

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



LIMITED
E/ICEF/L.972
24 September 1956
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND
Programme Committee

Recommendation of the Executive Director for an Allocation
AFRICA AREA
Tuberculosis Survey Teams for East and West Africa

1. The Administration recommends an allocation of \$13,000 to provide equipment and supplies, and funds to cover laboratory examination costs for continuation during 1957 of the tuberculosis survey of East and West Africa, for which \$30,000 ^{a/} was provided in an earlier allocation (E/ICEF/L.746 and Corr. 1).
2. Following the Board's approval of this survey in March 1955, two teams of WHO personnel, each consisting of a medical officer, two nurses and a laboratory technician, started field work in September, 1955. They have now completed surveys in three territories of East Africa and in two regions of Nigeria. It is planned that in the balance of 1956 and during 1957 the teams will visit six territories in East Africa, and Liberia, the third region of Nigeria and three other territories in West Africa.
3. In the first year of the survey, the teams have examined 25,700 persons in 25 villages and urban areas, including 79 organized groups and four hospitals. The survey method includes the carrying out of tuberculin sensitivity tests and the collection of sputum samples which are examined by direct microscopy in the field or sent to a European laboratory for culture. A limited survey has been made in Nigeria of tuberculin sensitivity in cattle and goats.

^{a/} The allocation of \$230,000 originally approved by the Board was later reduced to \$30,000 when WHO assumed responsibility to cover the costs of the technical personnel assigned to the two teams.

4. The East Africa team has completed surveys of Bechuanaland, British Somaliland and Somaliland under Italian administration, while the West African team has completed its survey of the Eastern and Northern Regions of Nigeria. Funds are available under the earlier allocation for continuation of the survey and evaluation of the results to the end of 1956.

Preliminary results of the survey

5. Although it is too early to present detailed results of the work done by the two teams, some rough preliminary indications regarding tuberculosis in the territories visited so far are set out below.

6. In British Somaliland, Somaliland under Italian administration, Nigeria and Bechuanaland, the proportion of persons infected with tubercle bacilli, as indicated by the tuberculin test, is very high indeed. Generally speaking 50 per cent of the 10 year old children in the examined groups were infected, and at about 20 years of age the percentage of reactors to tuberculin came close to 100 per cent.

7. The results from the bacteriological examinations will still have to be judged with great caution, and further investigations will be necessary. In five villages and one town examined in Nigeria altogether three sputa with acid-fast bacilli were found, giving an overall proportion of sputum positive among those examined of less than one in a thousand. In contrast to this finding, 3 per cent of those examined in the town of Berbera and 1.5 per cent of those in Burao town in British Somaliland gave sputa containing acid-fast bacilli. The corresponding finding in the first village examined in Bechuanaland (further results from this territory are not available yet) was 1.5 per cent.

8. It must be emphasized that it would be premature to draw any conclusions regarding tuberculosis as a public health problem in these African territories on the basis of the above preliminary indications. The collected data have not yet been finally analyzed.

/Plan of work for 1957

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9. The Governments of the following countries and territories have officially requested UNICEF and WHO to assist in carrying out tuberculosis surveys:

<u>West Africa</u>	<u>East Africa</u>
Western Region of Nigeria	Basutoland
Gold Coast	Swaziland
Liberia	Tanganyika
Sierre Leone	Uganda
Gambia	Kenya
	Zanzibar

It is planned that the two teams will visit these territories, or as many of them as possible, during the last quarter of 1956 and 1957. The sequence of visits will be determined by the WHO Regional Office for Africa in consultation with the Governments concerned.

UNICEF commitments

10. UNICEF would provide for the work of the survey teams in 1957 the following:

	<u>US\$</u>
a) Miscellaneous laboratory supplies	850
b) Supplies for handling sputum samples	650
c) Cost of 5,000 laboratory examinations by culture in <u>Statens Seruminstitut</u> , 7,500 Copenhagen	7,500
d) Air freight of sputum samples to Copenhagen	1,500
e) Contingency	<u>2,500</u>
Total recommended allocation	<u>\$13,000</u>

WHO approval and commitments

11. The continuation of this survey has the technical approval of the WHO which will continue to be responsible for the detailed planning and execution of the project and for the analysis of the data collected and of the results of the survey.

/12. WHO will continue

12. WHO will continue to budget for the salaries and related costs of the technical personnel assigned to the two teams.

Commitments of the countries and territories surveyed

13. The Africa tuberculosis survey is an inter-regional effort designed for the benefit of a number of countries and territories. Governments will assist the survey by providing such items as the following within the limit of their possibilities:

- a) Personnel - one full-time medical officer, two nurses or orderlies, one secretary, one statistical clerk, drivers, and any other auxiliary personnel which may be required for the purpose of the survey;
- b) Premises - a suitable central office and equipment and facilities for cold storage of tuberculin and vaccine, other supplies and facilities as may be locally available and necessary;
- c) Fuel, lubricants and maintenance of the UNICEF vehicles; and in some cases transportation of personnel, equipment and supplies within the country.