

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL



49943
Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.14/304
27 October 1964

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
Seventh session
Nairobi, 9 - 23 February 1965

REPORT ON ACTIVITIES IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

1. A conference of Directors of Central Personnel Agencies, or Civil Service Commissions, and Directors of Public Administration Institutes took place in May 1964 (E/CN.14/291). The meeting composed of representatives of 30 African countries, four countries from outside Africa and seven international organizations, drew attention to the large number of Training Institutions in Africa and the need for improvement, co-operation and pooling of information among them as more important than the creation of new institutions and that they should be used to a greater extent as bases for regional or sub-regional training activities and research. Among other important recommendations of the Conference were the creation of an African pool of civil servants available to other countries, the organization of a public administration information centre and the publication of a public administration newsletter.

2. During the year a sound foundation has been laid for regional activities, training programmes and country projects relating to local government. The Report of the Study Tour of Yugoslavia and India (E/CN.14/UAP/17) emphasized the importance of adequate central agencies and institutions for the improvement of local government while the Seminar on Central Services to Local Authorities established clear-cut objectives for self-governing institutions in Africa in the light of changed and changing circumstances. The results of this work will now be applied in the preparation of more detailed guides on unified personnel systems designed to provide a career service for local

authority personnel, credit institutions for local authorities and training programmes adapted to meet development and other requirements.

3. The Seminar on Central Services to Local Authorities, which was the second major project undertaken by the Local Government Section, took place at Zaria in Northern Nigeria from 29 June to 10 July 1964 (E/CN.14/UAP/37). 17 member countries were represented by one or more senior officials from their Ministries of Local Government or of the Interior. FAO and WHO were represented, also the International Union of Local Authorities and the Ford Foundation. There were in addition observers from Great Britain, the United States of America, and Yugoslavia. The total number of participants was 40. The object of the Seminar was to study the central agencies and institutions needed at the national level (or in a federal system at the state or provincial level) for the improvement of local government and to consider ways by which African governments might increase the contribution and effectiveness of their local authorities in the fields of social and economic development.

4. The Seminar reached a successful conclusion by agreeing that the system of local government in each country should be re-adapted to constitutional, administrative, economic and other changes in contemporary Africa and focussed attention on the need for assisting local authorities in drawing up local development plans, providing them with adequate financial resources and establishing sound personnel systems and training programmes.

5. A training course on Organization and Methods for English-speaking countries took place between 12 October and 20 November. Details of this course will be found in the training report (E/CN.14/307). The papers presented and discussions that took place will be edited in the form of an Organization and Methods training manual. A similar course for French-speaking countries had been contemplated but had to be postponed to a later date.

6. A third advanced course in customs administration was organized for English-speaking countries in November 1964. Nine countries were represented (including the East African Common Services Organization). Details of this course will be found in the report on training (E/CN.14/307). The main emphasis was placed on instruction in the working of the Brussels Tariff Nomenclature in view of the pre-occupation of many countries with the transposition to it of their existing tariffs.

7. A report on Budget Management and Government Accounting System in the Sudan was completed by the Regional Adviser in Budget Management in February 1964. The survey which had been requested by the Government in 1963 was for the purpose of identifying areas where improvements could be made in the existing systems and defining the extent and character of United Nations assistance.

8. The Regional Adviser in Local Government went to Kampala in February 1964, at the invitation of the Uganda Government, to evaluate a request for a local government adviser to be attached to the Kingdom of Buganda. An expert was subsequently recruited to fill the post and took up his assignment at the end of May. In October the Regional Adviser visited Tunis in connexion with the request of the Tunisian Government for a United Nations technical assistance team to advise the Municipality of Tunis on the re-organization and extension of municipal services in "Greater Tunis". The object of this mission was to work out details of the team's assignment with Tunisian officials and to assess probable calls for further help and support. Subsequently, he spent two weeks in the United Arab Republic, at the invitation of the Ministry of Local Administration in Cairo, reviewing the development of local government in that country and in consultation on technical assistance and training problems.

9. The Regional Fiscal Adviser (Taxation) completed a fact-finding mission in Dahomey in August in relation to a request for United Nations Technical Assistance in the field of price control.

10. During the year members of the Division attended the following regional or inter-regional meetings: Conference on International Support for Research in East Africa in Nairobi; Administrative Aspects of National Development Planning in Paris; two meetings sponsored by the OECD on development problems in Yaoundé and Abidjan; The Inter-Regional Budgetary Workshop in Copenhagen; Meetings of the Nomenclature and Valuation Committees of the Customs Co-operation Council in Brussels.
11. The Regional Fiscal Adviser (Taxation) was a member of a team of four experts appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in 1963 at the joint request of the Governments concerned to advise on the form of the future relationship between Senegal and Gambia. The report was submitted to the Governments on 16 March 1964 and was published on 15 June 1964.
12. Assistance to several African countries was provided concerning the conversion of their tariffs to the Brussels Nomenclature by the Regional Adviser on Customs Administration. The Customs Co-operation Council also collaborated actively in these undertakings. Further details will be found in the chapter on Trade.
13. Attention was given to initiate in all fields of public administration the production of manuals, handbooks and guides, that will be used as basis for future training activities.