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WORKSHOP ON URBANIZATION IN AFRICA

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SOCIAL WELFARE AND URBANIZATION IN AFRICA

(Prepared by
the Secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa)

SOCIAL WELFARE AND URBANIZATION IN AFRICA

The development of social service as a specialized activity is linked with economic development and the growth of towns. In rural life and the tribal environment, family and community institutions ensure the individual a minimum of security. So long as the group remains small enough for all its members to know each other intimately enough, it is still an integrated whole governed by collective restraints. Thus in the African "bush" the family and clan traditionally assume responsibility for those unable to look after themselves (children, invalids, old people), and custom demands the actual sharing of an inadequate meal with a "clan brother" in want - which explains why the organization of social service on modern lines was for long rejected off-hand as useless in the traditional framework. Admittedly, also, both the isolation of the countryside and the immensity of possible tasks resulted in its problems being somewhat neglected.

In the large urban congeries housing difficulties, labour organization and poor wages militate against the maintenance of traditional loyalties, which inevitably lose an essential part of their meaning where the neighbouring and the working groups are disparate and no longer reflect family, or even ethnic, unity. Although custom does not vanish with the countryman's flight to the town, since the emigrant often maintains contacts with relatives and members of his community in his home village and in town, diversity of interests, distance and daily contact with other civilizations strain family and clan links. Allegiances are formed between neighbours of different origins and between workers belonging to the same trade-union cells. Even when political parties rely on ethnic affinity, their synthetic interpretation of the latter has little to do with the common ways of life, beliefs and interests, or the petty rivalries in the spiritual unity of the "bush" village.

Bringing men together physically, the town separates them mentally. Urbanization demands of the countryman that he rid himself of his collective mentality and become a responsible individual with the initiative and freedom of action of one seeking success for himself and for the family so closely linked biologically with him. Bad working conditions,

and unemployment, before social security, poor wages in the absence of workers' demands, slums and demoralization marked the beginnings of industrialization and over-rapid urbanization in many parts of the world. In Africa, as elsewhere, the growing numbers of maladjusted, the physically and mentally handicapped, and children and old people in need of support, compelled action by the community, first by private bodies and subsequently with the backing of the public authorities.

In short, some traits which seem to have accompanied the rapid growth of modern urban settlements in Africa need to be counter-balanced by definite social welfare measures.

Let us mention among others:-
the weakening of family ties and of traditional institutions;
the transformation of the role and status of women;
the difference in outlook between generations and the creation
of a rural class and urban classes;
the growth in the towns of an unskilled labour reserve resulting
in low salaries and poverty;
the occupational lag between school and employment producing
growing numbers of young unemployed;
the lack and mediocrity of popular housing;
conditions of malnutrition and undernourishment leaving the door
open to infectious diseases ^{1/}

It may be worth while to point out here that these problems with which certain families have to cope, and the scope and importance of which may require special attention, are not always representative of the way of life of the majority of the urban population. The following pages will be devoted to the activities of the social welfare services that are endeavouring to meet these problems.

^{1/} The principal tendencies have been analyzed in detail in other papers submitted to this workshop. It seems therefore sufficient to mention them here.

5. Social service in the rural areas

Social service in Africa has not developed at a rate comparable to the rapid growth of towns. It has, however, sought to meet some of the problems mentioned above, can claim some modest achievements, and shows certain general tendencies that can be briefly described.

Social service in the countryside and villages has been popularized in recent years mainly in the context of community development. Chiefly with the aid of women, it endeavours through its actual beneficiaries to raise the latter's standard of living and solve the social problems confronting the community. This type of work is closely bound up with basic education, health education and domestic training. Its importance in regard to urbanization lies in the improvements it seeks to make in day-to-day living in the countryside - which makes it something of an attempt to stem the flight to the town - and in the training it gives women, who, without ever having attended school or had any contact with modern civilization, may be caught up in the migratory movement to the towns.

6. Organizations of and trends in social service programmes

The slant in national administrative structures affects the organization of social services, the prospects for social welfare activities, the expansion of charitable works, the co-ordination and decentralization of services etc... Administrative arrangements differ from country to country and from town to town. Some African countries have a Ministry of Social Affairs; but often there is a mere Department of Social Affairs within the Ministry of Health or Labour. In other countries, community development, social and social welfare are covered by one Ministry. In certain cases, too, various social service activities are divided among three or four different departments, in which case co-ordination of the work demands special attention and sometimes special machinery. Egypt solved this problem in 1953 by

setting up a permanent Public Social Welfare Board attached to the Prime Minister's Office.

Social security is not yet developed in the young African States. In several countries, however, aside from the employer's liability in the event of an accident, there is a fairly full system of family benefits covering the worker's wage-earning wife or consort (pre-natal, maternity, family or non-working mother's allowances). The equalization funds use whatever resources they have to establish social centres, nurseries, kindergartens, dispensaries etc..

Municipalities usually allocate funds for social welfare. Most such appropriations - apart from those intended for low-cost housing construction and the laying-out and management of parks and playing fields - are distributed in the form of subsidies to help run public or private bodies directed by other administrations. But in some towns direct municipal action is far from negligible. For example, the Nairobi City Council maintains nurseries and youth clubs in the working-class housing estates, as well as domestic science training centres for girls and young married women. The Lagos Town Council is responsible for Port welfare activities, repatriation of destitutes, health visitors and administration of the Old People's Home. The Abidjan municipality has established a social centre with a kindergarten and two district public halls at Adjame and a kindergarten at Treichville, and employs 22 social workers.

The charitable organizations were the first to provide social welfare services in African towns. The social work of the religious missions covers the whole continent; but the missionaries' efforts have been primarily directed towards elementary education and vocational training, and medical assistance, particularly the treatment and lodging of patients suffering from certain diseases such as leprosy. The youth movements nevertheless derive considerable stimulus and vitality from them. The numbers and activities of private charitable organizations vary substantially from town to town, seeming to be affected by long-standing conditions of prosperity or economic difficulties, religion, type of colonization and the support they receive in their development from the local authorities. The work done by the voluntary

organizations is particularly important in cities like Accra, Kampala, Nairobi, Khartoum, Leopoldville and Cairo. Some towns or cities have councils or federations of voluntary organizations co-ordinating their and the public services' activities and making possible the development of minimum standards of work and the framing of a general social development policy. In Morocco, the Entr'aide Sociale Marocaine, which comprises representatives of the Government and the private organizations, is responsible for both the development of the social services and the improvement of working standards, as also for the distribution of public funds in the form of subsidies. Elsewhere, there are boards or federations of charitable organizations of the same denomination or the same type.

The need for action on behalf of the greatest number with the limited funds available demands in Africa modifications in the methods and techniques developed in richer areas; nevertheless, the social policies pursued by the former metropolitan countries have left their particular mark on the countries they touched. Whereas French influence tended towards the centralization and legal codification of rights and services (family allowances and the development of medico-social assistance), British influence favoured local initiative and voluntary welfare activities. Countries under the latter influence recognize two principles as a basis for State action: ideally, the government should act only when private initiative proves unable to solve a problem alone, and responsibility for social welfare activities should always be left to the body nearest the beneficiary that can successfully shoulder it. In those countries the central government devoted special attention to the organization of probation and juvenile delinquency services, for which it was bound to assume responsibility, while at the same time expecting the assistance of the local administrations and the community.

In Ghana, thanks to the close association between social service and community development, urban social workers concentrate on objectives designed to encourage local initiative and give the community the greatest possible assistance. Their activities now comprise the following:

- (a) Group work aimed mainly at women and young people, with educational and health objectives, organized in co-operation with voluntary bodies and the public services concerned;

- (b) Arrangement of anti-illiteracy courses and campaigns, vocational training and professional guidance associated with social work in the schools;
 - (c) Court work and the administration of schools for children and adolescents in conflict with the law;
 - (d) Administration of an orphanage and schools for the blind and deaf-mutes, and social work among cured lepers;
 - (e) Welfare work with individuals in the main urban centres designed to solve a great variety of problems, particularly in cases not amenable to the working group approach;
 - (f) Assistance to voluntary associations and community centres. (The Social Welfare and Community Development Department backed the first national campaign for a joint charitable fund to finance the Ghanaian social welfare federation (Kwame Nkrumah Trust Fund.))
- In Uganda, the Community Development Division of the Ministry of Social Development has a Social Welfare and Probation Section. This Section has started a programme for the improvement and the extension of the child and family welfare services in the urban and suburban environment, with the assistance of the United Nations International Children's Fund and of the United Nations Bureau of Social Affairs. The direct objectives of this programme are: to stimulate the participation of non-governmental welfare organizations, to facilitate assumption of responsibility of local authorities, to train personnel of various categories employed by the Social Welfare Section and the non-governmental organizations, to improve and extend remedial and preventive social services, to conduct a survey of youth needs and to establish a practical research unit for continuing evaluation of children's needs and of the work done in social welfare. Social Welfare Committees, with a social worker attached in each case, have been set up in the main towns, comprising members elected by the voluntary organizations and government representatives appointed by the Ministries concerned (e.g. the Ministries of Health and Education). The Central Office for Women's Community Development Programmes is responsible for supervising more than 1,000 clubs, with 24,000 members. Moreover, the voluntary organizations associated with the Government's rural and urban programmes, under which they receive equipment and facilities for the training of their staff, control 1,050 groups with some 18,300 members (Catholic Action - 4,800; Mothers' Union of the African Anglican Church - 11,500; Salvation Army - 545; YWCA - 1,436).

Women's clubs have acquired considerable importance, especially in the

East-African countries and Ghana. As social centres, they meet the need to foster women's education for the home, to train them as mothers and improve the situation of those women who, having for long been deprived of schooling and confined to the vernacular languages, have found themselves culturally separated from their husbands and brothers. Although the movement is chiefly directed towards the countryside, there are women's clubs in cities like Accra and Kampala. While these clubs are mainly designed for teaching the domestic arts, they also give women an opportunity to meet their kind and enable them to develop their organizing abilities. Efforts are now being made in some countries to incorporate in the work of these clubs social service and child welfare activities, nurseries, discussions on family life, acquaintance with social welfare facilities etc.. Recently, the social services have also been devoting attention to the inclusion of men in family education activities.

7. The "social centre"

In the towns of West and Central Africa under the French influence there has been developing a multi-purpose institution offering various service for women and young children: the "social centre".

In many countries these "social centres" have so far been managed by European social workers, assisted by domestic science instructors (also European) and by local auxiliary staff who have either been systematically trained or been merely called in to enjoy some limited experience under professional supervision (e.g. in Dakar and Thies, Abidjan, Brazzaville and Fort-Lamy). As they now operate, the "social centres" concentrate heavily on maternal and child welfare activities. They are usually situated near a dispensary, where they do not, as at Abidjan, enjoy the services of one or two doctors. They are responsible for a weekly check of weight and health of thousands of babies, and the distribution of "nivaquine" as a prophylactic against malaria, and of milk for babies, and sometimes for pregnant women, nursing mothers and certain sick people. They teach mothers how to care for their babies and inculcate rudimentary ideas of hygiene. They also sometimes give classes in dressmaking, cooking, housekeeping and house-decoration for neighbourhood women and girls, designed to improve family living conditions for women who had not previously had a chance to learn such things.

Most of the women who come to the centres have never been to school, and sometimes literacy courses are arranged at their request. The centres usually have kindergartens, and sometimes also nurseries; but much less attention is generally given to children under school age (2-4 years) than to others. The kindergartens present the same staffing problems as the other branches of the centres, often in more acute form. Sometimes the number of children admitted cannot be coped with by the monitors in charge or the available facilities; the monitors are often inexperienced and their relations with parents are pretty valueless.

Assistants and auxiliaries are needed by their district medical services for visiting certain sick people suffering from social scourges like tuberculosis and venereal diseases, in order both to deal with the social aspects of the particular sickness and to improve the patients' and their families' health education. They also advise families regarding the forms to be obtained to apply for family allowances or social benefits, and on the steps to be taken in officially registering births or compelling a refractory father to support his children.

Penetration of the working-class districts is more effective where the social centre has a multitude of outlying branches, some of which provide maternal and child welfare services and advice to small groups of neighbouring families.

The social centres would no doubt do well to devote more effort to the social aspects of their function, instead of concentrating on health education and training in housekeeping. If they gave more credit to the women (illiterate as they may be) who attend them, they would probably get help from them that would simplify their work and open up further avenues for action. Discussion of day-to-day experience and difficulties of city life requires no academic knowledge, if it is based on the situation and present interests of the speaker. In town the social centres could serve as focal points for the adaptation of the "detribalized". Meetings of groups to find solutions for

their common problems would enable those suffering from a hitherto unknown isolation to join some club and find friends. While their work is closely co-ordinated with that of the health services, and even on occasion, as in Senegal, supported by whatever local administration is responsible for the planning and execution of work programmes, little account is taken of other women's groups that often exert very great influence on the mothers and girls who are the present or future "clients" of the centre - whether these groups be craft, tribal or religious associations. The aim of every social service organization is cultural or social change; what is needed is the conscious use of techniques calculated to simplify mutual adaptation between the individual and his environment. Before seeking to make any changes, it is very necessary to know what already exists; so it is essential to try to understand those with whom the work has to be done for their own benefit, through study of living conditions, relationship structures, neighbourhood and business relations, ethnic group traditions, variations in the role and status of the members of the family, training of groups and development of leaders, the procedures whereby custom decrees the search for agreement on points at issue, the transfer or disappearance of inter-tribal rivalries in the new environment, etc.. The biographies of families living in the same neighbourhood or belonging to the same ethnic group in a town might throw new light on urban adaptation problems and standards of living in proletarianized circles.

Newcomers to town are often helped in their initial adaptation by mutual-aid tribal associations, which proliferate in many African cities. A careful assesement should be made of the services rendered by active association in a particular environment, with a view either to broadening or altering the direction of their activities. In a word, while the social centres are doing very useful work, it would probably be an advantage if their programmes could be amplified, perhaps on the lines of the community centre, which has so far not received the same attention in Africa - with the exception of some countries like Nigeria, Uganda and the UAR, where they have come to the fore particularly in the new low-cost housing estates. The community centre welcomes all who wish to join, is run by social workers who

live in it in order to be nearer the people for whom they cater, and guides the various neighbourhood groups in militant social action.

In Congo (Leopoldville) there is a sizeable network of social service institutions, very many of which are responsible to voluntary bodies receiving subsidies from the public authorities or private funds. Before independence came, these bodies employed several hundreds of social assistants from the home-country, together with some 1,500 Congolese monitors of both sexes. The Catholic missions, whose influence was considerable, have continued these bodies' activities. The foyers sociaux, which were set up for reasons similar to the social centres in Brazzaville or Abidjan - e.g. the adaptation of the Congolese to life in town - but with a more comprehensive programme, have lost a high proportion of their executive staff. Apart from training in housekeeping and child welfare, baby clinics and kindergartens, the foyer programmes comprise the organization of cultural activities, lectures, parents' meetings, cinema shows, assistance to certain individual cases, old people, children, the sick, delinquents, boys' and girls' clubs, playing fields helped out by the handyman, and educational and popular art activities. The activities of the foyers sociaux are supplemented by those of the social and educational centres scattered throughout the provinces, which give additional general and vocational courses, arrange seminars and lectures, cinema shows and sports activities, while maintaining playing fields, labour bureaux, citizens' advice bureaux and probation officer groups, and see to staff training (youth leaders and game coaches). Some youth clubs have libraries, do-it-yourself classes, indoor games, sports, puppet theatres, and provide the background for scout patrols and young Red Cross groups. Through the "Family Councils" (Conseils de Foyer), which comprise people's representatives and staff members of the social organizations, the people have an opportunity to participate in the development and adaptation of programmes. However, population movements due to last year's insecurity and the substantial increase in the number of young unemployed in the towns are creating problems beyond the scope of the available agencies, even where these function efficiently.

8. Control of juvenile delinquency

Nearly all countries have legal provisions covering the special status of abandoned minors that are either delinquent or in danger of becoming so. There are special institutions that take in such young people. Probation systems are highly organized in, for example, Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria. Where there are no arrangements for the care of juvenile delinquents, the social centres and branches are used by the courts to investigate the family lives of the children and juveniles brought before them. In towns of any size, the social welfare services look after waifs and strays who, coming from the country in search of schooling or work, or merely lured by the unknown, find themselves lost and without livelihood in town. The bigger towns have one or two hostels where youths of either sex arriving in town can stay in a healthy atmosphere and receive the guidance they need; but there are still too few of these hostels.

As a special study is to be submitted to the Conference on the growth of delinquency due to rapid urbanization, we shall not describe here the aid services for delinquent children and adult prisoners with which several African governments have initiated their social welfare activities. Suffice it to point out that there again, as in other aspects of social service organization, prevention is better than cure. Governments seem to have realized that precautions cost less than assistance and are less problematical in their results. Since juvenile delinquency must be considered as a symptom, efforts at reform must seek out the causes, with a view either to removing them or at least to mitigating them, if basic aims are to be achieved. Attention has been called to some of these causes: the gap between the generations and the inadequacy of the parents, the abyss between town and country and lack of understanding in the schools, bad working-class housing conditions, the "dead" period between leaving school and taking up possible employment. As we have seen, much attention is being devoted everywhere to the training of the mother in home management. While that attention has not always produced direct action to prevent or solve conflicts or family stability problems, there are at any rate for the training of women to ensure physical well-being in the home practical programmes, social centres, women's clubs, home management schools for adults and girls, etc..

9. Leisure and youth movements

Control of the leisure of young people to some extent offsets the shortcomings of the schools. While rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents and court-work are part of the social defence services provided by governments, responsibility for social security is largely shared by the public authorities and the voluntary organizations with the main aim of teaching the young healthy use of their leisure, through recreation and education, for better physical and mental growth. The scout movement, boy and girl brigades, Young Christian Associations, Catholic youth movements, sports associations which are endlessly active in African towns, provide the framework for this fruitful use of leisure by the young. Unfortunately, municipal parks and playing fields are still too few in number and too often quite lacking in the densely populated zones where they are most needed.

Most African countries have created Ministries for youth and sports to supplement their Ministries of Education and Social Affairs. In Senegal, for example Maisons des Jeunes et de la Culture, which were founded by the Ministry of Youth, had at the end of 1960 3,726 members in the towns. These hostels function as popular education establishments, providing the people with premises and facilities for organizing leisure. Youth camps designed to bring rural and urban juvenile unemployed into the productive circuit and to promote community development had 90,000 working days to their credit. Sixteen sports federations with leagues and districts, have been formed. At Dakar, beginners' sports sports centres are training young people in six different games (basket-ball, football, boxing, swimming, tennis, and volley-ball).

In the republics which have recently achieved independence, especially those in which political unity grew around a party with a large majority as well as where the government is trying to perpetuate the domination of that party in power, open concern is expressed for instructing youth in civics. The youth sections of the majority party receive special attention. Their activities include the anti-illiteracy

campaign, cultural pursuits, games and community development, as well as the creation of civic consciousness and political indoctrination. Their leaders are provided with scholarships and study tours. Their enthusiasm and desire for progress are giving strong impetus to the movement for replacement of the earlier fragmentary voluntary organizations.

In an attempt to solve the problem of unemployment among youth of school-leaving age, certain countries have thought of using military training as a means to basic education and instruction in civics and agriculture. One or two countries have introduced a form of para-military service aimed at preparing an advance-guard of educated farmers capable of using modern methods and guiding their rural neighbours along the way of progress. However, programmes of this kind, if they are to be carried out on a scale consonant with the problems which they are to solve, (urban unemployment and rural stagnation) demand substantial investment. They must also overcome the reluctance of the young city-dweller - even when he has spent only his adolescence in town - to adapt himself to life on the land and to forget urban pleasures and the prospects of a bright future which big African towns today offer ambitious youth, especially those with more than elementary education.

10. Schools services - nurseries and orphanages

Schools' social services which are still in their infancy in those towns which have them, have a few rather limited tasks to perform. They carry out medico-social and social investigations that enable parents and children to take timely advantage of the facilities the community provides. They also often see to the repatriation of school-children and students, both from the capital to the interior and from abroad.

With the transformation of the family (grand-parents, uncles and aunts no longer taking joint responsibility), infants must be protected while their mothers are at work. Accordingly, the nurseries which satisfy this need are greatly appreciated in most towns. In Ghana, for example, there are 43 nurseries catering for about 2,300 children.

Orphanages, especially those for girls, are often run by missionaries. The number of openings is abnormally small, especially considering that the children admitted to them usually spend many years there, until they have completed the course or reached 17 or 18 years of age. But the African family is always ready, except in extreme cases of disintegration, to welcome any child its parents cannot bring up. The same applies to day-nurseries for children and infants specially situated - sudden illness of mother, mothers' death in child-bed with custom demanding the death of the child, twins or, in certain groups, a tenth child whose admission should be strictly controlled.

Official Boarding-out is even less widespread, probably because of the public's comparative ignorance of this type of service and of the lack of social workers interested in it; for it seems that experience in this field has been on the whole fortunate, as the African family's traditional hospitality makes it a fit substitute for the normal home. On the other hand, the habit of boarding out children direct is very common in almost all towns. Children, especially girls, are sent out to the country to remove them from the bad town influences and to ease the strain on the paternal budget; a child is sometimes left with a parent or a friend of the family to be brought up more severely, or country children are sent to stay with an uncle or an elder brother in town to further their education, or put into service. Where children are boarded out in a remote locality and not with close relatives or under special supervision, the results may be disastrous. Sometimes, under harsh treatment, the young country-boy runs away to swell the ranks of the

waifs and strays, an easy prey to delinquency; others become the helpless victims of cruel masters - which is why the social welfare and probation services try to send such children back to their families after the first escapade.

At Dakar, there is an assistant in the Social Affairs Office in charge of boarding out adolescents. Her task, when possible, is to direct them towards sitting for one or other of the periodic examinations for vocational training course candidates, or obtaining an apprenticeship or a permanent job.

11. Financial assistance

African countries, like other under-developed regions, cannot in the normal run of things subsidize all families whose incomes do not enable them to lead a decent life. It has often been said that where the entire population is on the verge of starvation it is sound social policy to promote an increase in the standard of living of the majority before relieving special cases. However, recurring famine in certain countries requires a special system for the emergencies which occur in certain rural zones while also having their repercussions in the towns. This is one of the main arguments advanced in favour of the distribution of subsidies in cash and kind in times of calamity and, from time to time to a few particularly under-privileged individuals or families.

Besides, there are in all large towns a few hostels for the aged, infirm and physically and mentally handicapped, provided by the central administration, the municipality or voluntary agencies. Assistance to the blind is particularly widespread. Unfortunately, this merely enables the most wretched element in the population to eke out an existence, and rehabilitation is still in its infancy in most towns.

12. Urban development and development of social welfare

Perhaps the only means of producing a lasting solution to the social problems arising out of over-rapid urbanization is to raise standards of living in both town and country. Concentration of effort in the towns would exaggerate the imbalance between town and country and might precipitate migrations that would swell the economic burden represented by an under-employed proletariat. The only way to guarantee stability and further the emergence of new generations fit to live in a modern world increasingly tending towards unity is to provide decent housing adapted to family traditions and needs, enough schools and a system of education designed to meet requirements for economic development and national integration, increased production and a distribution of income that will ensure a fairly comfortable family life. But Africa's present problem, like that of other under-developed regions, is how to cope with all these requirements simultaneously-how to achieve rapid economic development while ensuring the minimum social development to guarantee a healthy economy and at the same time sparing the people the excessive tensions and sufferings that ensue from exaggerated changes in their social structure and customs, where poverty is rife and the population increasing rapidly.

Family and individual welfare, which is the final aim of development, is also a prerequisite for it. The satisfaction of essential needs, like food, housing, clothing, recreation, education, health and security, affects the human factor in production, and the human investment in the latter has its needs which must be weighed against those of capital and technology in order to arrive at harmonious development and reduce to a minimum the social cost of accelerated urbanization and industrialization. The cost of social development is high; raising the people's standard of living, spreading of education, preventive and therapeutic medicine, child welfare and social security, community

action and social research may call for substantial expenditure necessarily drawn from the funds so needed for industry and agriculture. The urgency and multiplicity of economic and social needs explain the modesty of social service programmes in most African countries. In none of the large African towns are there services adequate to the problems with which they have to cope. Nevertheless, great efforts have been made to launch a progressive social policy in recent years. The foundations for the administration of national social service programmes have been more or less successfully laid in most African countries, and the question of training of staff has engaged the attention of the authorities.

What, in fact, is the social meaning of "decolonization"? What are its implications for social planning? The building of a nation goes beyond the definition of frontiers, beyond the constitution of a government, and even beyond official recognition by other independent States and international organizations. It calls for a national "awareness" and integration of the different racial groups living in the country. This type of integration demands great freedom and scope of communication, both physical and spiritual, an enlightened linguistic and educational policy, and social legislation taking account of population factors, customs, religious beliefs, and social and cultural changes. National growth implies a gradual, but utmost possible, assumption of responsibility for programming and execution by nationals. It, therefore, requires the africanization of staff; but this africanization is desirable only where Europeans can be replaced by local substitutes with a minimum of knowledge and experience in the field in which they will have to work. Hence the special importance of staff training in all African countries which have recently gained their independence.

Because of the present situation, in which most local staff work, as auxiliaries, and of the few posts reserved for professional

social workers, and also of the delay in training girls - added to the fact that social work is in most countries considered women's work - all the countries which have recently achieved independence are devoting special attention to the setting-up or expansion of schools for the training of social auxiliaries or helpers. Outside North and South Africa there are now no intermediate or higher social service schools except in Ethiopia, Ghana, Ivory Coast and Madagascar; but in various countries there are a few students who have studied at European or American schools, and scholarships are still being awarded to strengthen basic staff. It is to be hoped that neighbouring countries will agree that the vocational social service schools whose opening is now under discussion will serve as regional training centres.

African governments are today faced with the task of defining their social policies in the light of social and economic needs and of the interdependence between them, and of establishing priorities compatible with their financial and human resources. They must arrange efficient co-ordination between existing services, develop the necessary new programmes, evaluate training needs and meet them, provide facilities for studying social problems meriting special attention, particularly those connected with migration and urbanization, and from time to time evaluate the efficiency of social welfare activities and measures.

13. Role of ECA and United Nations Technical Assistance

It remains to mention what contribution United Nations Technical Assistance and the Economic Commission for Africa can make to the development of social service and to the solution of the social problems arising out of urbanization. It should be noted here that these problems are human problems that recur in different situations in town and country. Their obviousness and acuteness are peculiar to present conditions of urban growth and abrupt change.

The Economic Commission pays particular attention to the training of social service staff. It arranges training courses for staff responsible for the execution of programmes. One such was held at Accra (Ghana) from 21 November to 3 December 1960. The course on community development held at Dakar in November 1961 included a series of lectures on social work in community development. In 1962, there will be a symposium of directors of and teachers in schools of social work and administrators of national social welfare services, to study problems and discussing methods of training candidates for social work in Africa. Specialists in social work who teach in different African countries and in other regions of the world will foregather at meetings of experts for the discussion of problems concerning social organization and the development of social services in Africa, e.g. the Workshop on Urbanization Problems and the Expert group meeting on Organization and Administration of Social Services (Abidjan, April 1962).

The Commission's programme for 1962 and 1963 also comprises arrangements for a study tour for group observation of methods of administering and operating social welfare services in some African countries. There will be set up within the Community Development and Social Service Branch a centre for the dissemination of material for the teaching of the techniques and methods used in social work and community development.

The Economic Commission is at the disposal of governments desiring assistance in investigating social conditions in their countries with a view to framing national child and family welfare, community development and social workers' training programmes, taking advantage when necessary of the technical and material facilities offered by the UN and its specialized agencies.

United Nations Technical Assistance can provide requesting countries with advisers in social work to help them evaluate needs, or plan or launch social welfare programmes. It can also facilitate the establishment of schools or centres for training auxiliaries or female professional social workers by providing advisers on the administration of schools of social work and specialist teachers. It grants scholarships and finances study tours abroad designed to round off the training of social welfare personnel. It sometimes works in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Health Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization, so as to cover a wider field by carrying out multi-purpose programmes.