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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
Standing Committee on Social Welfare
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INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE IN THE FIELD OF
SOCIAL WELFARE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND
URBANIZATION

(Document prepared by the Bureau of Social Affairs)

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Standing Committee of Experts on Social Welfare and Community Development
Addis Ababa, 7 to 18 February 1962

Paper prepared by the Bureau of Social Affairs

INTRODUCTION

1. This paper is intended to provide the Standing Committee of Experts on Social Welfare and Community Development with the necessary background information in order to assist it in its task of formulating recommendation to the Economic Commission for Africa for strengthening and developing technical assistance activities in the social and related fields. It consists of two sections: Section I gives a brief review of the technical assistance given on a regional or country basis in these fields. In most cases, particularly the regional projects, the Secretariat of ECA has played an important role in the development and implementation of these activities. Section II summarizes certain policy points derived from the decisions of the policy-making organs of the United Nations which have a bearing on technical assistance activities in the social and related fields, particularly relevant to the African region.

I. ASSISTANCE IN THE SOCIAL FIELD PROVIDED BY THE UNITED NATIONS
Social Development

2. Problems of planning national social policies have been the subject of studies on the world social situation and on social development. These have been included in the Reports on the World Social Situation ^{1/} and the International Surveys of Programmes of Social Development. ^{2/} The 1957 Report on the World Social Situation included a detailed study on the urbanization process in Africa South of the Sahara and on problems of social policy.

^{1/} United Nations Publications, Sales Nos. 52.IV.11, 61.IV.4
^{2/} United Nations Publications, Sales Nos. 55.IV. 8, 59.IV.2

3. Two inter-agency missions on urbanization have taken place in Africa. The first of these, in 1959, visited countries of the Mediterranean region including Libya, Morocco and the United Arab Republic; the second, in 1961, was divided into two teams, one of which visited Ghana and Uganda and the other Nigeria, the Ivory Coast, Senegal and the Congo (Brazzaville). The two teams then prepared a final report which will be used as a basic background paper for the Workshop on Urbanization in Africa, which will be held in April 1962.

4. In recent years, the problems of planning balanced social and economic development have received increasing attention in the United Nations. In view of the interest and needs expressed by national officials in countries in Africa, a study of the problem in African countries has been judged particularly important. Studies have been undertaken in Uganda, the United Arab Republic (Egypt), Morocco, and in the Sudan. A regional adviser on social policy and development has been assigned to the Economic Commission for Africa for part of 1961 and 1962, and the United Nations is prepared to consider requests from governments for advice and assistance in the field of social development planning under the programmes of technical assistance.

Population

5. As a consequence of a decision of the Population Commission in 1957, the United Nations has concentrated in Africa on surveying means for developing demographic studies, training Africans in demography and improving census and demographic statistics in the region. Some of the suggestions arising from this activity are reflected in the statistical survey of African countries being undertaken by the Economic Commission for Africa. A pilot study was also carried out in the Sudan on the

demographic aspects of planning the utilization of man-power. Preparations are being made for holding a seminar on population in Africa in 1962, as well as for the establishment of one or more sub-regional centres for demographic training and research.

Community Development

6. Since the population of Africa is largely rural, the problem of rural development is of special importance. A growing number of community development programmes is being carried out, aimed at improving rural living conditions and integrating rural populations into the economic life of their country, as well as encouraging in them a sense of civic responsibility and independence.

7. In 1961, provision was made for twenty community development experts in thirteen African countries. By the end of the year, most of these were either in the field, had completed their missions or were under active recruitment. Although twenty-two fellowships of from three to twelve months duration were budgeted for nine countries, candidates were nominated for only five of these fellowships by four governments.

8. As an initial step towards the implementation of resolution 663 D (XXIV) of the Economic and Social Council relating to the applicability of community development principles and methods to the urban setting, an allocation was made to finance a social survey in Tunis on the basis of which the government intends to establish an urban community development pilot project in that city.

9. In addition to the workshop on low-cost housing and community facilities within community development programmes, held in October 1961 in Tunis, a training course for supervisory and administrative personnel in community development in West African countries, was held in Dakar in November under United Nations auspices. Three United Nations experts in

community development and related fields, working in countries of the region, were assigned to assist in conducting the course, which was under the direction of the ECA Chief of the Community Development Branch and his assistant. A senior consultant for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in New York also participated.

10. During the year, advisers in community development were provided for the Congo (Leopoldville), the Ivory Coast, Liberia, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Ruanda Urundi, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Cameroon, Sudan and Tunisia. Fellowships were provided for Dahomey, Libya, Ruanda Urundi and Sudan.

Housing, Physical Planning and Building

11. In 1961, provision was made for eighteen experts in housing, building and planning for seven countries. Projects included assistance to the Institute for Community Planning in Ghana; an adviser on housing and planning in Liberia; a low-cost housing adviser in Libya; an adviser for the School of Town and Regional Planning and a team of three advisers on the reduction of building costs for Nigeria; also for Nigeria, an expert to make a social survey of Ibadan as a basis for a master plan and an expert on organization of building construction; assistance for Somalia in a low-cost housing demonstration pilot project; and an expert in the use of local building materials for Togo. A regional Workshop on Self-help Housing was held in Tunisia during 1961; it will be followed by a survey of self-help housing in selected countries of the region in 1962. Another projected activity is assistance to the Swedish-Ethiopian Building Research Institute at Addis Ababa, with the objective of developing a regional housing and building centre. Fellowships were provided during the year for Cameroun, Ghana, Nigeria and Somalia.

Social Services

12. Recent years have seen a sharp rise in requests for assistance in the social services. This includes assistance in planning social welfare programmes and policies, social work training and rehabilitation of the

handicapped, as well as family and child welfare. A Workshop on Extension of Family and Child Welfare Services within Community Development Programmes was held in Ghana in 1960 and a Workshop in Social Services will be held in 1962. A regional technical adviser in Social services has been assigned to the Economic Commission for Africa for 1961-1962 to assist governments in this field. Social services advisers were provided for Cameroun, Ethiopia, Ghana, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Somalia, Togo and Uganda. Fellowships were awarded to nationals of Cameroun, Ghana, Liberia, Morocco, Nigeria, Tunisia and the Upper Volta.

Social Defence

13.0 Arrangements have been completed with the governments of Cameroun and Dahomey respectively for the assignment of an expert in the field of juvenile delinquency. Fellowships on social defence are also provided for these two countries.

II. DEVELOPMENT OF GUIDE LINES FOR THE FURTHERING OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES IN THE SOCIAL FIELD IN AFRICA

14. Section I of this report has been prepared so that the Standing Committee may review the existing technical assistance activities in Africa in the social and related fields, as a basis for recommending guide lines along which the Economic Commission for Africa might develop and strengthen its activities in these fields. In formulating these guide lines, the group will no doubt wish to acquaint itself with the broad policy directives laid down by the policy-making organs of the United Nations within the framework of which the existing technical assistance activities in the region have been developed. Some of the more far-reaching directives which have a direct bearing on the technical assistance activities in Africa are summarized as follows:

15. Priority assistance to newly independent countries. At its 15th session, the General Assembly adopted Resolution 1527 (XV) deciding to increase technical assistance to newly independent and emerging states and outlining the ways in which such assistance should be provided. The methods of planning and implementing programmes of technical assistance to such countries in the social field were set forth in the report by the Secretary-General on the strengthening of the work of the United Nations in the social field, (E/CN.5/357). These points which were subsequently endorsed by the Social Commission and the Economic and Social Council are repeated in paragraphs 16, 17, 18, and 19 that follow.

16. Assistance in planning for long-term international and national action. "The exploratory mission may often prove to be the most appropriate way of starting a new programme combining different forms of technical assistance. Such mission may be of various types, ranging from a visit by a Staff member from Headquarters or a regional office to joint missions organized in co-operation with the specialized agencies. They should be of sufficient duration to determine the needs

in a precise way, to plan the project in detail and to get work under way. Resolution 1527 (XV) of the General Assembly gave high priority to assistance to newly independent countries for the undertaking of national surveys of existing resources and the requirements for economic development". "Such surveys should be extended to the social aspects of overall development" and "should be used in planning both national programmes and related international assistance." Special importance is also stressed for "countries embarking on new social programmes of assistance in the implementation of priority projects as a preliminary to developing long-term action and the relevant organizational structure". In providing assistance in planning, special attention should be paid to a co-ordination and balance of economic and social development referred to in paragraph 25 of this document.

17. Assistance in training social development personnel. "It seems generally agreed that training programmes must have the highest priority among the types of assistance offered to newly independent countries." "The fellowship and scholarship programme could be strengthened through various improvements in the selection of fellows and in the planning of their programme of study." It also endorses "the wider use of 'group of fellowships' and the introduction of 'field replacements' as a new type of fellowship". "Consideration might also be given to the granting of 'research fellowships' to research and training institutions. While the fellowship programme should remain an important component of assistance in training social development personnel, it is suggested that special emphasis should be given to the development of regional and national training facilities and, in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 1527 (XV) of accelerated methods of training. In country programmes, assistance in the establishment of training institutions would be usually supplemented by the holding of United Nations sponsored national seminars or related training projects." The provision of stipends for trainees and the translation of training

material into national and vernacular languages are among the specific missions suggested for further training programmes.

18. Extending coverage of expert assistance through medium grade experts and volunteer teams. Suggested means for increasing the effectiveness of technical assistance experts is "the use of a broader scale of intermediate experts such as those already available under special schemes, would help to meet the urgent need of developing countries to train lower level personnel in large numbers". "Technical assistance could also be extended on a broader front through the use of volunteer teams to assist in international projects. Experimenting with this new type of assistance could usefully start with selected teams of newly professionals or technicians, who would participate in training projects or such operational activities as social, economic survey." In this connexion, attention might also be given to Resolution 849 (XXXII) of the Economic and Social Council which approves the use of volunteer technical personnel "on a limited and experimental basis" with technical assistance activities of the United Nations.

19. Development of intra-regional co-operation. "While participation in regional projects, such as seminars, study tours and research and training centres, should play an important role in the social development of newly independent countries, it is suggested that, especially in a wide continent like Africa, projects concerning more than one country should, in many cases, be organized on a sub-regional basis and include either neighbour countries or a group of countries with relatively homogeneous cultural and economic structure. Consideration might also be given to encouraging possible new forms of intra-regional co-operation, such as schemes for the exchange of personnel and information among countries within a region or sub-region."

20. Other standing policy statements which are applicable to the planning and implementation of technical assistance in Africa are summarized as follows:

21. Emphasis on institutional development and the building up of administration. At its 16th session, the Economic and Social Council adopted Resolution 496 (XVI) in which it set forth as one of the practical methods for assisting governments in furthering their social programmes, the development and strengthening of national and local organizations for administering programmes in social and related fields. The emphasis on institutional development and the building up of administration is reflected in the activities in the various fields summarized in Section I, particularly in community development and social services.

22. Emphasis on concerted effort by the various United Nations programmes. In order that the limited resources at the United Nations disposal will have the maximum impact upon a country's social and economic development, it is essential that the technical assistance activities in the social field be co-ordinated with those in the other fields which are carried out by the United Nations organizations, as well as the other United Nations operational programmes such as the Special Fund, OPEX, and UNICEF. At its recently concluded session, the General Assembly adopted Resolution 1678 (XVI) which, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to support the United Nations Children's Fund's new policy emphasis on long-term programmes for child welfare by making available adequate and appropriate technical services, including in particular those for social services for children and training programmes. In addition, there are special programme areas which have been designated by the policy-making organs as programmes for long-term concerted interagency action. These are community development, low-cost housing and, more recently, urbanization.

23. The above are policy emphasis which are applicable to all areas in the social and related fields. In addition, the expert group may also wish to take into account the following points which are also derived from the decisions and recommendations of the various policy-making organs, but are related to the following specific areas.

24. In the Social Policy and Development field, the broad principles governing its scope and direction derive from a number of resolutions of the recent sessions of the Social Commission, the ECOSOC, and the General Assembly all placing emphasis on the problem of balanced and co-ordinated economic and social development. On the basis of this policy, international assistance to countries in process of development requires a comprehensive view and careful studies of socio-economic situation of their countries. Likewise, high priority should be given to requests for expert assistance in relation to the demographic surveys and to the improvement and development of the information on levels of living and other basic data needed to plan and evaluate programmes in the social field. The latest General Assembly Resolution on the subject of balanced and co-ordinated economic and social development further expresses the wish that the regional institutions of economic development which are being created in the various regions under United Nations auspices include in their terms of reference the study of social factors affecting economic development.

25. In the Community Development Field special emphasis might be given to strengthening the administration and training of personnel for community development; to relating community development to land reform and co-operative undertakings; to extending community development principles and methods to European areas; and to linking local institutions for community development to the development of local government.

26. In the field of Housing and Physical Planning priority needs to be given for requests for the gathering of necessary data for the formulation of house policies and programmes; for the more efficient and economic use of local material resources in housing through research and standard setting; for the mobilization of domestic labour and financial resources through self-help and mutual-aid housing projects; and for the promotion of low-cost housing and related facilities for the low income families and those in special social needs.

27. In relation to Urbanization, General Assembly Resolution 1674 (XVI) requests the Secretary-General, the regional economic commissions, and the other United Nations agencies concerned, inter alia, to co-operate with the government in carrying out the necessary basic research and studies in formulating the comprehensive plans in urban and regional development and establishing and expanding required community services and facilities. The resolution also placed emphasis to citizens' participation in such programme. The formulation of such comprehensive plans would require the assignment of a team of experts consisting at least of a Physical Planner, an Economist, and a European Sociologist.

28. In the Social Services area, emphasis should be placed on general services concerned with the community as a whole, including those designed to improve and strengthen the family and to assist the family in dealing with new patterns of life and relations; on the establishment or strengthening of administrative machinery for the planning of welfare programmes in close relation to economic development plans; and on the training on all levels and categories of social welfare personnel.

29. In the Social Defense field priority needs to be given to assistance with respect to prevention of juvenile delinquency, as well as prevention of all types of criminality resulting from social and economic changes.

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