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Part I - REVIEW OF PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION

1. During the period covered by this report, the Commission's work, facilitated by the co-operation of the interested Governments and of some private organizations, has encompassed a broad field. The work programme adopted at the sixth session has enabled the secretariat to concentrate its efforts on basic problems of economic development, without neglecting other aspects of Latin America's economic activity.
2. Close working contact has been maintained both with the Governments concerned in the Central American Economic Integration Programme and with those of the countries where economic development studies are being carried out. Material help has been provided by private organizations wherever field studies have been undertaken on the transforming industries and on the coffee problem.
3. The Economic Survey of Latin America, 1955 will appear in mimeographed form shortly after this report, and will be printed this year once the final revision has been completed.
4. The first regular number of the Economic Bulletin for Latin America was published in January 1955, a special issue having been distributed at the sixth session.
5. Work has begun on studies on the economic development of Argentina and Bolivia. The relevant reports will be presented at the Commission's seventh session.
6. A Division of Social Affairs has been set up in the secretariat and staffed with personnel transferred from Headquarters. This will facilitate the progress of the studies undertaken on those social aspects most important for economic development.
7. The fourth annual course in the Joint ECLA/TAA Economic Development Training Programme was held from April to December 1955. Towards the end of the year, an intensive course was given at Bogota, for Colombian economists and Government officials.

/8. The implementation

8. The implementation of the Central American Economic Integration Programme has proceeded along practical lines. The Third Meeting of the Committee on Economic Co-operation in Central America was held at Managua, Nicaragua, from 23 to 29 January 1956. The ad hoc Committee set up to draft a multilateral treaty on free trade and economic integration in Central America met at Mexico City from 19 to 24 March 1956.
9. Preparations have continued for the Latin American Meeting of Experts on Steel Making and Transforming Industries, to be held at São Paulo, Brazil, from 15 to 28 October 1956.
10. The FAO/TAA/ECLA Pulp and Paper Advisory Group has completed its preliminary report on this industry in Argentina and is finishing another relating to Chile.
11. Under the Joint ECLA/FAO Programme, further progress has been made in studies on coffee, problems of the stockbreeding industry and agricultural prices.
12. Of the various studies presented at the sixth session, the following have been duly revised and sent to press: A Study of Inter-Latin-American Trade (E/CN.12/369/Rev.1); The Economic Development of Brazil (E/CN.12/364/Rev.1). The technical and statistical revision of the study on the economic development of Colombia is also well advanced.
13. A group of foreign trade experts is visiting several South American countries to make preparations for the first meeting of the Trade Committee, which will be held at Santiago, Chile, in September 1956.
14. The secretariat has had the benefit of the fullest co-operation from the specialized agencies and other international organizations. (See Part II of this report.) Contact has also been maintained with Technical Assistance Administration and with the other regional economic commissions with respect to all subjects of common interest in the various studies.

ECONOMIC SURVEY

- a) Economic Survey of Latin America, 1955 (E/CN.12/421)

15. Like its predecessors, the Economic Survey of Latin America, 1955 deals with recent trends in the gross product, national income and the availability
/of goods

of goods and services. It also examines the economic growth of the Latin American countries, not only as a whole, but also by sectors such as foreign trade, industry, energy and agriculture.

16. A new and important feature of the 1955 Survey is the analysis of fiscal revenue and expenditure in the post-war years, envisaged from the standpoint of the programming of economic development.

17. A limited number of copies of the Survey will be distributed before the Fifth Committee of the Whole Meeting. The final edition will be published as soon as the critical revision now in process has been completed.

b) Economic Bulletin for Latin America

18. Following the distribution of a special issue in August 1955, on the occasion of the Commission's sixth session, the first number in the regular series of the Economic Bulletin for Latin America was published in January 1956. This meets the Commission's desire for a periodic review of the principal economic events intended to supplement and bring up to date the information in the annual economic surveys.

19. The current issue includes an examination of Latin America's economic situation during 1955 in the foreign trade, agricultural and industrial sectors; special articles are also devoted to the most problem and to recent export and price trends for selected products. With regard to specifically national problems, three separate articles analyse the situation in Argentina and the newly-initiated economic policy, some aspects of Chile's inflationary process and the disequilibrium in Colombia's balance of payments.

ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

20. In accordance with the resolutions on this subject adopted by the Commission at its fifth and sixth sessions, the secretariat has continued its work on development problems and the application of the technique of programming to the specific needs of the Latin American countries.

a) Study on the economic development of Argentina

21. In response to the request submitted by the Argentine Government, the United Nations has organized a group of experts to collaborate with the local authorities in studying the fundamental problems of Argentina's economic development.

/22. This group,

22. This group, headed by the Executive Secretary, comprises officials of the Commission and of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, as well as experts from Technical Assistance Administration, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Inter-American Institute for Agricultural Science. Other specialized agencies may also co-operate in this project.

b) Study on the economic development of Bolivia

23. Together with TAA, and in collaboration with FAO and UNESCO's Andean Mission, the secretariat has, at the request of the Government, undertaken a study on Bolivia's economic development problems, for presentation to the seventh session.

24. The work programme embraces the analysis of Bolivia's current problems and of the basic elements of its economy, together with the presentation of alternative hypotheses of growth as a step towards the preparation of general projections for investment, foreign capital requirements, import replacement, distribution of man-power, etc. With regard to agriculture, mining, energy, industry and transport, an examination will be made of the economic and social problems that must be solved in order to achieve an adequate rate of growth, and projections will be worked out for each sector. Finally, the inflationary situation and the fiscal and exchange systems will be studied from the standpoint of economic development.

c) The economic development of Brazil (E/CN.12/364)

25. Revision of the study on the economic development of Brazil presented at the sixth session has been concluded, textual and statistical modifications having been introduced into the original version, in the light of the latest information. The volume sent to press comprises the general section and the special studies presented provisionally in the form of annexes.^{1/} As soon as

^{1/} Documents E/CN.12/364/Add.1 to 6, relating to transport, exports, projection of the demand for fuel, fiscal activities of the public sector, projections of the demand for energy and the coffee problem.

certain statistical work has been completed, a separate study on the possibilities of increasing wheat production will be published.

d) The economic development of Colombia (E/CN.12/365)

26 The study on the economic development of Colombia presented at the sixth session is being completely revised. The new version will take into account the comments and criteria put forward at the round table discussions held in Bogota for the purpose of examining the preliminary document and considering several aspects of Colombia's economic growth. As for its new presentation, each chapter of this first mimeographed version will be divided into two sections, the first analysing the historical process of development and the present situation, and the second presenting the various alternative hypotheses of growth with their corresponding projections. The notes on the methods used and the statistical appendices originally included in the study will be assembled in one general appendix.

e) Study on the economic development of Mexico

27. Work is in progress on the study of certain features of Mexico's economy, particularly those of external origin. As a beginning, statistics are being compiled and studies already published by the local authorities are being analysed. The most important aspects of this research will cover: a) external demand for Mexican exports and prospects for the tourist industry; b) projections of the demand for imports; and c) replacement of imports and the changes in their composition which must take place in order to maintain equilibrium in the balance of payments, in accordance with various hypotheses on the rate of growth.

f) Other studies

28. In compliance with resolution 81 (VI), the secretariat has begun work on the Study of monetary and fiscal policies for programming economic development by compiling the statistics for the period 1945-55. Some of the preliminary findings of this research will be published in the Economic Survey of Latin America, 1955.^{2/}

29. A beginning has also been made by the secretariat and Technical Assistance Administration on the Study of organization and administrative procedures for the planning and execution of economic development programmes.

^{2/} See paragraph 16 above.

A TAA expert has arrived at the Commission's headquarters to embark on the work in collaboration with the Economic Development Division, having previously discussed the details of the research involved with the United Nations Division of Public Administration and with ECLA's Mexico office. A preliminary version of the study will be presented at the Commission's seventh session.

30. A member of the secretariat staff has gone to Costa Rica to serve in an advisory capacity at the Instituto de Planeación Económica, under the terms of the agreement reached with the Government of Costa Rica and the University of San José.

ECLA/TAA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TRAINING PROGRAMME

31. The main objectives of this programme, organized by the Commission and by Technical Assistance Administration, are to acquaint Latin American economists with the methods of analysis prepared by the secretariat and to create a better understanding of the process of economic development and its programming, especially in under-developed countries.

32. The fourth of the regular annual courses was held from April to December 1955. Two trainees came from Argentina, one from Bolivia and four from Chile. In addition, towards the end of the same year an intensive course was given at Bogota, Colombia. Thanks to this division of activities, the benefits of the programme were extended to a considerably larger number of persons than in former years. The success achieved gave rise to a project for a further intensive course to be held in Brazil from September to December 1956, in collaboration with the Banco Nacional do Desenvolvimento Econômico.

33. The work of the participants in the regular course was very closely co-ordinated with that of the secretariat, since half their time was devoted to research on the economic development problems of their respective countries. This work was supplemented with the reading of selected texts, lectures and round table discussions related to the theoretical and practical problems of economic development and of the technique of programming.

34. From 22 September to 2 December 1955, the intensive training course at Bogota, organized by members of the secretariat staff and of Technical Assistance Administration, was attended by over a hundred high-ranking public /officials, economists,

officials, economists, engineers and university students, all of whom were Colombians.

35. One hundred and forty-six lectures were given and round table discussions were held (93 hours in all). The study programme covered the following five main subjects: social accounting, theory and programming of economic development, preparation and evaluation of projects, financing of economic development and administration for development.

36. Besides fulfilling its aim of raising the participants' standard of technical training, the course provided an opportunity for objective discussion of the most important problems of Colombia's economy. The text of the lectures was distributed in mimeographed form to the universities and a number of Government officials.

37. The regular course for 1956 began on 16 April. One of the trainees attending came from Argentina, two from Costa Rica, one from Cuba, two from Chile, one from Haiti, three from Mexico, one from Nicaragua and another from Venezuela.

INDUSTRY STUDIES

a) Iron and steel making and transforming industries

38. The secretariat has proceeded with the preparations for the Latin American Meeting of Experts on Steel Making and Transforming Industries, to be held at São Paulo, Brazil, from 15 to 23 October of the current year, under the joint auspices of the Government of Brazil, the Commission, Technical Assistance Administration and the Associação Brasileira de Metais.

39. The meeting will deal with certain topics related to iron and steel making which were not discussed at the Bogota Meeting of Experts on the Iron and Steel Industry in Latin America^{3/}, and will also study the present status and problems of the region's iron and steel transforming industries.

40. The agenda for the meeting is divided into three parts, as follows:

3/ See A Study of the Steel Industry in Latin America (United Nations publication, Sales N°: 1954.II.C.3). (Volume I was published in both English and Spanish; Volume II in English only.)

/a) problems relating

- a) problems relating to the development of the iron and steel industry in Latin America;
- b) a description of the steel making and transforming industries in selected Latin American countries and of their principal problems; and
- c) iron and steel transforming processes.

Part a) continues the analysis of specific subjects which were discussed at the Bogota Meeting. The main objective of part c) is the systematic investigation of certain technical and economic aspects of selected processes: forging, foundry, metal cutting, etc.

41. The background papers for the Meeting comprise 14 documents to be presented by the secretariat of the Commission and about 60 prepared by experts and technical institutions in various parts of the world. Among those for which the secretariat is responsible are the studies on the iron and steel transforming industries in Brazil, Colombia and Chile.

b) Pulp and paper industry

42. The study Pulp and Paper Prospects in Latin America (E/CN.12/361/Add.1) has gone to press. It contains the report of the Meeting held at Buenos Aires in 1954 and the technical papers presented on that occasion by the experts who took part. Distribution will begin at an early date.

43. The Pulp and Paper Advisory Group was organized recently by experts from ECLA, FAO and TAA, with a view to assisting the Latin American countries in the development of the industries in question. The Group has already completed a preliminary report on the pulp and paper industry in Argentina.

44. A report on the development of this industry in Chile should be ready shortly.

CENTRAL AMERICAN ECONOMIC INTEGRATION PROGRAMME

45. The Committee on Economic Co-operation in Central America held its Third Meeting at Managua, Nicaragua, from 23 to 29 January 1956. The report of this Meeting, and a review of the activities of the Committee and the secretariat between 10 May 1955 (closing date of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Committee convened at San Salvador, El Salvador) and 29 January 1956, are contained in document E/CN.12/AC.34/5, which is one of those presented to the

Fifth Committee of the Whole. As a prefatory note to this document, by the Executive Secretary, also describes the most recent developments in the implementation of the Integration Programme, it seems needless to give further details here.

STUDIES ON AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION

46. The secretariat's work in connexion with the agricultural sector is of two kinds:

- a) projects forming part of the Joint ECLA/FAO Programme, for which the principal regional economist of FAO is directly responsible in his capacity as Chief of the Programme. This programme is discussed on special bases every year, together with the personnel and funds assigned to it by each organization;
- b) the work undertaken independently by the Economic Survey and Economic Development Divisions of the secretariat. Although ECLA assumes the responsibility for the Economic Survey and for studies on development, the Chief of the Joint Programme takes his full share in these tasks at all stages, and is free to make whatever comments, criticisms and suggestions he wishes. The staff of FAO enjoy ready access to all ECLA's information, and attend any meetings in the office of the Executive Secretary or within the Divisions at which agricultural problems are to be discussed.

a) Coffee

47. Progress has been made in the preparatory work for the study on productivity and costs of coffee production in relation to economic development, referred to in resolutions 63 (V) and 90 (VI). This joint ECLA/FAO project, which will cover the main coffee-producing countries in Latin America, aims at determining: first, productivity of labour and capital under different conditions and with different methods of production and processing; secondly, production trends, on the basis of the number and age distribution of the trees; and, thirdly, the effects of coffee production on the economic development of the producer countries.

48. The preliminary report on the survey carried out in El Salvador is undergoing statistical revision. Meanwhile the group of experts sent to

/Colombia in

Colombia in March 1956 has begun its field work, which will continue for several months. Moreover, members of the staff of ECLA's Mexico office and an FAO expert are about to begin the study of coffee production in that country by compiling the statistical material required.

b) Livestock production

49. In view of the slow advance of livestock production and the considerable decline in per capita consumption recorded in several Latin American countries, the Commission in its resolution 91 (VI) recommended that the secretariat study the technical and economic factors affecting production, as well as the possibilities and prospects for its development, and the measures that should be adopted to encourage production and raise consumption of animal products to satisfactory levels.^{4/}

50. In consultation with FAO, it was agreed to pursue the study in seven countries which exemplify the various ecological and economic conditions under which livestock production is carried on in Latin America. The section on Argentina will be included in the report of the United Nations Mission which is to study that country's economic development. The Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Science at Turrialba, Costa Rica, which is a dependency of the Organization of American States, will collaborate in this part of the work.

51. In Chile, statistical information is being compiled so that field work can begin next June. Here the co-operation of experts from the United States Point Four Programme will be available, as well as that of the FAO experts in charge of technical assistance to the Chilean Government. Similar studies will be undertaken during the second half of 1956 in Uruguay, and later on in other countries.

c) Prices

52. The great importance of price levels and trends for the promotion of agricultural activities and for the over-all process of economic development is the basis of a joint ECLA/FAO project involving an analysis of the aims and techniques of price policies in the various individual countries and an evaluation of their effect on the production, consumption and trading of

^{4/} For a general picture of production, consumption and exports under this head, see "The meat problem in Latin America", Economic Bulletin for Latin America, Volume I, N° 1, pages 58-69.

agricultural products.

53. The study of the results achieved in certain countries through the application of specific measures to agricultural prices - with respect to both the domestic market and exports - may assist governments in the formulation of their own plans.

54. Preliminary research in the various countries covered by the project has already been completed, and the relevant report will be ready by the end of the current year.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND FINANCE

55. The comments and criticisms called forth by the Study of Inter-Latin-American Trade (E/CN.12/369), of which the preliminary version was submitted for consideration to the sixth session, have been embodied in a final text which has now gone to press and will be distributed before the first meeting of the Trade Committee.

56. In preparation for the practical work of this Committee, whose constitution was recommended in resolution 101 (VI), the secretariat has formed a group of three foreign trade experts who will visit those South American countries most closely linked with regional trade. The task of these specialists will be to examine the problems hampering inter-Latin-American commerce, to propose specific solutions - particularly as regards the system of payments - and to collect indications of the best means of encouraging multilateral trade. The group has already completed its consultations with the Chilean authorities and private organizations, and has gone to Argentina, whence it will later proceed to other South American countries.

57. The information gathered by the experts and the background documents prepared by the secretariat will be presented at the Committee's first session, which will be held in Santiago, Chile, in September of the current year. The Committee will be primarily concerned with drawing up specific proposals aimed at the expansion of trade, preparing the ground for trade negotiations and, in short, encouraging, by all the means at its command, the creation of a policy for the development of inter-Latin-American trade which will not conflict with the expansion of trade between Latin America and the rest of the world.

ENERGY PROGRAMME

58. The preliminary version of the study on Development of energy production and utilization in Latin America - possibilities and problems (E/CN.12/384), which was submitted for consideration at the sixth session, is being revised so that recent statistical data and the critical comments received can be incorporated into the final edition.

59. The secretariat has begun work on the various projects arising out of resolution 99 (VI) on energy problems in Latin America. Consultations are being held on such aspects of this resolution as call for the co-operation of Technical Assistance Administration, the United Nations Economic and Social Department and other international organizations, with a view to establishing the best way of putting the recommendations of the Commission into effect.

60. Within the framework of the study on the economic development of Argentina, experts from the secretariat and Technical Assistance Administration have begun to analyse problems connected with energy production and distribution in that country. This work will form part of the study on efficiency in production and utilization of the various forms of energy which was recommended by the Commission, and which will be undertaken subsequently in other countries, if the results achieved in Argentina warrant such a step.

61. Together with the group that is to study Bolivia's economic development possibilities, secretariat and TAA experts will visit the country to assess its hydro-electric resources and other sources of energy - particularly those derived from petroleum - as well as its energy requirements. For purposes of this appraisal, projections for the different sectors - mining, industry and agriculture - will be duly taken into account.

62. In accordance with paragraph f) of the above-mentioned resolution 99 (VI), an outline is being prepared for the study on multiple water resources utilization in Latin America. Experts from the secretariat, Technical Assistance Administration, the World Meteorological Organization and possibly other international organizations will participate in the project. The aims of the study are to collect, evaluate and define lacunae in the statistics and data available, and to assist governments in formulating their programmes for the utilization of hydraulic resources. The Government of France has offered

/the services

the services of a water-power expert to collaborate in this study for one year.

OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION

a) Technical Assistance

63. The report presented by Technical Assistance Administration (E/CN.12/AC.34/4) to the Fifth Committee of the Whole refers, inter alia, to the provisional decentralization of the regional activities of United Nations technical assistance. It is therefore needless to allude here to the part to be played by the ECLA secretariat in such activities, in accordance with the arrangements approved by the General Assembly and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

b) Social aspects of economic development

64. In a number of resolutions, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and some of its subsidiary organs have expressed their recognition of the interdependence and indivisibility of the economic and social components of development. These resolutions have been brought to the attention of the Commission. Furthermore, the Commission's views, as expressed in its resolution 82 (VI), explicitly corroborate their content.

65. The limited scope of the activities so far undertaken by the Commission in the housing, migration, man-power and other specific social fields has enabled the secretariat to carry them out with only temporary assistance. However, the recommendations contained in resolutions 82 and 83 (VI) of the Commission, the increasing need for regional studies in connexion with some of the major projects of the Economic and Social Council in the social field (e.g. the Study of Urbanization or the International Survey of Programmes of Social Development); and, finally, the broadening of the area covered by the programme of advisory social welfare services in the Latin American region, have made it necessary to strengthen the secretariat's staff and to create a unit exclusively devoted to such purposes. The detailing to ECLA by the Secretary-General of members of the social affairs staff of Headquarters, under the re-organization plan approved by the General Assembly in 1954, has enabled such a unit to be established within existing budgetary provisions. As the members of the Committee will recall, the proposal of the Secretary-General

/was noted

was noted with satisfaction at its last session.^{5/}

66. The responsibilities of this unit include the preparation of contributions on social aspects of economic problems for studies and reports comprised in the work programme of the Commission, and studies on related subjects. At the same time, the work of the unit in connexion with the regional aspects of certain projects contained in the Social Commission's work programme, as approved by the Economic and Social Council, forms an integral part of that undertaken by the Bureau of Social Affairs. The unit will also collaborate in technical assistance projects in the social field.

Part II - RELATIONS WITH SPECIALIZED AGENCIES
AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

A. Introduction

67. The secretariat of the Commission has continued to maintain close contact with the specialized agencies and other organizations. This has permitted increasingly effective co-ordination of the secretariat's work with that of other international organizations on Latin American problems of common interest, by means of frequent consultations and the exchange of information and specialized personnel.

68. In various aspects of the Central American Economic Integration Programme where technical assistance has been required, ECLA has enjoyed the continued co-operation of the International Labour Organisation, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

B. Specialized agencies

Food and Agriculture Organization

69. At the beginning of this year an exchange of correspondence put the finishing touches to the agreement signed by ECLA and FAO in 1954 on the Joint Programme of these two organizations. Furthermore, the Executive Secretary and the chief regional economist of FAO in Latin America have agreed

^{5/} Resolution 82 (VI).

/upon the

upon the details of FAO's participation in the United Nations study on the economic development of Argentina.^{6/}

World Meteorological Organization

70. As a result of consultations with the World Meteorological Organization, this agency is to participate in the study on utilization of multiple water resources which is about to be undertaken in collaboration with Technical Assistance Administration.

C. Inter-American Economic and Social Council

71. The Co-ordinating Committee of the secretariats of ECLA and the Inter-American Economic and Social Council met in Washington on 20 and 21 December 1955 to review those projects of both organizations where it is felt desirable to establish co-operation and exchange of information, and especially the new work projects which arose out of the Commission's sixth session. The Joint Report of the Committee (E/CN.12/AC.34/6) is submitted to the Fifth Committee of the Whole for consideration. . It examines the progress achieved in co-ordination at secretariat level to avoid the duplication of studies and projects affected by co-ordination arrangements, namely: improvement of statistical data, Latin American statistical training centres, maritime statistics, Central American trade and customs problems, inter-Latin-American trade, maritime transport, studies on agricultural products, programming of economic development, social factors influencing economic development and the financing of housing.

^{6/} For the different activities in which ECLA and FAO have collaborated, see paragraphs 22, 23, 46, 47, 48, 50, 51 and 52 above.

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