs

23. The United Nations Development Programme is requested to finance the regional machinery being established for the improvement and expansion of the STPA for an initial period of two years, after which it is hoped that the expenses will be met by the ECA regular budget. The individual components are as follows:

(i) Project personnel

- (a) Experts: - One specialist in statistics (P-4/P-5) 18 man/months
- One Training officer (P-3) 18 man/months

(b) Other project personnel: One secretary (GS) 18 man/months

(c) Travel: Travel and per diem for the specialist in statistics and for the training officer

(d) Mission costs: Prospective donors meeting - travel and per diem for:
- United Nations Headquarters participant
- and UNDP Headquarters, participant.

(ii) Group training (meetings): Travel and per diem for Directors of regional statistical training centres and for UNDP and UN Headquarters participants local transportation expenses, reporting costs

(iii) Miscellaneous: Translation and reproduction of training material, printing of reports, etc.

H. Proposed Work Plan

24. <u>Project activities</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Proposed duration and starting date</u>
<u>- Programme organization</u>		
(i) Preliminary consultations with donors and African Governments for an indication of their possible contribution to the STPA	Addis Ababa	4 months December 1977
(ii) Presentation of the STPA to the meeting of the ECA Executive Committee and formal endorsement of the programme document	Addis Ababa	1 week May 1978
(iii) Convening by UNDP Headquarters, UN Statistical Office and ECA of prospective donors meeting to examine the STPA with a view to its implementation	New York or Brussels	1 week end of 1978 or early 1979
<u>- Curricula development</u>		
(iv) Assisting member countries in initiating training at sub-professional level by developing course material and providing short-term assistance in lecturing	Addis Ababa various African countries	Two-year period July 1978
(v) Assisting in development and/ expansion of centres offering professional training programmes	Addis Ababa Host countries of the STPA centres	Two-year period July 1978
(vi) Assisting in making arrangements with respect to the special provision for Portuguese-speaking countries	Addis Ababa	Two-year period July 1978

<u>Project activities</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Proposed duration and starting date</u>
(vii) Promoting expansion of facilities for specialized post-graduate training	Addis Ababa Host countries of the STPA centres, centres outside Africa	Two-year period July 1978
(viii) Promoting organization of short-term courses and seminars for practising statisticians	" "	" " "
(ix) Assisting in curricula development of the various courses	Addis Ababa Host countries of the STPA centres, centres outside Africa	Two-year period July 1978
- <u>Co-ordination between centres</u>		
(x) Organizing a biennial meeting of Directors of statistical training centres comprising the STPA to stimulate co-operative development of teaching programmes including course content and also to discuss admission requirements, current problems and future development	Africa	1 week April 1979
- <u>Related regional inquiries</u>		
(xi) Conducting an annual survey of the centres comprising the STPA covering their activities, associated problems, any curriculum revision, admission requirements, etc. and dissemination of relevant information	Addis Ababa	Two-year period July 1978
(xii) Conducting a periodic survey of statistical organization and staffing in Africa	Addis Ababa	Two-year period February 1979
- <u>Financial resources</u>		
(xiii) Assistance in the search for financial resources	Addis Ababa	Two-year period July 1978
(xiv) Provision of practical and technical support to donors who wish to help individual centres or provide fellowships	Addis Ababa	" " "

25. In order to carry out the above co-ordinating functions effectively, the ECA Statistics Division will need to recruit two staff members: One specialist in statistics to assist in curricula development and one training officer to help in carrying out the various assignments entrusted to the ECA Statistics Division. The staff member who will assist in curricula development at the post-graduate, undergraduate and sub-professional levels must have high academic qualifications, considerable teaching experience and practical experience in a statistical organization in at least one developing country. The second staff member should have worked in a statistical organization in Africa.

26. A detailed Work Plan for the implementation of the project will be prepared by the specialist in statistics, in consultation with the Chief of the Demographic and Social Statistics Section, ECA Statistics Division. This will be done at the start of the project and brought forward periodically. The agreed upon Work Plan will be attached to the Project Document as Annex I and will be considered as part of that document.

I. Preparation of the Framework for Effective Participation of Statistical and International Staff in the Project

27. Not applicable.

J. Development Support Communication

28. As previously stated, dissemination of information on statistical training activities will form an important part of the work programme under this project and is expected to result in more effective utilization and improved performance of existing centres. Improved and co-ordinated information on all STPA centres should also have a significant influence on financial prospects for the overall programme.

K. Institutional Framework

29. ECA will be the executing agency for the operational support to the Statistical Training Programme for Africa. Within the ECA secretariat, the Statistics Division will have primary responsibility for the running of the project. However other substantive divisions including the Public Administration, Management and Manpower Division and the Technical Assistance Co-ordination and Operations Office, will be involved.

30. ECA will co-operate closely with the United Nations Statistical Office and specialised agencies and with all the centres comprising the STPA as well as with all agencies with significant responsibilities for statistical training in Africa.

31. The Conference of African Statisticians will have continuing responsibility for reviewing the STPA proper and this project in particular.

L. Prior Obligations and Prerequisites

32. Not applicable.

M. Future UNDP Assistance

33. It is expected that the activities under the present project relating to ~~operational support~~ the STPA will be carried out on a permanent basis. This request covers only an initial period of two years after which, as previously stated, it is hoped that financing will be taken over by the ECA regular budget. Nevertheless UNDP support will continue to be required, particularly in the organization of a biennial meeting of Directors of regional statistical training centres.

PART III. SCHEDULES OF MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTS

A. Tripartite Monitoring Reviews; technical reviews

34. The project will be subject to periodic review in accordance with the policies and procedures established by UNDP for monitoring project and programme implementation.

35. As already indicated, the Conference of African Statisticians will serve as the principal consultative body to guide and review the progress of the project.

B. Evaluation

36. The project will be subject to evaluation, in accordance with the policies and procedures established for this purpose by UNDP. The organization, terms of reference and timing of the evaluation will be decided upon by consultation between ECA and UNDP.

C. Progress and Terminal Reports

37. A progress report will be prepared every six months by each of the staff members (specialist in statistics and training officer) appointed under this project and a terminal report at the end of the two-year period presently covered. In addition, the Chief of the ECA Statistics Division will prepare at the end of that period a status report.

PART IV PROJECT BUDGET COVERING UNDP CONTRIBUTION

Region: Africa

Project No.: RAF/78/ /A/01/51

Title: Operational support to improvement and expansion of the Statistical Training Programme for Africa (STPA)

Components	1978		1979	
	m/m	US\$	m/m	US\$
10. PROJECT PERSONNEL				
11. <u>Experts</u>				
11.01 Specialist in statistics	18		6	12
11.02 Training Officer	18		6	12
11.99 Sub-total	36	172,800	12	54,000
13. All other project personnel	18	9,600	6	3,000
15. Travel		15,000		5,000
16. Mission costs		7,000		7,000
19. COMPONENT TOTAL	54	204,400	18	69,000
32. GROUP TRAINING				
32.02 Meetings		39,600		39,600
39. COMPONENT TOTAL		39,600		39,600
50. MISCELLANEOUS		6,000		2,000
59. COMPONENT TOTAL		6,000		2,000
99. GRAND TOTAL	54	250,000	18	71,000
			36	118,800
				6,600
				10,000
				135,400