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UN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME OF ASSISTANCE
TO STATISTICAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA
(Document prepared by the UN Statistical Office, New York)

UN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME OF ASSISTANCE
TO STATISTICAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

(August 1969 - July 1971)

General

Since the last report on technical assistance was made to the Sixth Conference of African Statisticians^{1/} there has been a slight decline in the overall number of statistical projects in the region. This was probably due in part to restrictions imposed on the use of Regular Programme funds for country and regional projects in statistics, such funds being gradually diverted to so-called impact and priority fields. For a general comparison of obligations incurred during 1968-70 for statistical activities under all U.N. programmes of assistance, for all the regions, see Annex I.

A total of 73 advisory, operational and volunteer personnel were provided to 25 countries^{2/}, compared with 83 advisers to 28 countries during the previous two-year period. The strength of the regional advisory was also reduced somewhat; while the services of two regional advisers in demographic statistics and one in national accounts continued to be available throughout the period, from the end of 1970 when the sampling adviser completed his assignment, short-term assistance in this field has had to be discontinued for want of funds to continue the post. On the other hand, the services of an inter-regional adviser on computer methods were also made available for short missions in six countries and as a participant in a seminar on the use of computers in demographic statistics organized for African countries by the Federal Republic of Germany in cooperation with ECA.

There is every indication that the resources of the UN Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) will be called upon increasingly over the next few months by countries requiring assistance in connexion with the African Census Programme. Apart from assistance which may be provided for individual country programmes, a regional project currently under consideration would provide the services of a number of regional advisers, including two in demographic statistics, one in sampling and one in data processing.

Meantime, during the period under review emphasis continued to be given to development of national statistical offices, national accounts, population censuses and training.

1/ Doc E/CN.14/CAS.6/17
2/ See Annex II

Statistical Organization and Development of Statistical Systems

A number of countries continued to require assistance in developing and strengthening their statistical services. These included Botswana, Congo/K, Ethiopia, Guinea, Libya, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland and Zambia.

In the case of Zambia, which has been receiving sustained UN assistance since 1965, steps have been taken gradually to phase out such assistance. This is in accordance with the recommendations of a UN Evaluation Mission which went to Zambia in the Spring of 1970. The Mission felt that UN assistance in statistics had been successful in attaining its objectives, in the sense that a statistical system had been established, its growth following closely the plans laid down in 1965; and that local personnel had been trained and were gradually replacing foreign experts. The Mission felt, however, that a complete withdrawal of assistance would be premature, and arrangements have therefore been made for one expert and one associate to remain in post until the early part of 1972.

National Accounts

The urgent need for national accounting data for purposes of planning accounted for the assignment of experts to nine countries (Dahomey, Ghana, Libya, Niger, Nigeria, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia). These experts, together with the regional adviser on national accounts, who carried out short-term missions in about a dozen countries, are assisting in the preparation of estimates required for planning and in laying the basis for a continuing, and systematic, compilation of the national accounts based on the Revised System of National Accounts (SNA).

The resources of the UN Development Programme, as well as the UN Trust Fund for Planning and Projections were utilized for a number of meetings and courses aimed at contributing to the exchange of experience among countries in the region in this field and to improving the comparability of their national accounting data; and in the case of the courses to assist national accounts statisticians in the preparation of national accounts data according to the Revised SNA. These activities included: a Seminar on Data Required for Projections and a Working Group on Public Sector Statistics, held in Addis Ababa from 9-14 November and 16-21 November 1970 respectively; a three-week training course held in co-operation with the Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics in Kampala (14 September-3 October 1970 for English-speaking participants) and another in co-operation with the Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics in Rabat (17 May - 6 June 1971 for French-speaking participants).

Other Economic Statistics

At its sixteenth session the Statistical Commission approved plans for a 1973 World Programme of Industrial Statistics and it is expected that countries in the region intending to participate may require assistance as 1973 draws near. Meantime, expert services in industrial statistics are presently being provided to Libya and Zambia and in distribution statistics to Nigeria.

In the case of international trade statistics, experts assigned to countries requiring assistance in organizing and developing their statistical systems generally give priority to work in this field. The resources of the UN Development Programme were made available, however, for a meeting in the region on this subject. A seminar on Concepts and Definitions of International Trade Statistics was held in Addis Ababa from 27 May to 2 June 1971. Although in Africa the problems of commodity classification according to the SITC (or the BTN, which is compatible), and of CIF valuation for imports and FOB for exports seem to have been settled, the problems of standardization of the trade system (general or special) as well as of the definition of the partner country remain. It is expected that the seminar's recommendations will bring about an improvement in the comparability of international trade statistics of the African countries.

Demographic and Social Statistics

Although at this writing full-time assistance in respect of population censuses is being provided to only three countries (Algeria, Morocco and Nigeria) - in addition to short-term assistance to other countries rendered by the two regional advisers - there is every indication that over the next few months an unprecedented number of requests will be received (13 having already been received and awaiting field investigation).

The 1970 World Population and Housing Census Programme and the World Programme of Vital Statistics have stimulated census-taking and the collection of vital data throughout the world, but many countries in Africa have found it difficult to participate for lack of resources. Following recommendations of the Tenth Session of the ECA Conference of Ministers, held in Tunis from 8 to 13 February 1971, that increased assistance be made available by ECA to the countries of Africa in order to enable them to improve their systems of population data collection and analysis, a proposal was submitted to the UN Fund for Population Activities for approval of an integrated regional programme for Africa. Under this programme regional advisers would be available to countries to assist in the formulation of integrated programmes of demographic statistics including the design and

conduct of population of censuses and similar inquiries, current demographic surveys and the collection and compilation of vital statistics through registration. The needs of each country requesting help will be examined on an individual basis, and projects negotiated with the governments concerned. Since obviously country programmes cannot be fully financed by UN resources counterpart services will be required, the dimensions of such services being subject to individual consideration.

Data Processing

An important element in the success of any government statistical services is the speed with which data is processed and tabulated. In view of the possibilities afforded by electronic computers, increasing emphasis has been given by a number of countries to assistance in the utilization of modern equipment for data processing. The services of the inter-regional adviser on computer methods were made available on a short-term basis to Algeria, Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius and Swaziland, his advice ranging over various aspects of computer use, means for improving efficiency of personnel, and recommendations in respect of equipment requirements.

The inter-regional adviser also participated in a Seminar on Population Data and Use of Computers, with Special Reference to Population Research, (Wiesbaden, 3 to 13 May 1971), organized by the Federal Republic of Germany in co-operation with the Economic Commission for Africa, specifically for countries of the African region.

Statistical Training

Training is an important feature of efforts to promote statistical development, and because the shortage of trained personnel remains one of the main obstacles to such development, efforts continue to be directed towards meeting training needs at various levels.

Middle-level training centres were established in Africa in the 1960's with UN help in Addis Ababa, Achimota/Accra, Yaoundé and Dar-es-Salaam. These centres were set up as an interim measure, following independence and the resulting exodus of expatriate personnel, to train local staff to maintain the basic statistical series; the policy with respect to these centres has from the outset envisaged a gradual take-over of responsibility by the countries for this type of training, as professionally trained statisticians become available. Accordingly, training activities of the Achimota/Accra and Addis Ababa centres have now been integrated into regular courses at the national universities, though assistance in the form of lecturers is still being given with respect to Achimota/Accra, and in the form of fellowships to both.

The Statistics Training Institute in Yaounde, which was established as a three-year Special Fund project in 1969, continues to provide the two sub-professional courses at "agent technique" and "adjoint technique" levels. Earlier, as the Yaounde Training Centre, it was aided by United Nations under its technical assistance programme. Since 1961 this training facility has admitted about 444 students, including 146 Cameroonians and 298 nationals of 17 other countries in West, Central and East African regions. To date, it has awarded 252 diplomas to agents techniques and 87 diplomas to adjoints techniques. In addition to staff provided by United Nations (Project Manager and two lecturers as well as short-term lecturers from ECA and the specialized agencies) teaching staff has also been supplied to the Institute by the European Economic Community (EEC), France and Switzerland.

The Dar-es-Salaam Centre, established in 1965, jointly by the East African Common Services Organization (now the East African Community) and the United Nations, has so far enrolled about 132 students, including 38 Tanzanians and 94 nationals of 6 other countries in East and South Africa. The Centre runs two training courses: one for statistical assistants organized along the lines of those at Addis Ababa and Achimta/Accra, and the other for statistical assistants (intermediate level), which includes a one-year course open to candidates already possessing the statistical assistant diploma or its equivalent. From 1966 to 1971 this Centre has awarded 71 statistical assistant diplomas and 32 statistical assistant (intermediate level) diplomas.

The current courses, which began in July 1971, are the last to be conducted under the existing arrangement between the East African Community and the United Nations, and it is expected that the Community will itself make arrangements for continuing this facility as required.

At the higher level, the Moroccan Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics trains personnel for the French-speaking countries up to the level of a first degree. It became a Special Fund project in 1965, though UN aid had been provided even earlier under the technical assistance programme. Although the Institute has made good progress in achieving its objectives, these cannot be completely attained during the five-year period originally envisaged for the project. A request has accordingly been made to UNDP for a two-year extension, which should make it possible to consolidate the three-year degree course and to enable counterpart personnel now being trained abroad to gain additional experience on return to the Institute. Since 1964 some 141 students have already obtained their diplomas of ingenieur des travaux statistiques (75 Moroccans and 66 from other French-speaking countries), not counting 30 students in the 1970/71 course.

At the same level, but catering to English-speaking countries, is the Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics in Kampala which was established as a Special Fund project in 1969. The Institute was established as an autonomous institute within Makerere University, being a joint project of the United Nations and the Government of Uganda, designed primarily to provide facilities for professional training in statistics and applied economics. The University started a first-year course in statistics one academic year prior to the beginning of the Project; accordingly in the academic year 1969/70 the Institute commenced operations with first and second year students. A total of 133 students enrolled in the B.Sc. degree statistics courses of the Institute. Of these, 72 were first-year students, including eleven from Kenya, three from Tanzania, two from Ethiopia and one each from Nigeria, Rwanda, Somalia and Sudan in addition to one from the United Kingdom, one from Canada and one from India. The remainder were Ugandans. Sixty-seven students passed the first year regular statistics examination. Not all of these may enroll in the second year of the Institute, for some may choose a programme in economics, and there may be some failures in the first year Mathematics and Economics courses. Out of 38 students enrolled in the second year, there were five Kenyans, one from Cameroon and one from Swaziland. A total of 35 students passed their examinations. There were 23 students in the third year, 22 of whom passed their final B.Sc. degree examinations (of whom four were Kenyans, the remainder Ugandans).

Apart from the fellowships provided for study at UN-sponsored training facilities, individual fellowships were also awarded to qualified persons for advanced training abroad. Twenty-four (24) candidates from seventeen (17) countries received such awards.

ANNEX I

Obligations incurred in Statistics^{a/}
 (All Regions)
 (amounts in US dollars)

	Regular budget Programmes	UNDP (TA) component	UNDP(SF) component	Funds-in Trust	Total
<u>1968</u>	598,439	1,449,777	203,875	198,012	2,450,103 ^{b/}
<u>1969</u>	506,767	819,697	1,288,814	172,808	2,788,086 ^{b/}
<u>1970</u>	385,088	1,191,856	956,908	164,236	2,698,088 ^{b/}

a/ United Nations Technical Cooperation Activities, Report of the Secretary-General to the Twelfth Session of the UNDP Governing Council, 7-25 June 1971 (DP/RP11, p.13).

b/ The regular programme figures include cash disbursements and unliquidated obligations for all years. The UNDP(TA) and the Funds-in-Trust components include cash disbursements and unliquidated obligations for the year 1968 and reflect cash disbursements only for the years 1969 and 1970.