

# UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



UNDP

Distr.  
GENERAL

DP/476  
1 April 1980

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GOVERNING COUNCIL  
Twenty-seventh session  
June 1980  
Agenda item 10 (e)

## FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

### Headquarters staffing review

#### Note by the Administrator

1. In introducing the budget estimates for the biennium 1980-1981 to the Budgetary and Finance Committee of the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council, the Administrator stated that he was faced with requests for a substantial increase in the number of professional and other posts in UNDP headquarters and the field. He proposed at that time that the staffing remain at substantially the same level as in 1979 pending a study of headquarters and representative field offices. The study was to assess not only actual workloads, but also whether what is being done must be done, whether it could be done more efficiently and whether it might be better done elsewhere.

2. It was decided to conduct the study in two parts. The first related to a desk-to-desk survey at headquarters. Because of the close interrelationship between headquarters and field activities, this part of the study also collected information on how field offices perceive the functions and role of headquarters in support of field activities. The second part of the study would be to survey the workload and staffing in representative field offices.

3. The team leader for the headquarter's survey was an experienced manager, familiar with both UNDP field and headquarters activities. Internal resources consisted of some qualified staff members with both headquarters and field experience who were directly responsible to the team leader. The team as a whole was assisted in a few aspects of its survey work by advice from three consultants. The survey report which has covered virtually all staff working at UNDP headquarters has, at the time of writing of this paper, just been received.

4. The conclusions of the team fall under two major headings: those relating to the organizational structure within headquarters; and those relating to improvement in operational matters. The suggestions relating to modification in the existing organizational structure mainly result from what is perceived as the need to further strengthen the operational units, the policy and programme support and the resource mobilization and management functions in headquarters. Those relating to improvements in operations cover a large number of suggestions such as the need for an improved institutional memory, the need for issuance of clearer guidelines and procedures in several areas and monitoring their application for compliance, the avoidance of duplication in certain activities, the streamlining or rationalization of certain functions, and the increased use of word processors and other office equipment to facilitate and expedite work.

5. The team recognizes that ISIP-related developments will have an important bearing on the future activities of some units in headquarters. For obvious reasons it has not been possible for the team, at present, to determine their exact impact.

6. The team has suggested a more structured approach to the preparation of job descriptions and a limited job classification exercise. The survey has gathered valuable information regarding the nature and interrelationships of jobs in UNDP headquarters.

7. The Administrator has decided that UNDP administration should review each recommendation and the relevant analysis made in the survey to be able to determine which of the many useful suggestions for operational improvements can be implemented and what suggestions for organizational modifications need to be undertaken or referred to the Council. A co-ordinator will assist in monitoring progress in the completion of the review and early implementation of several of the recommendations.

8. Insofar as the number of staff at headquarters is concerned, the Administrator has decided that until the review is completed he should not request an increase in staff which has been suggested by the survey and he has concluded that he cannot presently make recommendations about total staffing needs and the deployment of personnel due to several reasons:

(a) The resource picture has changed substantially since the early part of 1979. After achieving an increase in voluntary contributions of over 15 per cent in 1979 as compared to 1978, the increase in 1980 is estimated at only 4 per cent and it is at present difficult to foresee what level will be achieved in 1981;

(b) The years 1980 and 1981 are a departure point for planning for the third programming cycle but both the growth target for voluntary contributions for 1982-1986 and the allocation of resources in terms of Indicative Planning Figures have yet to be determined by the Council;

(c) The survey goes into considerable detail regarding the working of various units and a systematic review has to be undertaken before the Administrator can responsibly make any recommendations in this regard;

(d) The impact of the improvement in systems, processes and outputs on the number of staff, as a result of the ISIP project, has yet to be fully established.

9. The Administrator accordingly believes that at this time the Council should note the action which he proposes to take as a result of this study. He has set in motion a process of review of the desk-to-desk survey so that whatever suggested improvements in operational matters can be implemented as quickly as possible, and other conclusions of the survey are carefully reviewed with a view to reaching appropriate decisions. The Administrator has also decided that the organization of the survey of representative field offices should be initiated. After the June session of the Council reaches final agreement on third cycle IPFs, these preparations will enable the field survey to be undertaken quickly. The Administrator would then be able to report to the twenty-eighth session of the Council on the surveys in both headquarters and the field, together with his own recommendations on staffing levels and other matters.

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