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NOTE ON THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR AFRICA
1982-1986

Introduction

1. The UNDP second programme cycle will terminate at the end of 1981. The Regional Programme for Africa for the years 1977-1981 was approved by the UNDP Governing Council after thorough and extensive consultations not only with Governments of the region, through the UNDP Resident Representatives in Africa, but also with specialized agencies and other organs of the United Nations system as well as regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations of the Africa region, notably the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the African Development Bank (ADB). In all, 40 intergovernmental organizations in addition to the Governments of the region and specialized agencies of the United Nations system were invited to submit their proposals to UNDP for the second regional programme.

2. At its 34th session, the General Assembly adopted a resolution 34/206 entitled "Implementation of section IV of the Annex to the General Assembly resolution 32/197 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system". This resolution requests the UNDP Administrator to "prepare, in cooperation with the executive secretaries of regional commissions, proposals for enhancing the collective involvement of the countries in each region in the identification and the initiation of regional projects and activities as well as in the determination of priorities for inter-country programmes". In the spirit of this resolution, this Note is being submitted to the EC/A Conference of Ministers in order to seek the collective views of African Governments on the preparation of the Regional Programme for 1982-1986, especially on the strategy to be adopted and priority actions to be foreseen in this Programme.

II. Preparation of the 1982-1986 Regional Programme Document

3. The preliminary views of UNDP on both the strategy and on priority activities to be taken into consideration during the 1982-1986 programming cycle were presented to the UNDP Regional Meeting of Resident Representatives in Africa, held in Mbabane (Swaziland) from 7 to 17 January 1980 and attended by representatives from organizations of the United Nations system as well as by the OAU Secretary-General and the ECA Executive Secretary. A consensus was reached during this meeting on these preliminary views as well as on a work-plan for the preparation of the Regional Programme.

4. This work-plan, timed to take account of the dates of the forthcoming ECA Conference of Ministers and the UNDP Governing Council meeting, must permit appropriate consultations and elaboration of the final Regional Programme document in time for submission to the UNDP Governing Council in June 1981. The work-plan is presented as follows :

February 1980

- Receipt at UNDP Headquarters from the United Nations Specialized Agencies of any particular views on priority activities as proposed at the Mbabane meeting;

April 1980

- Submission of this Note to the ECA Conference of Ministers in order to seek the collective views of African Ministers;

After April 1980

- Consultations with African Governments, organizations of the United Nations system as well as with intergovernmental organizations in Africa;
- Preparation of the draft regional programme document;

April 1981

- Presentation of the draft Regional Programme to the ECA Conference of Ministers for comments;

June 1981

- Submission of the draft Regional Programme to the UNDP Governing Council for approval.

5. Thus, after having obtained the views of the current ECA Conference of Ministers and after having consulted the individual African Governments of the region, African intergovernmental organizations and organizations of the United Nations system, UNDP will prepare a draft document for the Regional Programme 1982-1986. This draft document will be submitted at the subsequent ECA Conference of Ministers in 1981 for comments, before being finalized and submitted for approval to the UNDP Governing Council at its June 1981 session or at such other session as the Governing Council may deem appropriate.

III. Strategy and priority activities of the Regional Programme

6. Since 1975-1976 when the second regional programme was prepared, important recommendations have been adopted at a series of inter-African and international meetings on development problems in Africa. Among these meetings, one could mention the Conference of Buenos Aires on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, the Conference of Mar del Plata on Water Resources Development, the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, the Vienna Conference on Science and Technology for Development, the Monrovia Symposium on the Future Development Prospects of Africa towards the Year 2000 (the report of which was adopted by the OAU Heads of State in July 1979), the ECA Conference of Ministers held in Rabat in 1979 and the Conference of African Ministers of Planning and Transport and Communications on the United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa.
7. A certain number of development constraints in Africa were clearly identified on the occasion or in the course of these meetings, in particular those sponsored by the OAU and the ECA. Consequently, in order to respond to the African Governments' desires, there is no doubt that all international assistance, particularly that the UNDP Regional Programme, should be oriented and formulated so as to contribute to the solution of development problems related to these constraints.
8. The strategy to be adopted for the Regional Programme must take into account:
- (a) the proposed strategy for the third development decade of the United Nations;
 - (b) the decisions already taken in the framework of the OAU summit meetings;
 - (c) recommendations adopted at the afore-mentioned international and regional conferences.

Without going into details, we can note that the key elements of this strategy point out the necessity of greater national and collective autonomy of African States, the development of self-sufficiency in food production, the introduction of innovations in the development process, a greater command of tools required to accelerate development (for example, promotion of science and technology for development as well as implementation of technical co-operation among developing countries, etc.), the build-up of infrastructure, particularly in transport and communications, without which the development efforts risk being fruitless.

9. Most of the priority activities resulting from this global strategy, received due attention from UNDP and influenced its programme of assistance in the region during the 1977-1981 period. For the 1982-1986 regional programme, UNDP's objectives should be to put particular emphasis on those priority activities which may not have received the attention that they deserve.
10. The priority activities to be considered during the 1982-1986 programming cycle have been identified by UNDP as follows :
- (a) subregional and regional co-operation including assistance to African intergovernmental organizations, river and lake basin development schemes in the region and promotion of technical co-operation among African countries;

- (b) promotion of food self-sufficiency, through the implementation of the Regional Food Plan for Africa;
- (c) implementation of the Programme of the United Nations Decade for Transport and Communications in Africa;
- (d) programme for desertification control and protection of the African environment;
- (e) promotion of science and technology for development;
- (f) development of human resources through appropriate programmes in vocational training, employment promotion and major disease control;
- (g) development planning and management;
- (h) special development programmes for the least developed countries, land-locked countries and island countries.

11. It is not possible at this stage to allocate specific percentages of resources to the different activities outlined above. Such allocations will depend on the extent to which ongoing activities will have to continue. The number of new projects that we can accommodate will also depend on the importance of continuing projects as well as on the size of available global resources.

IV. Conclusion

12. The views of the current ECA Conference of Ministers on UNDP's preliminary intentions as presented above will be of paramount importance for the elaboration of the draft regional programme for 1982-1986.

13. While it is premature at this juncture to give a precise indication of the financial resources which will be allocated to the Regional Programme for Africa during this period, it should be noted that the expenditures of the ongoing Regional Programme will exceed allotted resources. Thus, the 1982-1986 programme must be selective and must concentrate on central issues. A preliminary indication by this Conference of Ministers on priorities to be given the different proposed activities will be most useful in this regard.