

WORLD HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

ORGANISATION MONDIALE
DE LA SANTÉ

ONCHOCERCIASIS CONTROL PROGRAMME
IN THE VOLTA RIVER BASIN AREA

NATIONAL ONCHOCERCIASIS COMMITTEES

Seventh meeting

Lomé, 7-9 June 1983

NOC7/3

INTRODUCTORY PAPER ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
IN THE ONCHOCERCIASIS CONTROL PROGRAMME AREA (OCP)

INTRODUCTORY PAPER ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
IN THE ONCHOCERCIASIS CONTROL PROGRAMME AREA (OCP)

During the 7th meeting of the National Onchocerciasis Committees (NOCs), discussions related to the socio-economic development in the Programme area will cover essentially two points:

- I. The preparation of socio-economic reports by the Participating countries.
- II. The form of collaboration to be established between the Economic Development Unit of OCP and the national officers in charge of planning of the development of lands freed of onchocerciasis.

I. The preparation of socio-economic report by the Participating countries

It should be recalled that it was during the 5th meeting of the NOCs, held in Niamey, that it was decided to prepare socio-economic reports biennially, three countries doing so in a year followed by the four others the next year.

Thus, in December 1982 in Bamako, the Joint Programme Committee (JPC) had the occasion to examine the reports prepared by Benin, Ghana and Mali and congratulated the countries concerned for the quality of the reports. It appreciated, particularly, the maps and sketches annexed to the reports.

Recognizing the human resources available to the national units one can only be pleased with the result achieved. Improvements are of course still possible.

As regards the 1983 reports, the ECO Unit sent the model for preparation of reports to the four countries concerned in December 1982. Later a mission composed of two members of the Unit visited each of these countries to discuss the progress of the report and to offer their services where needed.

The 7th meeting of the NOCs will have the occasion to examine the first drafts of the 1983 socio-economic development reports and appreciate the progress made in the elaboration of these documents which are of particular importance because they are a concrete testimony of the commitment of Participating countries to the achievement of the final objective of the Programme which is the effective development of lands and rivers freed of onchocerciasis.

II. Collaboration between the Economic Development Unit and the national units in charge of the development of the OCP areas

Apart from contacts established with the Participating countries for the preparation of the socio-economic report of the OCP area, the Economic Development Unit and the national planning units must collaborate in order to stimulate further the development of lands freed from onchocerciasis.

Even though the Participating countries are entirely responsible for the development activities in their respective zones and each of them has already started development projects on the basis of national priorities, OCP feels concerned with the problem. The Economic Development Unit would like therefore to contribute as much as possible, in close collaboration with these Participating countries, to the acceleration of the process of development of freed lands. In order to do this, many kinds of collaboration between ECO Unit and the National Services can be explored.

1) The ECO Unit could serve as a meeting place for the national officers for discussions and exchange of experiences on problems of common interest. The Unit could, for this purpose, organize a round-table conference on specific subjects, training seminars, or study trips to project sites within the Programme area.

2) If after a general meeting the officers in charge of National Units decided on an action ECO Unit could act as the tool for execution of such an action of common interest, defining the terms of reference of studies, for financial and personnel resources as well as collection, analysis and dissemination of information of interest to all national Units.

3) Within the framework of the establishment of socio-economic data banks in the countries as well as in OCP, ECO Unit could help in the setting up of a mutual network of complementary data banks. It could also constitute, at its level, a range of specialized information on settlement projects (from the African Region and the world), on development projects in sparsely populated areas or on any type of project which is of particular interest to the onchocerciasis freed areas.

4) Because of the competence of its personnel on one hand, and its contacts with the international and regional technical assistance agencies on the other hand, ECO Unit could serve as an adviser and intermediary towards helping national units in their effort to plan development, especially the preparation of pilot projects in their respective areas.

5) If the international context permits it and if the national units have sufficient project files, the Unit could make use of the relations established within OCP to organize a joint meeting, even informal, between donors and national units on concrete projects for the development of onchocerciasis-freed lands.

6) It is likely that for its own needs OCP would have to undertake socio-economic studies at the regional level, in which case the Unit would need the collaboration of National Units. This could constitute a new source of rich experience for the national personnel involved.

These six points are obviously not exhaustive. It would be desirable for the responsible national officers to come out with their views on these points during this meeting of NOCs and propose others in order to give reality to the contribution of ECO Unit in the process of development of onchocerciasis-freed areas.

The floor is therefore open for discussions.