



Economic and Social Council

Distr.
LIMITED

E/CONF.74/L.65
23 August 1982

ENGLISH ONLY

Fourth United Nations Conference on the
Standardization of Geographical Names
Geneva, 24 August to 14 September 1982
Item 6 (b) of the provisional agenda *

TOPONYMIC EDUCATION AND PRACTICE:
REPORT ON PILOT TRAINING COURSES

Report on the Pilot Training Course in
Toponymy held in Cisarua, Indonesia **

Paper presented by the Working Group
on Training Courses in Toponymy of the
United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names

* E/CONF.74/L.1

** Prepared by Prof. F. J. Ormeling, Convenor of the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, Lonneker, Netherlands.

Introduction

A Pilot training course in Toponymy was held in Cisarua, Indonesia from 7 to 18 June 1982. The course was organized under the aegis of the UN Cartography Section, Department of Technical Co-operation for Development. It was organized by the National Co-ordination Agency for Surveys and Mapping (BAKOSURTANAL) in Indonesia in close co-operation with the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy of the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN).

A complete report of the course will be presented by the host country, Indonesia to the 4th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names. In order to avoid duplication, the following report will, after some background information, mainly concentrate upon the preparation of the course and further present some recommendations for future courses.

Background Information

The desirability of organizing training courses in toponymy, particularly in field collection and office treatment of names, has been repeatedly expressed by the various UN Regional Cartographic Conferences, the UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names as well as by the UNGEGN during its biennial meetings. As aerial photographs and satellite imagery do not contain geographical names, a new type of surveyors has to go into the field to collect and check them. For senior officers involved in mapping, introductory courses into the complex matter of geographical names standardization are considered the most suitable method to bring out and emphasize the importance and problems of field collection.

In 1975 the UNGEGN established a special Working Group on Training Courses which was charged to draft a course programme, to recruit an international team of experts willing to co-operate as lecturers and to find a host country willing to sponsor a pilot training course to collect experience on the matter.

Despite repeated attempts, the UNGEGN had to wait until 1979 for a host country to present itself. It was Indonesia, involved in a huge mapping programme and as such, fully sensitized to the importance of geographical name standardization that, through Professor J. Rais, offered to host the training course at the 8th UNGEGN Session in 1979.

Preparation of the Course

In preparing the course the Indonesian National Co-ordination Agency for Surveys and Mapping (BAKOSURTANAL) organizing committee under Colonel Oemarioto took care of the local organization (accommodation of participants, transport, class room facilities, technical visits, field work, etc.) while the course programme, time table and recruitment of lecturers became the responsibility of the UNGEGN Working Group on training courses under its convenor, Prof. Ormeling.

In September 1981 the two parties met for a final discussion in Jakarta. All further contacts were realised by correspondence, telex etc. Prof. Ormeling worked in close contact with Dr. M. de Henseler, Chief, UN Cartography Section, New York and with Professor Breu, Chairman of the UNGEGN, Vienna. The UN, under whose umbrella the training course originated, gave its moral support by inviting the international experts as lecturers by a special letter to UN member countries, signed by the UN Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Bi Jilong of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development.

The course being primarily intended for participants from the UNGEGN Division of Asia South-East and Pacific South-West, invitations to participate were primarily sent out by the host country and in co-operation with the convenor of the Working Group on Training Courses in Toponymy of the UNGEGN.

Needless to say that the preparation which took place between Jakarta, Enschede (Netherlands), New York and Vienna suffered considerable delays. Twice the course had to be postponed until finally the second and third week of June 1982 were decided upon.

The main problem which the organizers had to face was the funding of the course, particularly of the air fare and subsistence of the international lecturers. The problem became even more acute as only a few UN member states positively reacted to the UN Under-Secretary-General's invitation. It was in this critical phase that the host country, Indonesia, presented the solution by offering financial aid out of World Bank loans for mapping projects.

The last obstacle had to be overcome when Prof. Breu, chairman of the UNGEGN and also a keynote lecturer of the course had to cancel participation because of physical inconvenience. Fortunately, Mr. H.A.G. Lewis, Chairman of the Permanent Committee on Geographical Names for British Official Use and member of the UNGEGN since its foundation, was found willing to replace Prof. Breu at short notice.

Eventually, on 6 June the following lecturers gathered in Cisarua, a mountain resort (alt. 700 m), near the Puncak Pass in West Java, where the course was to be held: 1. R. Böhme (FRG), representative of Dr. de Henseler, Chief, UN Cartography Section, 2. D.P. Blok (Netherlands), 3. E. Földi (Hungary), 4. H.A.G. Lewis (U.K.), 5. F.J. Ormeling (Netherlands), 6. D. Pearce (Australia), 7. J. Rais (Indonesia), 8. I. Made Sandy (Indonesia) and A. Taylor (U.S.A.). On 7 June the course was formally opened by Asmoro Pranoto, Chairman of BAKOSURTANAL. In all, 29 participants, representing various agencies involved in mapping attended the course. Among the participants apart from the host country Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines and Thailand were represented.

Programme of the Course

In preparing the course, the organizers followed the programme drafted by the UNGEGN Working Group on Training, as agreed upon at the 6th UNGEGN Session in 1975. The programme consisted of two parts: 1. a series of lectures serving as an introduction to the complex matter of geographical names standardization, 2. a series of field trips in the Lawiliang region west of Cisarua, during which the participants were exposed to actual field collection of names. The area for field work was carefully selected by the Indonesian Organizing Committee, offered an interesting variety of topographic, hydrographic and cultural details. Its location in the Sundanese speaking part of Java presented an extra difficulty which was solved by assigning Sundanese-speaking Indonesians

to each field party. The field collection was carried out on the basis of blank topo sheets 1:50,000 compiled and printed for the occasion by BAKOSURTANAL.

Ample time was reserved for discussion. In the evenings participants used to gather to summarize their experience and compare their field work results. Social tours and technical visits were considered a welcome change from the tight programme.

Recommendations for the host country

At the closing session of the training course participants and lecturers joined in a written recommendation to BAKOSURTANAL to promote the establishment of a National Names Authority in accordance with the recommendations of the UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names. It was suggested to recruit members of such a body from BAKOSURTANAL, the National Language Center, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of the Interior, the Departments of Language and Literature of the Universities etc.

Further, the desirability was expressed of follow-up courses in Toponymy, particularly in field collection and office treatment of names in the host country itself for geography students and staff of the main mapping agencies. Finally, course participants joined in a recommendation to BAKOSURTANAL to promote the introduction of toponymy in the geography/cartography curriculum at university level in order to achieve regular training under the guidance of experienced lecturers.

Recommendations for future Training Courses

The course was concluded by the presentation of two course evaluations, one by the participants and another by the lecturers. The main points of these course evaluations, which showed a considerable overlap, are the following:

1. In general, the programme enrolled in Cisarua was considered well planned and highly satisfactory. The prevailing opinion was that the pilot training course had been successful and served its purpose.
2. The combination of theoretical lectures, preceded by an introduction into toponymy terminology and field collection of geographical names

in practice was considered very effective. It was felt, however, that in the lecture programme the linguistic-historic aspect of toponymy was not adequately dealt with, while in the second part of the course, due to lack of time, office treatment did not get enough attention. In this connection it was recommended for future courses to organize field work in an area in which official mapping is in progress and for which documentation for office treatment is available.

3. In view of the importance of name standardization for mapping programmes in developing countries, it was generally felt that in future some form of financial assistance should be provided by the UN as financial constraints often prevent countries from sending participants.
4. The collective accommodation of participants and lecturers in a bungalow park at Cisarua near the Puncak Pass away from the distractions of the city was appreciated by participants and lecturers alike. The joint lunches, tea and coffee breaks stimulated the exchange of information and discussion which excelled by its openness.
5. As to the participants of future courses, it is considered useful to invite as lecturers and participants not only people from the mapping agencies but also from parties/offices dealing with other aspects of geographical names such as linguists (two Indonesian linguists attended the course), historians, archeologists, anthropologists etc.
6. Technical visits to the leading Indonesian mapping agencies were considered worthwhile, inspiring and informative. In the future visits are recommended to institutions such as National Archives, National Libraries, Cadastre etc. to introduce participants to documentation aspects of geographical names.
7. As far as the field work is concerned, the map scale 1:50,000 might be less suitable for those participants not familiar with

map reading. As in courses of this nature, there is a mixture of academic backgrounds, the use in the field of larger map scales (1:25,000) supplemented by aerial photographs is recommended.

Vote of Appreciation

The Pilot Training Course in Toponymy held in Cisarua, Indonesia from 7 to 18 June 1982 has been most successful. Our deep appreciation should go to the Government of Indonesia and to the National Co-ordination Agency for Surveying and Mapping (BAKOSURTANAL) of Indonesia, for pioneering and hosting this course without any financial assistance from the UN. The organization of the course was irreproachable, and every detail was taken care of in an optimal manner due to the untiring and enthusiastic effort of Colonel Oemarioto and his staff, to whom all participants are sincerely obliged.