UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

LIMITED

E/LACCY/NR/L.8-Resumé
September, 1965

ORIGINAL: SPANISH

LATIN AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Jointly sponsored by the Economic Commission for Latin America, the Latin American Institute for Economic and Social Planning, and the United Nations Children's Fund, in co-operation with the International Labour Organisation, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and the World Health Organization

Santiago, Chile, 28 November to 11 December, 1965

SUMMARY

of

the Report Prepared by the Government of El Salvador

Introduction

El Salvador has a total area of 20 000 Kms. sq. Its climate is, in the main, tropical. The 1961 census shows a total population of 2 511 000 inhabitants, population density being on the average 126 per Sq. Km. though density differs considerably in different parts of the country. There is considerable floating population caused by rural migrations following the coffee harvest. At least 62 per cent of the population is rural, and in many small towns rural ways of life still prevail. There has been considerable migration of rural population to San Salvador, creating serious health and housing problems. The average age of the population is low, 52 per cent being under 19 years of age. Only 31 per cent of the population is economically active, of which 20 per cent is constituted by the 10-19 years age group (1961 census), and the greater part works in agriculture. Population growth had reached 3.1 per cent in 1963. The average per capita income is US$ 268.00 per annum, but, in fact, many families have an annual income not greater than US$ 60.00.

/Social Welfare

Social Welfare

This is both governmental and private (welfare associations and religious organizations), the latter receiving state subsidies. Though private organizations provide valuable services they act independently from government programs to the detriment of general social planning. Government departments active in social aid to children and youth also work independently of one another thus causing duplication.

Services provided are:

Day nurseries for children under 7 years. Thirtyfive nurseries care for an average 3 000 children daily.

Children's homes for orphans, abandoned or destitute children. There are 12 such establishments in the country which not only house the children until the age of 18 but also provide education and a trade. The system has the ususal disadvantages.

Scholarships.

These go from scholarships for attendance at private schools to preventative and readaptation scholarships of corrective nature granted upon Court applications. There are also apprenticeship scholarships for young workers attending night school.

Physical and mental rehabilitation for handicapped children.

Complementary programs including the distribution of food and clothing and the services of organizations such as Rotary, Lions international, Junior Chambers of Commerce, etc.

Health.-

The state provides free public health services through the Ministry of Public Health. Other state agencies, autonomous institutions and private organizations collaborate with the Ministry.

The 10-year Public Health plan prepared with WHO technical assistance was initiated in January 1964. The plan pointed out the following facts:

73 per cent of dwellings lack running water
74 per cent of dwellings lack a sewage disposal system
59 per cent of deaths are in the age group under 19 years due to diseases of the digestive tract, acute respiratory diseases and accidents.

/Malnutrition is

Malnutrition is acute being one of the main causes of disease under the age of 15. To solve the problem the Government has prepared some programs with collaboration of FAO, the PanAmerican Health Bureau and INCAP, The Coordinated Pilot Program of nutrition is under way.

Free hospitals have 5.604 beds (2.11 bed per 1 000 inhabitants). There are 703 beds for children under 12 years and a children's hospital with 450 beds is nearing completion.

The mortality rate was 1.12 per cent according to the 1961 census

The same census showed a 7 per cent infant mortality rate.

Education.-

The country's educational system comprises 4 levels:

Preschool or nursery level for children 4 to 6 years of age. Such schools only exist in urban areas.

Primary or elementary schools provide six years schooling, normally for children from 7 to 12 years.

Secondary schools provide, on the average 5 years schooling, normally from students from 13 to 17 years. This comprises two cycles - the first, lasting three years, and the second, which may lead to higher education at the University, or which may lead to normal school, or train technicians, accountants, etc.

Higher education - this is provided by the University, which is autonomous and by State-run institutions.

The system in general lacks co-ordination.

There is a high degree of illiteracy - in 1961 only 48 per cent of the population over 10 years of age could read and write.

Though there is some improvement in school registration it is still low (47 per cent of school age children in 1961), particularly in rural areas where facilities are poorer than in the towns.

In 1962 there were 3 138 educational establishments in the country, this figure including all levels of education.

The private sector is active in education, particularly with regard to technical and normal (teacher's) training.

The highest proportion of the national budget is allocated to education - over 20 per cent - 50 864 000 colones being the 1964 budget for education (This is 2.65 per cent of the G.N.P.)

/Housing.

Housing.-

There is a serious housing deficit. Between 1950 and 1961 urban population increased by 44.7 per cent and dwellings by 40.6 per cent.

Very low income level families live in shacks and slums, one room to a family. Poor ventilation, dirt floors, no water, electricity or sanitation are typical of such dwellings.

Few people live in their own homes, and there are a few facilities for members of low-income groups to become property owners.

The Instituto de Vivienda Urbana has been granted an IDB loan to put up 5 000 dwellings between 1963-64.

Rural dwellings also present problems, though no specific studies thereof have been made.

Legislation.-

The Constitution itself and other laws have provisions for the protection of the family, motherhood and youth.

Though legislation is advanced it is not always complied with, and the new Penal Code is to have a chapter covering such offenses. There are also other draft bills in preparation for the solution of many problems.

Labour legislation for the protection of minors (under 18 in Salvador) and women is also advanced.

There is no special legislation for the treatment of juvenile delinquents, though the Constitution so orders. At present, when convicted, juvenile delinquents are sent to the same prisons as adult offenders, though they are kept separate. There are some readaptation centres.

Plan for Economic and Social Development 1965-1969.

In general it is designed to attain an annual 5.6 per cent rate of growth of the GNP. It plans to increase domestic demand and to make better use of the demand created by the Central American Common Market. Economic activity is to be diversified and industry is to be stimulated, leading to import substitution.

The plan emphasizes social development and almost 50 per cent of public investment under the plan is devoted to projects for social progress. Education, public health, housing and pure drinking water are given high priority.

/Housing.

Housing.-

The housing plan comprises the construction of 34 600 urban dwellings (25 000 to be built by the public sector and 9 600 by the private sector). The total public investment in urban housing is to be 141.4 million colones. There is also a program for the construction of 15 000 rural dwellings on a self-help basis, with a total public investment of 20 million colones. It is estimated that the 9 600 dwellings to be built by the private sector will cost 250 million colones.

It is estimated that from 1969 onward the annual housing shortage due to population growth will be covered, thus allowing for reduction of backlog deficit, replacement of housing etc.

The housing to be financed by the public sector includes the self-construction system.

Preference is to be given to housing in developing industrial areas.

Education.-

The total education program included in the Development Plan means an investment of 60.9 million colones for the five year period, of which 25.3 million are to go to primary education, 17.5 million to University expansion, 10.5 million to academic-type secondary education and the balance for vocational training and the Community Development Programs of the Brigadas de Educación Fundamental.

At the primary-school level the objective is 100 per cent registration of 7 years olds by 1969.

In general, increased registration at all levels is planned, and the necessary physical facilities are to be provided.

Vocational training is to be expanded to provide the skilled personnel necessary for an expanding industry and progressive agriculture.

The University is to be enlarged and special emphasis is to be given to biological, physical and mathematical sciences.

It is realized that the full impact of the plan will be felt after the first five year plan is completed, so preparations are already in hand to satisfy the educational demand which is expected to arise after 1969.

Health.-

The health plan is directed to the reduction of the incidence and prevalence of diseases and accidents and of the deaths due to them.

/The plan

The plan includes facilities for preventative treatment and hospitalization. New out-patient clinics providing medical care are to be built in 42 areas, thus increasing the number to 110. This will not only enlarge the area having such facilities, but also extend it from 1 000 000 consultations to 1 700 000 per annum.

The number of hospital beds is to be increased to 6 245 by the construction of new hospitals under the direct control of the Ministry of Public Health and Welfare. It is also planned to increase the availability of hospitalization by shortening hospitalization periods. Most of the new hospital facilities are to be built in the Para-Central and Eastern regions of the country which at present need them most.

Small-pox vaccinations are to be increased as well as innoculations against whooping cough (pertussis), tetanus, diphtheria, tuberculosis and leprosy. For the first three diseases an annual minimum of 147 000 innoculations is the goal. Against tuberculosis, the present rate of 195 000 innoculations, protecting 12 per cent of the population under 20 years of age is to be maintained. Special emphasis is to be given to tetanus innocuations of pregnant women, with an annual average of 80 000 tetanus innoculations being given.

The health plan also includes visiting nurses for families having children under five, particularly. The goal is to visit 180 000 families per year.

Sanitary inspectors are to visit homes, markets, acqueducts and other sources of contamination. Their activity is to be largely directed to the control of Diarrhoea and gastroenteritis.

In collaboration with Caritas there is to be a Supplementary Nutrition program providing skim milk to children under 5 and in the first and second grades of the elementary schools.

Health personnel including hospital administrators, nurses, aides, statisticians, epidemiologists, physicians, dietitians, hospital technologists, dentists, sanitary engineers and inspectors and social workers, are to be trained under the health plan.

Priority is to be given to the construction of hospitals and health posts for areas more than two hours distant from hospitals; old hospitals are to be remodelled.

The total investment in health in the five year period is estimated at 30 900 000 colones.

/ Acqueducts and

Acqueducts and Sewage Disposal.-

A. Both urban and rural acqueducts are to be built for supplying drinking water. The total urban investment is estimated at 17 236 000 colones for which some long term financing from IDB is expected. Total investment in rural acqueducts is estimated at 12 235 000 colones; some long term IDB financing is also expected for this purpose. The objective is to increase drinking water supply to the extent that by 1969 only 67 000 urban and 1 352 000 rural dwellers shall lack such facilities.

B. Sewage. At present 509 000 people lack such a facility; it is expected to reduce that figure to 481 000 by 1969 with a total investment of 7 529 000 colones, for part of which long term IDB financing is expected.

Community Development.-

The program on Community development is directed to the all-over development of rural families having regard to education, hygiene, working capacity, development of skills and cooperation. Varied government departments and agencies will co-operate in the program.

It has been proposed that a regional centre be created in El Salvador for training middle level technicians, which would be partially supported by OAS and which would serve the whole of Central America.