



**Executive Board  
of the  
United Nations  
Development Programme  
and of the  
United Nations**

Distr.  
LIMITED

DP/1996/L.13/Add.7  
10 May 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Annual session 1996  
6-17 May 1996, Geneva  
Agenda item 1

DRAFT REPORT ON THE ANNUAL SESSION  
GENEVA, 6-17 MAY 1996

Addendum

UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT

Chapter V. REPORTS TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
(continued)

14. Replies. The Associate Administrator addressed the specific questions and comments of delegations. He recognized that the report provided comprehensive information but could have had additional analysis to guide the discussions of the Executive Board and the Economic and Social Council.

15. The recruitment of resident coordinators was being opened up to include the large agencies in addition to those of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP). Progressively, as resident coordinators were dedicating more time to coordination activities, they were delegating UNDP representational and operational functions to deputy resident representatives. This delegation was further facilitating the clear separation of resident coordinator functions from UNDP representative and operational functions.

16. Regarding the programme approach, which was progressing steadily, it was necessary to await the outcomes of country programme mid-term reviews and final evaluations, which is where progress would be reflected.

17. The country strategy note (CSN) was the product of a government-owned process and the time taken for its completion depended on the national planning cycle and on the quantity and diversity of inputs

required. While only nine CSNs may have been completed, the CSNs were in advanced stages of completion or approval in another 34 countries. The CSN process had been initiated and was in earlier stages in another 43 countries. The CSN process was, therefore, active in a total of 86 countries, which, showed, in fact, steady progress.

18. Regarding capacity-building for national execution, the training at the country level included government counterparts involved in national execution. The UNDP mission statement would certainly stress capacity-building as part of the enabling environment for sustainable human development. National implementation units were necessary at the present time to ensure compliance with reporting requirements for national execution.

19. The Associate Administrator provided further data on gender balance in UNDP. Currently, 32 per cent of professionals were women. The overall targets were for 38 per cent in 1997 and 50 per cent by the year 2000.

20. With regard to collaboration with the World Bank, a joint letter had been sent by the Administrator and the President of the Bank to resident representatives on means to enhance country-level cooperation. The International Monetary Fund was also interested in developing closer collaboration with UNDP at the country level. Resources mobilization at the country level was an important operational concern of UNDP.

21. With respect to evaluation, in his introductory statement to the Economic and Social Council, the Administrator could include additional information on that subject, particularly in light of the discussions held at the second regular session 1996.

22. The Associate Administrator clarified that conference follow-up was taking place at the global level in the three inter-agency task forces (IATFs) and the newly approved committee on the empowerment and advancement of women and at the national level through the thematic groups under the leadership of resident coordinators. The IATFs were in the process of producing concrete outputs such as guidelines for resident coordinators. The thematic groups at the national level would lead eventually to coordinated or joint operational activities in support of conference outcomes.

23. Inter-agency follow-up to Habitat II was expected to be undertaken within the existing IATFs, whose work programme could be adjusted to accommodate the conference outcomes. UNDP was actively involved in preparations for the conference and had seconded two staff members to its secretariat. The Secretary General had pointed out at the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) that as a United Nations System conference, the World Food Summit should receive support from the whole system in preparation and follow-up. The Administrator had co-signed, with other JCGP executive heads, a statement on world food security to the Bureau of the Inter-sessional Working Group of the Committee on World Food Security, which was preparing the World Food Summit.

24. With regard to decentralization, resident representatives could currently approve up to \$1 million for single projects or programmes. Under the successor programming arrangements, decentralization with accountability would be enhanced, as subsequent discussions at the Executive Board would reveal. There were nine centres of experimentation where additional decentralization was being tried out prior to its eventual mainstreaming.

25. Finally, regarding humanitarian activities, the Associate Administrator pointed out the close relationship existing between UNDP and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA), both multilaterally through the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) as well as bilaterally through joint working groups. Collaborative work was also being undertaken with the World Bank in joint preparations for post-conflict recovery in Liberia. The Associate Administrator also confirmed that the focus of UNDP programme activity was on emergency and crisis prevention, appropriate development assistance during crisis and on recovery, not on relief. He cited the examples of UNDP assistance in area development programmes reintegrating displaced persons: in the Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Central America, Mozambique and Ukraine, among others. He noted that the Administrator had assigned high priority to the question of coordination of resource mobilization for relief with mobilization for development. In that respect, the work of the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) was important in bringing together the development agencies and the World Bank while the IASC represented primarily the relief partners. The open exchange of information between these two groups was seen as contributing to the joint examination of roles and resource mobilization, distinguishing between the various fund-raising mechanisms and the important role of the resident coordinator in mobilizing resources at the country level.

26. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) thanked delegations for the critical but constructive comments made during the discussion. He informed the Executive Board about the discussion of the resident coordinator system at the recent JCGP High-level Meeting, based on comments provided by the JCGP partner organizations to the Administrator. It was agreed that UNDP would undertake an analysis of the consolidated comments and would circulate the results and follow-up actions. In the future, the agencies would also be involved in the performance evaluations of the resident coordinators. In that context, he also confirmed that the newly designated UNFPA representatives would operate within the resident coordinator system, which UNFPA continued to support fully.

27. With regard to questions about the effectiveness of the programme approach, he explained that UNFPA experiences with the approach, which had been employed since 1977 through the formulation of country programmes, had been satisfactory and had facilitated the coherent utilization of programme funds. Regarding UNFPA work on revised guidelines on national execution, he stressed that UNFPA saw it as a system-wide effort that proceeded in close consultation with UNDP. The revised guidelines would be shared with the Fund's partners in CCPOQ and JCGP for comments. UNFPA would also

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continue its efforts to enhance national capacity-building in all UNFPA-funded programme activities, including country-level training.

28. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) expressed his agreement with concerns that field-level follow-up to the major international conferences and summits required increased efforts. He mentioned feedback from UNFPA offices that the guidelines for the resident coordinator system on the implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) were being used through the work of theme groups under the guidance of the resident coordinator in many countries. UNFPA was awaiting further comments from its country offices to monitor the use of the guidelines over time. In response to a query about the country strategy note, he confirmed that the CSN was the process for creating a common development vision and that JCGP was not instituting any parallel mechanisms through the common country assessment.

29. Concerning the relevance of national population councils or units, UNFPA had undertaken evaluations of such coordinating mechanisms and, with few country-specific exceptions, had found them useful in the formulation of population policies and the coordination of external assistance. The main challenge ahead was for such institutions to extend their work beyond the traditional population sector in follow-up to the ICPD Programme of Action. On resource mobilization, he agreed on the need for intensified fund-raising efforts. He stated that the selection of advocacy as one of the core post-ICPD programme areas for UNFPA had increased activities to raise awareness at the field level.

30. Regarding inputs to the upcoming Habitat II and the World Food Summit, he explained that UNFPA had seconded a technical officer to assist in preparations for Habitat II and had actively participated in all preparatory meetings. For the World Food Summit, the executive heads of the JCGP partner organizations had issued a joint statement to highlight issues related to food security, which should receive further attention in the draft plan of action, such as food access issues, reproductive health and women's empowerment. With regard to the United Nations Special Initiative on Africa, he stated that UNFPA had raised the absence of population issues from the documents at the recent meeting of the Steering Committee on the Special Initiative. After discussions, the Steering Committee had decided to integrate gender and population as cross-cutting themes in the implementation plans and to include reproductive health specifically as a component of health-sector reform. The new understanding had been affirmed by the meeting of ACC in April.

31. Concerning collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions, the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) responded that UNFPA had concluded an agreement with the World Bank that information gathered in preparation for country programmes would be shared between the organizations in order to avoid any duplication of work and provide a common basis for country-level activities. In addition, joint projects were being implemented in many countries. He emphasized that despite the absence of formal agreements, meaningful consultations were regularly held at all

levels of the two organizations. He confirmed that UNFPA had been working closely for two decades with the Asian Development Bank and had also concluded an agreement with the African Development Bank.

32. The Executive Board took note of the reports. At the suggestion of one delegation, it was agreed that the present reports would be transmitted to the Economic and Social Council with, as annexes (a) the report in the present joint segment as well as (b) the report of the discussion on evaluation at the second regular session 1996 and (c) the report of the discussion at the annual session on the implementation of programming arrangements.

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