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PROGRESS REPORT FOR 1962 AND  
PROJECTED ECA WORK PROGRAMME FOR 1963-64 IN  
SOCIAL WELFARE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT,  
URBANIZATION AND LOW-COST HOUSING

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An evaluation of the community development programmes in Morocco and Nigeria was completed during the year in accordance with the plan for a general study of Community Development in Africa (Project 31-02). The brief studies deal mainly with the contribution that the Community Development programme can make in the improvement of co-operation and how practical efficiency can be increased by means of planning, organization and integration within the overall development plan.

Appraisals of individual country community development programmes will be continued in 1963-64, utilizing information provided by member governments to the various United Nations bodies and supplemented by material collected directly by the ECA Secretariat.

In accordance with Resolution 37 (III), a thorough study of the contribution of community development to economic development will be undertaken in 1963 by a working group composed of one specialist in community development, one specialist in evaluation techniques, one rural economist and one statistician. The purpose of the study will be to determine the techniques, methods and norms of evaluation and then to proceed with the evaluation. This study was to have been carried out in 1962 but was postponed for administrative reasons.

A study tour for senior officers of governments to visit Community Development Projects in selected Asian countries, which was scheduled for the Fall of 1962, will be carried out some time in 1963.

A training course for high level Community Development Officials was completed in Tunis in November-December 1962, the second of such training courses in the work programme of ECA. Twenty-three officials from the countries of Algeria, Morocco, Libya, UAR, Ethiopia, Somaliland and Tunisia were in attendance. A training course for West African countries was carried out at Dakar in 1961 and a similar course for officials in East African countries is scheduled for early 1963. A report of the Tunis training course is presented as a working paper to the 2nd session of the Standing Committee.

The Clearing House for Community Development and Social Welfare (Project 31-03) during the year collected and distributed important documentation on community development, social welfare and related subjects in Africa, especially publications of the UN publications prepared by UNESCO, ILO, FAO and information documents on national programmes of community development and social welfare. A staff member to be responsible for the Clearing House was appointed late in 1962 and it is expected that activity will now advance more rapidly. The first issue of the Liaison Bulletin, "African Community Life" has been published and is included in the documentation for the second session of the Standing Committee.

As recommended by the Standing Committee in February, 1962 and by the Tunis Workshop in 1961, studies will be continued in 1963-64 on problems of planning and re-planning of villages and small communities, including self-help housing programmes, and of experience in building schools, markets, co-operative stores, community centres, and other community facilities. An enquiry was undertaken in eleven African countries in 1962 on similar aspects and a report is part of the documentation for the 1963 Standing Committee session.

It is planned to carry out in 1963-64 two "pilot" projects on the applicability of community development techniques to urban areas. A study on Addis Ababa was completed in 1961 and was considered at the first session of the Standing Committee in February 1962. It has resulted in the inauguration of an Urban Community Development Programme by the Municipality for which UNICEF aid has been requested.

Assistance to governments will be continued by ECA in 1963-64 in the organization of national seminars on planning and administration of community development programmes by providing staff to work with national personnel.

A meeting of experts on the organization and administration of social welfare services was held in Abidjan from 11-21 April (Project 32-05). The experts prepared a report on their deliberations which is a part of the documentation for the Standing Committee and for the fifth session of the Commission.

Among the recommendations stressed was that governments must be responsible for planning and establishment of national social welfare programmes, taking into account local needs and aspirations, and the appropriate role of voluntary organizations. Co-ordination of government and voluntary organizations was viewed as of great importance.

The group also expressed a belief that priority should be given to training of staff at all levels, and fully endorsed the proposed seminar on training for social welfare services to be arranged early in 1963 (Project 41-08).

Preliminary preparations for this seminar have been carried on during the year through contacts with governments and on the basis of answers to a questionnaire circulated in 1961 to gather information on organizational structures for social services and on existing training programmes. An analysis of the answers has been prepared and is submitted as a working paper to the Standing Committee on social welfare and community development at its second session.

The training seminar will be made up of selected social welfare administrators, directors of established schools of social work, directors of training in government departments and senior social workers employed in government or in voluntary agencies. The general purpose of the conference will be to review methods for improving skills and efficiency of social welfare staff at all levels, such as:

- (i) initiation and development of advanced training within countries or regions;
- (ii) training courses for auxiliary personnel;
- (iii) programmes of in-service training.

Special emphasis will be placed on training in the fields of group work and community organization and the inter-relationship of social work to social sciences, home economics and other technical fields.

A study tour will be undertaken in 1963 for ten professional persons, men and women active in the field of social welfare, including those in charge of social welfare services in community development programmes. The purpose is to provide for an exchange of views within the group as well as with social welfare officials in the countries visited. The group will study the characteristics of various types of social welfare services with a view to possibly adopting them to their own countries. A similar tour in 1964 is also contemplated.

Close co-operation has continued during the year with UNICEF offices in Africa in connexion with projects receiving or requiring UNICEF aid; and advice has been provided to a number of governments on organization and administration of social welfare programmes. (Project 32-01). This will be continued in 1963-64.

The recommendation of the Standing Committee at its first session that there should be a close exchange of personnel and students among African countries and that ECA should provide technical staff and advice on the planning of such an exchange has not yet been implemented for administrative reasons. The Standing Committee at its last session had suggested that such programmes should be conducted along the lines of group visits and meetings rather than on an individual fellowship or scholarship basis. Further discussion of this recommendation at the 1963 session of the Standing Committee is indicated.

The problems raised by the rapid growth of towns in Africa called for considerable attention and led to the preparation of papers for examination by the Standing Committee on Social Welfare and Community Development, as urbanization and housing were listed among its assignments. The reports submitted by the Secretariat led to a recommendation that urban studies be pursued along the lines hitherto followed.

It was stressed that the collection of basic data and the dissemination of documentation were urgently needed. Accordingly, steps were taken to establish a clearing house, consisting of a considerable amount of statistical and bibliographical material, largely unpublished. A questionnaire was set up on the most important aspects of urban life, including population, administration, education, public utilities, labour and other points. Many municipalities answered the questionnaire, and data on other towns were compiled by the Secretariat, so that it may be possible before long to publish both a statistical inventory of African cities, and a bibliography more extensive than any previously published on African urban conditions.

In co-operation with the University College of Addis Ababa, a start was made in the scientific analysis of data collected on the occasion of the social survey which was conducted in this town in early 1960. The possibility of setting up a community centre was treated in a document presented to the Standing Committee, and the problem of migration was the subject of a document presented to the Urbanization Workshop.

The Urbanization Workshop, which met in Addis Ababa from 25 April to 5 May 1962, was carefully prepared through missions sent abroad as well as through work done at headquarters. Inter-Agency missions visited several African towns as early as April 1961, and a further visit was paid in April 1962 to Leopoldville, Nairobi and other towns, where meetings were held and documentation was collected for the benefit of the Workshop.

This Workshop was jointly sponsored by the Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and the World Health Organization. Twenty-three governments gave a favourable answer to the invitation sent to them and their delegations joined twenty-three experts appointed for the occasion, as well as staff members of ECA and of other international organization units, for the discussion of all aspects of urban life in Africa.

The ECA Secretariat presented five reports of general urban interest, including an introduction to the problems of urbanization in Africa to which an atlas of statistical data, maps and town plans was attached. Two dozen reports on special aspects of urban growth were presented by the specialized agencies or sent by selected contributors. All these reports were subject to lively discussions at the Workshop which approved a number of recommendations likely to help in finding the way to an improvement of urban conditions in Africa.

It was recommended, inter alia, that centres for the study of urban growth be set up by the national governments, and that such centres be consulted in the planning of further urban developments, in order to avoid the haphazard growth noticed in many cities. Services dealing with urban development, either political, technical, or social, were advised to work out a better co-ordination than hitherto of their respective activities. The creation of inter-departmental co-ordination units were recommended at the national, regional and local levels. Research was advocated as a prerequisite to planning and improvement of existing conditions, with special emphasis on population, social disorganization, and industrial opportunities. In a general way, planning was recognized as indispensable to the betterment of urban conditions, and several recommendations were made on planning methods. They will be found, together with a summary of the debates, in the final report on the Urbanization Workshop presented as a document for the Fifth Session of ECA.

After the conclusion of the Workshop, the ECA secretariat received a number of requests for technical assistance, most of which, unfortunately, called for financial and staff prerequisites which could not be met without some delay. It was, nevertheless, possible to send a representative to the annual meeting of social welfare officers of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, and it is expected that urban research work will be carried during the first half of 1963 in both Nairobi and Zanzibar Town.

In view of the urgent character of certain urban problems and also of their widespread character, urban research workshops have been planned. The first subjects on which the ECA secretariat was requested to organize such workshops were; "The role of women in urban life" and "The relation between municipal income and socio-economic conditions". The preparation work for these workshops is under way.

Finally, let us note that ECA was represented at the first International Congress of Africanists, which met in Accra, in December 1962.

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