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BIENNIAL REPORT ON FINANCIAL AND OTHER ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO
AND AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS AND ON THE
HUMAN SETTLEMENTS ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AND
OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS OUTSIDE
THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Interim report of the Executive Director

SUMMARY

At its second session, in its resolution 2/3 of 4 April 1979, the Commission on Human Settlements recommended to the General Assembly that it request the Executive Director to undertake the preparation of a biennial report in 1982, beginning with an interim report in 1981, on financial and other assistance provided to and among developing countries on human settlements and on the human settlements activities of the United Nations system and of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations outside the United Nations system. This recommendation was subsequently approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/114.

Also at its second session, the Commission further agreed that the reports in question should be re-examined with a view to simplifying their contents, reducing their size and introducing economies in their preparation (A/34/8, para. 91). This interim report to the fourth session briefly describes the format for the reports to be submitted for consideration by the Commission. The full reports will be submitted to the Commission at its fifth session.

I. BIENNIAL REPORT ON FINANCIAL AND OTHER ASSISTANCE
PROVIDED TO AND AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ON HUMAN
SETTLEMENTS AND ON THE HUMAN SETTLEMENTS ACTIVITIES
OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

1. At its second session, the Commission agreed that information on such assistance should be presented in a single report. ^{1/} However, there are three distinct categories of assistance that have to be covered in the report:

(a) Direct bilateral assistance (not involving a recognized international organization): technical assistance, grants and loans provided (i) to developing countries and (ii) among developing countries;

(b) Multilateral financial assistance: grants and loans provided by multilateral financial institutions within the United Nations system (e.g. World Bank) and outside it;

(c) Assistance by the United Nations system: technical assistance and relevant human settlements activities by organizations in the United Nations system.

2. Similar reports on relevant activities within the United Nations system were presented to Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (A/CONF.70/A/4) and to the Commission at its second session (HS/C/2/CRP.2). In both cases, what constituted a "human settlements activity" was not defined. As was pointed out in the original report, this approach had the advantage of avoiding the imposition of what other organizations might consider an arbitrary and debatable definition, allowing them instead to interpret "human settlements activity" within their own context and to report on activities which they considered relevant to the improvement of human settlements (A/CONF.70/A/4, paras. 68-69).

3. The Secretariat considered various alternatives such as using a more thematic approach (for example, asking for information only on projects specifically concerned with the shelter, infrastructure and service needs of low-income groups). However, the last overview of all human settlements activities of organizations in the United Nations system was prepared in 1978, and it was considered important that the Commission should be provided with a full overview of such activities periodically as a basis for determining its own future plans and programmes. The analytical overview of all human settlements activities to be presented to the Commission in 1982 might lead to the identification of a specific area of major concern which the 1984 biennial report could concentrate on. The following overview of all human settlements activities would then be due for presentation in 1986, which will be the tenth anniversary of the 1976 Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements.

^{1/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 8 (A/34/8), para. 91.

4. The formats of the two previous reports (A/CONF.70/A/4 and HS/C/2/CRP.2) were reviewed to see if they could be further simplified. However, it is proposed to maintain the tabular format (with some modifications), as this format facilitates rapid review and reference. The tables would be included as annexes to a more analytical report. The modified version of the original tables, with a short description of the information required, is to be found in annex I.

5. Information on direct financial assistance in the form of loans or grants provided by bilateral and multilateral financial organizations was not included in the previous surveys. Since this information is to be included in the 1982 biennial report and since a different kind of information is needed to describe direct financial assistance projects accurately, a second chart has been developed. This chart is to be found in annex II.

6. In the report submitted to the Commission at its second session, several difficulties were noted regarding information requirements (HS/C/2/8, paras. 33 and 43). These difficulties concerned:

(a) The identification of the human settlements cost element in larger projects: in previous reports, when human settlements activities constituted only part of a large project, the total project cost was reported, making it difficult for the overview to estimate accurately the actual assistance devoted to human settlements problems;

(b) The time-frame problem: the various organizations have different programme and budgetary cycles; in addition, many projects are carried out over several years, with funding not evenly distributed throughout the period, with the result that data on trends is misleading;

(c) The level of aggregation of the information on any one agency's programme;

(d) The classification of projects according to the six subject areas identified by the Habitat Conference for priority action.

Regarding the first difficulty, it is proposed to ask reporting institutions, in the "cost" column of the table, to provide the estimated cost of the human settlements component and to include the total cost of the whole project in brackets under that figure.

The second problem of estimating financial flows and assistance over a particular time period for comparative purposes when project costs are often unevenly distributed over a longer time period is more difficult to deal with. One way of coping with the problem is to use a specific date, for example 31 May 1981, rather than a period of time as a basis for reporting. This approach also has the advantage of circumventing the difficulties created by the different programme and budgetary cycles of the various organizations.

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9. With regard to the third difficulty concerning the level of aggregation, it is proposed to adhere to the approach used in the original report and to ask each organization to present its information at the highest level of aggregation consistent with a meaningful and informative presentation of its activities (A/CONF.70/A/4, para.70).
10. With regard to the fourth difficulty, the classification of projects according to the six priority areas caused problems for many organizations in the previous surveys because the six areas are not mutually exclusive. For example, activities concerned with public participation usually relate to other areas as well. Moreover, the activities of some organizations (e.g. World Bank lending operations) are so comprehensive in scope that they cover several of the priority areas. Consequently, for the previous reports, the rigid classification of projects on the basis of the six priority areas was not obligatory. It is proposed to continue with this approach and to allow activities to be listed under more than one area.

II. BIENNIAL REPORT ON THE HUMAN SETTLEMENTS ACTIVITIES OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS OUTSIDE THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

11. In its resolution 2/3 of 4 April 1979, the Commission recommended to the General Assembly that it request the Executive Director to undertake the preparation of a biennial report in 1982, beginning with an interim report in 1981, on the following subjects:

- (a) Activities and collaboration between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements and non-governmental organizations;
- (b) Information on the human settlements activities of inter-governmental organizations outside the United Nations system, and co-operation between them and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements.

This recommendation was subsequently approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/114.

12. The Commission also agreed that such reports should be re-examined with a view to simplifying their contents, reducing their size and introducing economies in their preparation. 2/
13. As one measure in implementation of these decisions, a concise report on the highlights during 1980 of co-operation with the organizations in question has been included in an annex to the progress report of the Executive Director (HS/C/4/2). It is proposed that a similar report on the highlights of co-operation with these organizations should be submitted to the Commission at its next session, and that the biennial reports on organizations outside the United Nations system should therefore be the same as those on organizations in the United Nations system, concentrating on human settlements activities. In addition, for the purposes of consistency and comparison, it is proposed that the organizations concerned be asked to provide the information in the same tabular form to be used for organizations within the United Nations system (see annex I).

14. It is further proposed that the biennial reports on the human settlements activities of inter-governmental organizations outside the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations should be presented as information documents.

15. To sum up, information on the human settlements activities of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations outside the United Nations system would be made available to the Commission in the following ways:

(a) In the progress report of the Executive Director, under highlights of co-operation with other organizations since the previous session;

(b) In reports on the UNCHS (Habitat) work programme, with indications as to where such activities have made a significant contribution to the development or implementation of a project;

(c) In written or oral statements made at Commission meetings by representatives of the organizations concerned under the appropriate rule of the Commission's rules of procedure;

(d) In the biennial reports on the human settlements activities of the organizations concerned.

GUIDE FOR COMPLETING THE CHART

Information should be provided on all relevant activities which were underway or at least approved as of 31 May 1981.

Column 1 - Area of activity

Indicate which of the following subject areas the project best corresponds to:

- (a) Settlement policies and strategies;
- (b) Settlement planning;
- (c) Shelter, infrastructure and services;
- (d) Land;
- (e) Public participation;
- (f) Institutions and management.

Column 2 - Entry number

Number each entry in sequence.

Column 3 - Title

Provide a descriptive project title.

Column 4 - Short description

The short description should briefly refer to:

- (a) The relevant objective(s) or intended results;
- (b) The country, countries, group of countries or region in which the activity will be carried out;
- (c) The project reference number in brackets at the end of the description.

Columns 5, 6 and 7

Indicate whether the project is national (N), regional (R) or global (G) in scope.

Column 8 - Duration and completion date

Indicate the duration and actual or expected completion date. If it is a regular activity with an indefinite duration, enter "continuous".

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Columns 9 and 10 - Co-operating organizations

Indicate in the appropriate column all major co-operating bilateral or international agencies, using their acronym if well known or their actual title.

Column 11 - Costs in thousands of US dollars

If the project in question is concerned exclusively with human settlements, indicate the total project cost in thousands of US dollars.

If the human settlements activity is only part of a larger project, indicate the estimated cost of the human settlements component, with the total project cost in brackets underneath.

Column 12 - Sources of funding

List all funding sources by name and amount so that the total corresponds to that provided in the previous column, and, when relevant, indicate whether the funds are from regular budget (RB) or extrabudgetary (XB) sources.

Annex II

GRANTS AND LOANS

Area of activity	Entry number	Country	Short description	Amount ^{a/} (US 000)	Duration	Grace period	Interest rate	Other contributors and/or co-operating organizations
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

a/ Provided by the granting or lending institution.

b/ The name of other contributors of additional and counterpart funds, the amount of such funds, and the names of any other organizations providing any substantial technical assistance or services.