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SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE: IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE MEDIUM-TERM AND LONG-TERM RECOVERY AND REHABILITATION  
PROGRAMME IN THE SUDANO-SAHELIAN REGION

JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Activities of the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Activities of the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (JIU/REP/83/1)".

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Geneva, January 1983  
JIU/REP/83/1

ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SUDANO-SAHELIAN OFFICE (UNSO)

Programming, identification, formulation and supervision of  
execution of projects  
Search for financing

Report prepared by Moustapha Ould Khalifa  
Joint Inspection Unit

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Purpose

1. The United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) provides the Governments of the countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region with assistance in the planning, programming, financing and supervision of execution of projects in accordance with two mandates:

(a) Under the first mandate, UNSO is to serve as the central point responsible for co-ordinating the assistance provided by the United Nations system to the States members of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) in implementing their medium-term and long-term recovery and rehabilitation programme and, in particular, ensuring food self-sufficiency and combating the effects of the drought (resolution 3054 (XXVIII) of 17 October 1973);

(b) Under the second mandate, UNSO is to serve as the arm of the United Nations responsible for assisting, on behalf of UNEP and under a UNDP/UNEP joint venture, 19 countries in the Sudano-Sahelian region (States members of CILSS plus 11 others) in formulating, financing and implementing their plans of action to combat desertification (resolution 33/88 of 15 December 1978).

2. The rationale of this study is:

(a) Firstly:

- (i) The great interest shown by the General Assembly and most of the organs and agencies of the United Nations system in the recovery and rehabilitation activities of the CILSS countries and in the programme to combat desertification in the Sudano-Sahelian region;
- (ii) The urgency of the drought and desertification control programmes in the Sudano-Sahelian region, where most of the countries are included in the group of least developed countries;
- (iii) The specific and innovative character of the approaches adopted by UNSO in identifying projects and, in particular, in mobilizing financing;

(b) Secondly:

- (i) UNSO having been established at a relatively recent date, whatever recommendations may be arrived at now would prevent initial mistakes and permit the optimum use of resources, thus ensuring better assistance to the Sudano-Sahelian countries;
- (ii) In view of the complexity of the phenomena of drought and desertification, an integrated approach would make it possible to fine-tune UNSO's relations with the States concerned, the regional organizations and the organs, programmes and agencies of the United Nations system, and with the various sources of finance;

- (iii) Such an integrated approach would facilitate both the planning and co-ordination of the recovery and rehabilitation programmes of the CILSS countries and the implementation in the Sudano-Sahelian region of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification and might enable the Governing Councils of UNDP and UNEP, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly to establish new medium-term and long-term orientations;
- (iv) Last and most important, this study will endeavour to ascertain whether UNSO has provided the kind of response to assistance needs that the countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region expected of it.

3. Desertification and drought in the Sudano-Sahelian region have assumed catastrophic proportions, their gravity being due to the global and cumulative nature of the consequences of these two phenomena, which have seriously jeopardized the development of the countries of the region, where 65 million hectares of productive land have been lost over the last 50 years.

4. These two phenomena interact on nearly all aspects of life in the countries concerned. The effects include:

- (a) Ecologically: loss of forests and pasturelands, reduced rainfall, extinction of some forms of livestock production;

- (b) Agriculturally: soil aridity and sterility, precluding all rural activities, even subsistence farming, and resulting in a mass exodus from the countryside which in turn aggravates management problems in recently created urban conglomerations in the affected countries (housing, schooling, health, supplies);

- (c) With respect to communications: encroachment of sand on trails and roads, making some regions inaccessible.

5. These few facts suffice to explain why, in nearly all resolutions concerning recovery in the Sahel, the General Assembly has:

- (a) Invited Member States, most of the agencies and programmes of the United Nations system, particularly UNDP, UNEP, FAO, UNIDO, UNESCO, ILO, WHO, UNU and WFP, and non-governmental organizations to allocate the largest possible amount of resources to requests for assistance from the Sudano-Sahelian countries;

- (b) Requested the Governing Council of UNDP to give high priority to regional development programmes relating directly or indirectly to the drought in the Sudano-Sahelian region.

6. The Economic and Social Council has, inter alia, urged all United Nations organs, agencies and organizations to increase their assistance, through joint undertakings with UNSO, to programmes for combating drought and desertification (resolution 1980/51).

7. As a result of all this, there is great interest in recovery, rehabilitation and development activities in the Sudano-Sahelian region and in the implementation

of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification. In view of that interest and the priority accorded to such activities, the Joint Inspection Unit included in its programme for 1982 a study on the activities of UNSO, in the hope of contributing, through constructive recommendations, to the effectiveness of its programmes.

B. Major actions taken by the States concerned - Prelude to the establishment of UNSO

8. The six heads of State of Chad, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Senegal and the Upper Volta signed at Ouagadougou, on 12 September 1973, a convention establishing the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS). On that occasion they adopted, on the proposal of their ministers, the programme summarized below (paras. 9-12).

9. For the short term, an emergency programme to provide relief for the population and to save livestock, covering the following fields: (i) food needs and human health; (ii) fodder for livestock and animal health; (iii) seeds; (iv) emergency actions for human and pastoral water supply; (v) transport and storage facilities for products; (vi) financial assistance to offset budgetary losses.

10. For the medium and long term: national programmes oriented towards solving the problems of food production, water supply, reconstitution of the herd and reforestation, with emphasis on the following fields: (i) village, agricultural and pastoral water supply; (ii) animal production: disease prevention, fodder for livestock, reconstitution of the herd, improvement of pasturelands and ranges; (iii) national reforestation programmes; (iv) construction, improvement and maintenance of feeder trails in order to open up isolated areas.

11. A subregional programme defining priority actions to be taken, such as: (i) construction of large dams for irrigation; (ii) development of inter-State communication routes; (iii) establishment of the Special Fund for the Sahel to finance solidarity operations or actions, emergency relief and medium-term and long-term development operations or actions; (iv) a subregional seed plan, intensification and improvement of agricultural production; (v) a large-scale reforestation programme to check the advance of the desert.

12. A framework for subregional co-operation in the following fields: (i) establishment of an Institute of the Sahel (applied research, agronomy, zootechny, waters and forests, co-ordination of research activities of the countries of the zone); (ii) establishment or strengthening of advanced training centres in the fields of agronomy, waters and forests, hydrology and meteorology; (iii) control of epizootic diseases; (iv) control of major endemic diseases in humans.

C. Method

13. The Inspector was able, in the interests of economy, to establish preliminary contacts with UNSO officials in New York while on mission in connection with another study. The various discussions that took place led to the preparation of a

questionnaire, which was sent to the States concerned, to regional organizations and to interested organs and agencies of the United Nations system. The questionnaire, which was worded appropriately according to whether it was being sent to the Governments of the Sudano-Sahelian region or to the organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, sought their views and suggestions concerning their relations with UNSO and the latter's activities.

14. Field visits were arranged to a representative sample of Sudano-Sahelian countries. During these visits, instructive working sessions were held with government departments of nine Sudano-Sahelian countries concerned and with interested regional organizations (CILSS, WAEC, 1/ the AGRHYMET Centre, 2/ Liptako-Gourma 3/ and the Institute of the Sahel, 4/ and also UNEP in Nairobi and ECA in Addis Ababa). Detailed records were drawn up at the end of these visits.

15. The major questions raised during the country visits or in replies to the questionnaire will be discussed as and when they touch upon one of the points dealt with below.

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1/ The West African Economic Community (WEAC) was established in 1972 by six States, five of which are members of UNSO: Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Upper Volta. Its aim is to establish a common market for the member States while at the same time carrying out regional co-operation projects in all fields of development.

2/ The Regional Centre for Training and Application in Operational Agrometeorology and Hydrology (AGRHYMET) is at Niamey. It is a regional project belonging to the States members of CILSS. Its purposes are meteorological, hydrometeorological and agrometeorological monitoring, the supply of statistical data and the training of technicians in those fields.

3/ The Authority for the Integrated Development of Liptako-Gourma was established in 1970 by three States, Mali, the Niger and the Upper Volta, its purpose being the development of the Liptako-Gourma region.

4/ The Institute of the Sahel was established pursuant to a decision of CILSS in 1973. Its seat is at Bamako. The Institute's role consists of the following:

(a) Collection, analysis and dissemination of the results of scientific and technical research;

(b) Transfer and adaptation to the Sahel of technologies existing in the region or in other regions of the world where similar ecological conditions exist;

(c) Co-ordination and harmonization of scientific and technical research undertaken in the countries of the region;

(d) Training of researchers and technicians.

16. The author takes this opportunity to express his appreciation to everyone (officials of government departments, of regional organizations and of United Nations agencies) who assisted him, either directly during the talks that were held or by transmitting replies to the questionnaires mentioned above and comments on the first draft of this report.

## II. ESTABLISHMENT OF UNSO BY THE UNITED NATIONS - MANDATES AND ORGANIZATION

### A. Mandates

17. In 1973, at its twenty-eighth session, the General Assembly of the United Nations established, within the Secretariat, a Special Sahelian Office responsible for co-ordinating the medium-term and long-term activities of the United Nations system for the rehabilitation and development of the Sahelian countries severely affected by drought (resolution 3054 (XXVIII)). A United Nations Trust Fund for Sudano-Sahelian Activities, financed by voluntary contributions, was established to provide UNSO with the necessary resources for the performance of its functions. Supervision of the Office, originally assigned to the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs, was entrusted in October 1976 to the Administrator of UNDP.

18. At the time of its establishment, UNSO covered the six countries which were founding members of CIISS (Chad, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Senegal and the Upper Volta), later joined by the Gambia in 1973 and by Cape Verde in 1975.

19. In December 1978, following the adoption by the United Nations Conference on Desertification of a Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, the General Assembly of the United Nations (resolution 33/88) extended the competence of UNSO to include assistance for the implementation of the Plan in 15 Sudano-Sahelian countries (the States members of CIISS plus the United Republic of Cameroon, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Somalia and the Sudan).

20. In order to reflect the geographical scope of its responsibilities, the Office was renamed the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO). The General Assembly subsequently approved the extension of UNSO's activities, under its second mandate, to additional Sudano-Sahelian countries: Djibouti, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau (resolution 35/72) and Benin (resolution 36/190).

21. In January 1979, the Administrator of UNDP and the Executive Director of UNEP signed a memorandum of understanding entrusting UNSO, on behalf of UNEP, with responsibility, under the UNEP/UNDP joint venture, for the implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification in the Sudano-Sahelian region. The functions assigned to UNSO include planning, programming, mobilization of financing and implementation of projects.

22. Thus, so far as the implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification is concerned, UNSO covers 19 African countries in all; in addition,



however, it also has to arrange a specific rehabilitation programme for the eight States members of CILSS, in view of the very serious consequences of the persistent drought which those eight countries have been suffering since 1967. This is due to the fact that the General Assembly has assigned to UNSO, apart from its functions in connection with recovery, rehabilitation and development in the CILSS countries, the role of the United Nations body responsible for supporting, on behalf of UNEP, the efforts of these 19 Sudano-Sahelian countries to combat desertification (resolution 33/88).

23. Non-governmental organizations contribute to combating drought and desertification in Africa through many institutions, including the Club du Sahel.

24. Since 1975, UNSO activities have expanded mainly in connection with the implementation of the first mandate, concerning the recovery, rehabilitation and development effort of the drought-stricken CILSS countries.

25. As the second mandate, concerning implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, is of a more recent date (1978), it naturally began to be carried out later. For the purpose of implementing that second mandate, UNEP and UNDP signed a protocol of agreement in 1979, under which UNSO was to operate as a joint venture, and agreed to share equally (50-50) the operating costs of UNSO under its second mandate and the financing of some of its activities.

26. At its tenth session, in May 1982, the Governing Council of UNEP expressed concern at the persistence and worsening of the process of desertification in the Sudano-Sahelian region and at the slowness with which the Plan of Action was being implemented in order to combat it, and requested the Executive Director to increase UNEP's support for UNSO and to report to the Governing Council at its eleventh session on the action taken on that request. At its twenty-eighth session, in June 1982, the Governing Council of UNDP noted with concern that the level of UNEP contributions to the UNDP/UNEP joint venture (institutional support) was not fully assured and urged that the problem should be solved in such a way as not to restrict the possibilities for UNSO to carry out its responsibilities in the Sudano-Sahelian region. Consultations between UNEP and UNDP are at present in progress with a view to finding means of implementing the agreement between the two parties so as to strengthen their joint action.

27. Most of the States members of CILSS have emphasized the need to distinguish clearly between the activities of UNSO under the two mandates and have pointed out that the General Assembly, in resolution 33/88 of 15 December 1978, stated that the new functions of UNSO should be carried out "in conformity with" the efforts for the rehabilitation of the drought-stricken CILSS countries.

28. The fact that drought and desertification are closely interrelated and interact on each other, producing relatively similar consequences, may suggest at first sight that there is no need to distinguish between these two phenomena and that the two mandates have the same objectives.

29. In fact, there are considerable differences, especially as regards the adverse effects on countries. Desertification problems vary from country to country, and

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sometimes even within a country. They are aggravated by the drought in those countries which are suffering from the latter.

30. Desertification is defined, in the document "Summary, plan of action and resolutions" of the United Nations Conference on Desertification (29 August - 9 September 1977), as "the diminution or destruction of the biological potential of the land, [which] can lead ultimately to desert-like conditions. It is an aspect of the widespread deterioration of ecosystems ...". Defined in this way, desertification is a structural factor which profoundly affects the economy and way of life of populations. Today, more than 75 per cent of the land surface of the CILSS countries is arid or semi-arid, as compared with a world average of 33 per cent. Desertification therefore requires actions which must be primarily of a medium-term and long-term nature.

31. As for drought, that is a cyclical phenomenon which accelerates the desertification process through the destruction of existing resources, including the partial or total loss of livestock, the impossibility of growing some food crops and mass exodus from the countryside, all of which means that the CILSS countries are much more seriously affected than others in the Sudano-Sahelian region. Most actions to combat drought are somewhat of an emergency nature and any global programme covering them is primarily a short-term and medium-term one, although some preventive activities may be long-term.

32. Consideration can be given to merging the two mandates, or rather to integrating the first mandate into the second so far as objectives are concerned, only if it is determined, firstly, that the drought is over and, secondly, that the objectives of the first mandate, including food self-sufficiency, reconstitution of the herd and the creation of conditions for supplying the population, have been fully achieved.

33. According to information obtained in the CILSS countries that were visited and confirmed by the reports of the Administrator of UNDP (DP/450 of 1 April 1980, para. 5, and DP/544 of 1 March 1984, para. 4), the drought still continues in most of those countries. This finding was confirmed by the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session (A/37/122).

34. According to estimates by CILSS and by a number of evaluation missions from donor countries and agencies, rainfall is insufficient and unevenly distributed in time and space and there continue to be large rain deficits, 5/ totalling 200,000 tons in 1980-1981 in the CILSS countries as a whole (DP/450 of 1 April 1980, p. 6).

35. Most of the CILSS countries point out that there is nothing to show that the cycle of drought which started in 1967 has come to an end. On the contrary, those countries still live in fear of a worsening of the drought as each rainy season approaches.

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5/ Grain deficits, in some States members of CILSS, have become structural.

36. Most of those countries consider that, despite the laudable efforts made by the various donors and by UNSO and the effectiveness of the latter's methods, which are adapted to the urgent approach that is needed in combating drought, the five-year programme (first-generation projects) adopted by the heads of State of CILSS in December 1977 at Banjul has been implemented only to a limited extent: for while identification and programming activities have been satisfactory, activities for the mobilization of finance, when compared to the total needs, have produced only limited results.

37. It can thus be seen that the rehabilitation programme for the CILSS countries has specific objectives, at least as regards the short and medium term, whereas some of its long-term aspects may be covered by the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification. That explains why the General Assembly stated (resolution 33/88 of 15 December 1978) that UNSO should carry out its new task of combating desertification without reducing its efforts for rehabilitation of the CILSS countries.

38. UNSO itself draws a clear distinction between those two mandates. Thus, in 1979 it undertook planning and programming missions with the aim of assisting in the formulation of specific country programmes to combat desertification (evaluation of the main causes of desertification, adaptation of ongoing activities and formulation of new activities for combating desertification, conditions for the preparation of a national plan and choice of priority projects).

39. At the joint CILSS/UNSO/Club du Sahel meeting at Dakar on 23 November 1978, which was financed by UNSO and in which representatives of the member States participated, the broad lines of a regional Plan of Action were drawn up, pursuant to the decision of the Council of Ministers of CILSS (session of 9 June 1979 at Dakar) that CILSS and UNSO should collaborate in implementing a unified plan to combat desertification. Those broad lines cover, inter alia, regional problems of deterioration of pastureland, development of water resources, stabilization of dunes, supplies of fuel wood, reforestation in general, agriculture in arid zones, information, education and training. The meeting accordingly recommended, for the implementation of the regional plan, close collaboration between CILSS and UNSO, especially through the "ecology-forestry team" which has been set up at the CILSS level and at the country level. A list of regional and country projects has been drawn up and 107 of them, which are regarded as high-priority projects, are presented in sufficient detail to permit the immediate preparation of data sheets.

40. The results achieved at the meeting mentioned above (para. 39) and the work of UNSO and of the ecology-forestry team enabled the Conference of Heads of State of CILSS, held in January 1980 at Ouagadougou, to adopt the unified plan of action (CILSS, UNSO, Club du Sahel) to combat desertification, that plan being distinct from the drought control programme.

#### B. Organization

41. The Director of UNSO is subject to the direct authority of the Administrator of UNDP. The fact that UNSO has its headquarters in New York means, firstly, that liaison with UNDP, with the representatives in New York of the 19 countries

concerned and with the representatives of donor countries is facilitated and, secondly, that UNSO has the benefit of UNDP facilities with respect to administrative management, information and communications; at the same time, the fact that a Regional Office is maintained at Ouagadougou, where CILSS has its headquarters, although it is subject to the authority of the Director of UNSO, means that project programming and implementation activities in the various countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region can be kept under review.

42. Some countries have drawn attention to the lack of regular contacts with the Regional Office at Ouagadougou and have expressed the wish that a system of local representation should be considered. The Sudan would like a regional body comprising the countries which are not members of CILSS to be established with headquarters at Khartoum. It notes that, if such a project were to be carried out, an UNSO representative would have to be installed at Khartoum. Similarly, Mauritania would like to have an UNSO representative installed at Nouakchott to cover the states members of the Organization for the Development of the Senegal River (OMVS), so as to overcome difficulties of liaison and communication with Ouagadougou. As he explained to the representatives of these countries during his visits, the Inspector does not consider it desirable, in present circumstances, to establish additional local offices or to appoint representatives, since UNDP effectively provides such services and spares UNSO additional expense. It should be noted in this connection that one of the conclusions of the meeting organized by UNSO at Dakar, from 30 May to 1 June 1979, was that resident representatives should regularly receive from UNSO information enabling them to give effect to the priority of drought and desertification control activities in the course of their ordinary relations with Governments and when programmes of assistance are being prepared.

43. Some countries, and ECA, wanted the Regional Office at Ouagadougou to be strengthened, while others stated that UNSO headquarters in New York should be reduced to the strict minimum that is necessary for liaison with UNDP and for co-ordination. However, it should be pointed out that one of the main functions of UNSO is the mobilization of financing and that this necessitates continuous dealings with multilateral and bilateral sources. Moreover, since UNSO is required to co-ordinate all the activities of the United Nations system to combat drought and desertification in Africa, it must have a central structure enabling it to carry out such a task, which means that its headquarters have to be so organized as to be able to handle it; thus, having its headquarters in New York is strategic for these two essential functions (financing and co-ordination). Nevertheless, the Regional Office at Ouagadougou must have a qualified staff adequate to carry out the task of project programming, formulation and monitoring. The present distribution of staff between headquarters and the Regional Office takes into account the tasks assigned to each of them. The strengthening of structures, especially those of the Regional Office, which has been under consideration for two years has proved to be impossible owing to lack of funds; in fact, two posts (one in New York and one at Ouagadougou) have had to be temporarily frozen with effect from 1 January 1983. The only strengthening possible in 1983 will be at the Regional Office, with the establishment of two expert posts (in forestry and soil conservation) financed directly by Australia and Sweden. The transfer from New York to Ouagadougou of an official at the P-3 level is also scheduled for early 1983.

44. The administrative and operational activity support costs of UNSO under its two mandates - to assist in the rehabilitation of the economies of the drought-stricken CISS countries and to combat desertification - are shown in table 2, which also indicates changes in staffing at the Professional and General Service levels, both at headquarters in New York and at the Regional Office at Ouagadougou. It will be noted that, although there was no change in the number of staff members from one biennium to the next, the budget has increased considerably, owing mainly to inflation (see table 2 and the comments on it).

45. The fact that UNSO does not have an unwieldy structure and that there is no bureaucracy in most of its methods should enable it to carry out its task in a proper manner. Some countries have raised the possibility of making it an executing agency. This does not seem to us to be justified, for not only would it lead to a considerably increased work-load but, in addition, it is by no means certain that UNSO would execute projects at lower cost than is incurred when they are executed by States or by the specialized agencies. The multidisciplinary nature of the UNSO programme means that many agencies of the system are involved, in their respective fields, so that the thrust of UNSO action can be focused on stimulating the activities of those agencies rather than duplicating them by becoming an executing agency, thus necessitating the employment of a large number of highly specialized staff.

46. In connection with the preparation of this report, the Inspector had discussions with most of the Professional staff of UNSO. The personal files of the UNSO staff were also consulted. It seems clear that, by and large, they have the requisite qualifications and are dedicated to the work of UNSO. Table 1 below shows that most of them have considerable university training and that they acquired appreciable professional experience before joining UNSO. The Inspector nevertheless believes that some UNSO staff members should be given, outside working hours, quick courses (one week at the maximum) by UNDP in order to improve their skills in the areas of administration, formulation of project documents and project evaluation.

Table 1. UNSO: breakdown of Professional staff by professional experience acquired before joining UNSO and by university level

Education	Doctorate	Master's degree	Bachelor's degree
	8	3	4
Experience	Less than 10 years	11-20 years	21 years and over
	6	6	3

Table 2. Budget of the administrative services of UNSO, including those of the UNDP/UNEP joint venture

(a)	<u>Costs (\$US 1,000)</u>			<u>Personnel</u>			<u>Travel</u>	<u>Overhead</u>	<u>Equipment</u>	<u>Total</u>		
1982-1983 (estimates)				3,058.4			421.4	798.2 <u>a/</u>	108.0	4,386.0 <u>b/</u>		
1980-1981				2,611.5			293.4	540.6	29.5	3,475.0		
(b)	<u>Personnel</u>	<u>D-2</u>	<u>D-1</u>	<u>P-5</u>	<u>P-4</u>	<u>P-3</u>	<u>P-2/1</u>	<u>Subtotal P</u>	<u>G-5</u>	<u>Other GS</u>	<u>Subtotal GS</u>	<u>Total</u>
(i)	New York											
	1982-1983	1	3	3	2	2	-	11	1	9	10	21 <u>c/</u>
	1980-1981	1	3	3	2	2	-	11	1	9	10	21
(ii)	Ouagadougou											
	1982-1983	-	1	3	1	1	-	6	-	10	10	16 <u>c/</u>
	1980-1981	-	1	3	1	1	-	6	-	10	10	16

Explanatory notes

Personnel

1. The increase of 17.1 per cent in the budget estimates for 1982-1983 as compared with 1980-1981, for the same number of personnel, is due to the increase in salaries and post adjustment and to reimbursement of education costs, etc.
2. The figures given for personnel costs are net of staff assessment. Actual expenditure in 1982-1983 may be less than the amounts shown in this table, for three reasons: (i) some posts may not be filled; (ii) the reduction of the UNEP contribution by \$220,000 indicated in footnote, b/ (iii) the financing of two posts by the Governments of Australia and Sweden.

Travel

3. The rise in travel costs reflects the increase in the responsibilities of UNSO, which will result in more travel by the Director and staff of the Office under the programme, particularly in connection with the mobilization of resources.

Overhead

4. In addition to the increase of \$500,100 in reimbursement for services rendered by UNDP in 1982-1983, UNSO has to meet higher overheads as a result of the move to new offices.

Equipment

5. The increase in expenditure on equipment in 1982-1983 is due to the purchase of service vehicles and office equipment.

Source: DP/548 and DP/1982/53.

- a/ Excluding \$500,100 representing reimbursement for services provided by UNDP.
- b/ The UNEP contribution will be \$220,200 less in 1983, which will reduce the total to \$4,165,800.
- c/ In 1983, one D-1 post at New York and two P-4 posts at Ouagadougou will remain unfilled.

### III. PLANNING, PROGRAMMING, IDENTIFICATION AND FORMULATION OF PROJECTS

47. The functions of UNSO, in carrying out its two mandates, are planning, programming, identification of projects, mobilization of financing for them and monitoring of their execution. It also provides institutional support to countries in strengthening their national and regional structures for combating drought and desertification and works to co-ordinate the activities of the United Nations system as a whole in that connection.

48. Under its two mandates, UNSO has organized inter-agency planning and programming missions which, during the years 1979-1982, covered 18 countries out of 19 (only Chad did not benefit from this UNSO activity, owing to exceptional circumstances). These missions were organized and carried out by UNSO in agreement with UNEP and in consultation with UNDP, the purpose being, inter alia:

(a) To evaluate the extent of desertification in the countries concerned and to determine its causes and consequences;

(b) To inventory desertification control activities in the countries concerned;

(c) To study with Governments the preparation of national plans to combat desertification and the establishment of institutional machinery to carry out, co-ordinate and evaluate such plans;

(d) To assist in identifying, formulating and evaluating priority projects submitted by Governments to UNSO for assistance in seeking external financing.

49. These missions resulted in the identification of hundreds of projects, which were submitted either to the Consultative Group for Desertification Control (DESCON) <sup>6/</sup> or to bilateral donors or various programmes and funds belonging to the United Nations system, such as the Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), WFP and IFAD.

50. The reports of planning and programming assistance missions provided the groundwork for other project study and identification missions organized by UNSO jointly with donor countries - Sweden (SIDA), Denmark (DANIDA), Finland, Yugoslavia, the Netherlands, Italy and others - and usually addressed themselves to a particular sector having a major impact on desertification control: energy conservation and development of renewable energy sources (Gambia, Senegal, Cape Verde); reforestation (Niger, Upper Volta); rehabilitation and management of pastureland (Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia).

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<sup>6/</sup> DESCON is a mechanism for consultation, technical agreement and mobilization of resources established under the auspices of the Executive Director of UNEP. It is a forum for bringing together the States members and agencies of the United Nations system and potential suppliers of funds.



51. A further step was taken with the organization of project formulation missions by specialized agencies, with UNSO financing, such as those relating to projects on forestry in Ethiopia and Uganda; solar energy in Mali; erosion control and protection of palm plantations in the Niger; stabilization of dunes and prevention of sand encroachment in Mauritania and the Sudan; and post-university training for range management personnel in the States members of CISS.

52. The reports of these planning, programming, identification and formulation missions have been used for the preparation by UNSO of country reports assessing the progress achieved in desertification control, indicating ongoing activities and those which remain to be undertaken and giving a list of the priority projects for which the country concerned is seeking external financing.

53. Thus, UNSO has a work programme covering all the member States and ranging from assistance in planning and programming to identification and formulation of projects, at least where desertification control is concerned. There is no such activity in connection with the rehabilitation of drought-affected economies in the CISS countries, where UNSO intervenes directly in the (first-generation) project formulation phase, leaving to CISS and its member States the responsibility for the other phases of planning, programming and identification. As regards both mandates, UNSO assistance is particularly important in seeking additional financing and in supervising project implementation.

A. UNSO assistance in planning and programming

54. Despite the planning missions (see para. 49), the Inspector found, as a result of the visits he made to the countries of the region, that a number of beneficiary countries still have no national desertification control plans based on an analysis of the causes and effects of desertification, indicating the short-term, medium-term and long-term priority activities to be undertaken and the human, financial and physical resources needed to implement them, and outlining the institutional framework and support required in order successfully to complete such activities.

55. The reports of the missions which were organized by UNSO and in which specialized agencies, and in some cases donors, participated did lead to recommendations concerning the various measures to be taken in order to initiate, strengthen and institutionalize the planning, programming, identification and formulation of activities to combat desertification, but some of the countries concerned have still not made the necessary arrangements to systematically integrate those recommendations into their economic and social development plan, even though the UNSO missions took place for the most part in 1979. Development plans include a number of desertification control activities, but they are scattered among several ministries and do not yet derive from an overall strategy.

56. UNSO, which attaches particular importance to following up the identification and formulation of projects for which it is to seek financing, should be enabled to attach equal importance to effective assistance that would make it possible for each member State to formulate a national desertification control strategy, programme or plan, integrated, if possible, into national development plans.

57. More specifically, UNSO should be enabled to assist the 19 countries in the thorough formulation of plans, strategies or programmes for combating desertification, well distributed over time and space and carefully indicating the priority activities to be undertaken, distinguishing between those which attack the causes and those which remedy the effects and taking stock of the financial, human and physical resources which the country can deploy - on its own, in the first instance - and those that will have to come from outside in order for such activities to be carried out.

58. At the meetings of UNDP resident representatives, both at the level of the States members of UNSO (Dakar, 30 May-1 June 1979) and at the level of Africa as a whole (Mbabane, 7-17 January 1980), the activities of UNSO in connection with desertification control and their integration into the third country programming cycle as priority projects was discussed. Similarly, consultations are taking place between UNSO and the UNDP Regional Bureaux for Africa and for Arab States with a view to collaborating closely in the preparation of country programmes, with special reference to the sections relating to desertification control. <sup>7/</sup> However, the stage does not seem to have been reached where a section on desertification control could be included in country programmes, indicating the strategy pursued, the resources assembled and the time frame.

59. The formulation of such a strategy in country programmes should take into account the theoretical and practical work done by some member States which have organized seminars or symposia on the subject and by specialized intergovernmental bodies. It should also provide an excellent occasion and a valuable opportunity for reflection and close collaboration between United Nations organs, the specialized agencies and UNDP with a view to putting into practice, with appropriate adjustments, the recommendations of the world-wide Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, and in particular for a global and multidisciplinary approach to desertification control which would place it within the general framework of the efforts made by the developing countries to bring about overall development. Co-ordination and collaboration within the United Nations system and between the system and the countries concerned is a vital factor for the success of any programming of their development activities in general and of their desertification and drought control activities in particular. <sup>8/</sup>

60. In order to facilitate monitoring of the implementation of such a strategy, UNSO should be enabled to discuss with Governments the value of periodic updating, synchronized either with the periodicity of economic and social development plans or with the country programming cycles.

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<sup>7/</sup> For more details, see DP/455 of 24 March 1980.

<sup>8/</sup> See in this connection the recommendations in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU/REP/76/10) entitled "Report on country programming as an instrument for co-ordination and co-operation at the country level" (Geneva, October 1976).

61. While formulation of the strategy requires the collaboration of a number of United Nations specialized agencies and departments, under UNSO auspices, updating should be possible with the staff resources of the UNSO Regional Office at Ouagadougou, which should carry out that task as a normal part of their activities with the participation of the government departments concerned, the UNDP representative/co-ordinator and the resident personnel of the specialized agencies in either the country or the region.

B. Assistance by UNSO in the identification and formulation of projects

62. The desertification and drought control projects finally selected as priority projects by the Governments of the countries covered by UNSO now number in the hundreds and derive from very varied sources: projects identified and formulated by the countries, by CISS, by the specialized agencies, by UNSO missions, and so on. Countries delve into this huge portfolio of projects in order to select a few and submit them to UNSO for assistance in seeking supplementary outside financing.

63. The striking thing, apart from the length of the list of projects, is their heterogeneity and the variety of criteria that were used in labelling them "priority". It seems necessary, in order to have as clear a view as possible of the criteria for selecting priority projects, or at least those which are submitted to UNSO, to divide them into two categories:

(a) Drought control projects which derive their legitimacy, so to speak, from being included in the CISS programme of activities and which are designed to forestall the effects of any future drought, or to ensure food self-sufficiency, or to accelerate the process of economic and social development;

(b) Desertification control projects, which are intended to contribute to the attainment of one or more objectives of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification. These projects were, for the most part, studied and selected by the Governments in close collaboration with UNSO as part of the activities of the programming missions which visited 18 of the 19 countries.

64. There would be no objection to the use of such varied criteria for determining the priority projects referred to UNSO for the purpose of seeking financing if one were sure that, taken as a whole, the projects selected by the recipient countries and supported by donors are actually the most important ones. While most, if not all, of the projects which have been or are being implemented, are awaiting financing or have merely been formulated seem valuable in themselves as compared with others which were not selected, it does not appear that some of them should have been selected as having greater priority. Some projects or programmes, such as the AGRHYMET Centre, should try to establish a better balance between the technical sophistication which their objectives call for and more rapid training of local personnel, together with optimum use of the results achieved at the user level. The problem remains complex since all the projects on the lists submitted to UNSO under its two mandates are considered extremely urgent and are accorded high priority by the Governments which selected them. This factual situation nevertheless allows the sources of financing some flexibility in allocating resources.

65. However, UNSO should make a special effort of theoretical thinking with a view to eventually elaborating a methodology for identifying and formulating projects that meets the priority needs of countries but is based on carefully established criteria. This would, of course, be greatly facilitated if, as stated above, the objectives assigned by Governments were indicated separately in the national plan and in the country programme. It would be very difficult to impose a single set of criteria valid everywhere and in all circumstances. There should be a few basic principles to guide not only UNSO but also the resident representatives of UNDP, the specialized agencies, the requesting Governments and donor Governments in establishing criteria, if possible acceptable to everyone, for selecting priority projects.

66. Whenever possible, preference should be given to projects which allow the local Governments, their experts, their administration and the population concerned the greatest share in their implementation. The use of outside experts <sup>9/</sup> and of imported equipment should be confined to cases where no alternative is possible. Priority should be given to projects which have the broadest possible impact; for example, a green belt, dune stabilization or reforestation project which would at the same time make it possible to regenerate the soil, provide additional income for the local population (fruit from the trees planted), procure an alternative source of energy (wood from the species planted) and help to keep the population in place should have priority over any planting that would achieve only one of those objectives.

67. Table 3 below shows the breakdown according to mode of execution and the components of projects in relation to resources provided through the Trust Fund and gives amounts and percentages for the following components (excluding project planning and formulation missions): experts, consultants, training, subcontracting and equipment.

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<sup>9/</sup> See the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU/REP/78/3) on the role of experts in development co-operation, Geneva, March 1978.

Table 3. Execution by Governments and by specialized agencies in respect of contributions to the Trust Fund (April 1982)  
(in US dollars)

<u>Heading</u>	<u>Amounts executed by agencies</u>	<u>Amounts executed by Governments</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage of grand total</u>
National personnel	284,210	5,904,630	6,188,840	10.06
Experts <u>10/</u>	5,167,930	-	5,167,930	8.40
Consultants <u>11/</u>	731,751	40,000	771,751	1.25
Training	982,386	433,921	1,416,307	2.30
Subcontracting	7,425,812	1,439,496	8,864,808	14.41
Equipment	16,561,527	4,748,178	21,309,705	34.64
Other <u>12/</u>	2,797,367	12,388,489	15,185,856	24.68
Fixed costs	2,600,620	17,980	2,618,600	4.26
SUBTOTAL	36,551,103	24,972,694		
GRAND TOTAL			61,523,797	100.00
Government execution as a percentage of the total budget			40.59%	

10/ Holding contracts of more than one year.

11/ Holding contracts of up to one year.

12/ "Other" includes, inter alia, operational costs and maintenance.

68. In its previous reports, particularly the report on the role of experts in development co-operation (JIU/REP/78/3), the Joint Inspection Unit came to the conclusion that it was important to find ways of replacing resident foreign experts as project managers. A number of approaches were suggested, including more frequent use of consultant services, even if several visits to projects were necessary, and more frequent conclusion of co-operation agreements combining the advantages of subcontracting and twinning. 13/ These substitutes for resident experts are particularly valuable in the case of UNSO-supported projects:

(a) By bringing about a significant cost reduction, they would make it possible to cover the costs of more UNSO-supported projects;

13/ The idea of twinning makes it possible to establish, at the time when a project is implemented, an ongoing relationship of co-operation between two institutions involved, the beneficial effects of which go beyond the objectives of the project.

(b) They would reduce the difficulties caused by delays in recruiting experts and installing them and their families at the project site;

(c) They would give practical effect to the host Government's authority to manage the project by assigning greater responsibility to national personnel;

(d) Co-operation agreements (see JIU/REP/78/3, paras. 203-212 and annex V) could constitute a major encouragement to donor countries to increase their contributions and arrange for the establishment of an institutional framework that will enable projects to continue after UNSO assistance has reached its final stage.

69. For all these reasons, the Inspector believes that Governments, UNSO and the various executing agencies should make even greater efforts at the project formulation stage to reduce to the strict minimum the proportion of funds allocated to resident foreign experts and to rely more on arrangements under co-operation agreements and on wider use of short-term consultants.

#### IV. THE SEARCH FOR FINANCING

70. Since 1974, and in particular following the enlargement of its mandate in 1979, the amounts of financing for projects submitted to UNSO under its two mandates, some of which were already being implemented at the time of its establishment in 1974, have increased from \$153 million to \$835.6 million as at 28 December 1982. Out of that amount, derived from the following sources, UNSO has mobilized directly \$186.3 million (for more details, see annex I), which is in addition to national financing:

(a) Direct bilateral and multilateral or multibilateral financing: \$584.1 million;

(b) The United Nations Trust Fund for Sudano-Sahelian Activities: \$93.6 million;

(c) Amounts mobilized directly by UNSO for the implementation of projects but not passing through the Trust Fund: \$92.7 million;

(d) National financing: \$65.2 million.

71. Thus, since the establishment of UNSO, the amounts mobilized either directly by the Office or through the Trust Fund have amounted to \$US 186.3 million, or 22 per cent of the total financing of projects summarized in annex I. Table 4 gives a breakdown of UNSO financing and shows that more than half the funds were allocated to the improvement and maintenance of feeder roads and about one tenth of the total to each of the following sectors: management and development of water resources; livestock protection and supply of seeds; reforestation; of strengthening institutional infrastructures. For the three remaining sectors, the percentages are as follows: range management, 4 per cent; alternative sources of energy and energy conservation, 2 per cent; manufacture of agricultural implements and machinery, 1 per cent.

Table 4. Activities financed by UNSO

ACTIVITIES	PROJECTS	STATUS	UNSO CONTRIBUTIONS	
			IN:	
			millions	%
A. Management and development of water resources	(a) Inventory of water-points and dams;	A	17.2	11%
	(b) Drilling of 50 wells (Upper Volta, Gambia, Mauritania) to produce drinking water and to water livestock;	A		
	(c) Construction of reservoirs and earth dams;	A		
	(d) Replenishment of aquifers to combat salinity;	A		
	(e) Management of flood plains;	E		
	(f) Maintenance and repair of sources.	E		
B. Livestock health; crop protection and supply of seeds: emergency assistance with long-term implications	(a) Protection of livestock against epidemic diseases and reconstitution of the herd;	A	17.7	11%
	(b) Supply of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides to farmers;	A		
	(c) Crop protection through the supply of pesticides, construction and management of silos to reduce losses, regularization of the supply of and demand for grains, stabilization of producer and consumer prices and facilitation of distribution in case of emergency.	A		
C. Manufacture of agricultural implements and machinery	Assistance to countries in producing ploughs and carts and bringing them into general use in order to improve output.	A	2.1	1%
D. Reforestation: village reforestation, green belts around towns, erosion control	Planting of some 3,500 hectares around Niamey (Niger), Gao (Mali), Sapone and Koudougou, (Upper Volta), with a view to:			
	- Supplying household energy needs (wood);			
	- Protecting fragile ecosystems against erosion (Cape Verde) and sand dunes (Senegal and Somalia);			
	- Improving the local environment: protection against sand-storms, creation of shade (Niger, Mali, Upper Volta);			
	- Improving the income of villagers (fruit trees and productive trees such as <u>acacia</u> or <u>senegal</u> in the Sudan over an area of 26,000 feddans);			
	- Increasing the population's awareness of the problem of desertification.	E	15.0	10%
E. Range management	Management of pastureland to ensure balanced development and effective desertification control in Mali (lake district), the Sudan (El Odaya, northern Kordofan) and the Upper Volta (ORD, Sahel).	E	5.6	4%

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Table 4. (continued)

ACTIVITIES	PROJECTS	STATUS	UNSO CONTRIBUTIONS	
			IN:	
			millions	%
F. Construction, improvement and maintenance of priority pastureland roads	(a) Reconstruction and maintenance of 150 km of roads in Chad;	A	79.3	51%
	(b) Construction and maintenance of 1,200 km in the Gambia, Senegal, Mali, the Upper Volta, the Niger and Mauritania for the rehabilitation and development of the rural areas most seriously affected by drought with a view to allowing access in case of emergency and reviewing the infrastructure for ongoing or planned agropastoral activities. This programme has opened up rural area with a population of 550,000, representing in some countries 30 per cent of the total national population.	A		
G. Energy conservation and development of alternative sources of energy	(a) Reducing by 50 to 60 per cent the consumption of traditional fuel (wood) through the use of improved wood-burning cooking stoves (Upper Volta, Niger, Gambia, Senegal);	E	3.4	2%
	(b) Developing the use of wind and sun as sources of energy (Cape Verde, Mali);	E		
	(c) Developing the production and marketing of agricultural waste as a source of energy (briquettes with a groundnut-shell base) and the use of peat;	E		
	(d) Preparation of energy master plans; evaluation of the national consumption of energy; projections of the supply and demand of energy by source; study of energy costs and energy price policies; study of possibilities for the use of alternative sources of energy; formulation of energy master plans (Gambia, Niger).	A	3.4	2%
H. Institutional support	(a) Assistance to national technical departments involved in the planning and programming of desertification control activities (18 countries);	A	15.4	10%
	(b) Strengthening of agro-hydrometeorological services in the States members of CILSS;	E		
	(c) Training in integrated range management in the Sahel;	E		
	(d) Establishment of a department of ecology and forestry in the Institute of the Sahel with a view to facilitating and harmonizing regional policies and activities;	A		
	(e) Seminars on the formulation of a unified desertification control in the CILSS countries; Seminar on the jojoba tree to enable the participants (technicians and decision-makers) to share the experience of the Sudan with regard to the jojoba and, in particular, to learn about its properties in relation to soil conservation and prevention of desert encroachment, and also its industrial uses; seminar on the formulation of research and training programmes in desertification control.	A		
TOTAL			155.7	100%

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72. The significant amounts mobilized by UNSO are an indication of its effectiveness, but they still fall very far short of covering the needs of the countries concerned. However, adjustments could be made in the procedures for mobilizing funds from each of the four sources mentioned in paragraph 70, and this could result in a considerable increase in the sums mobilized, which, according to estimates by the recipient countries and the organizations concerned, are still far below the real needs. These adjustments are discussed in more detail in the following paragraphs.

73. The Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC), in a report which it submitted to the Governing Council of UNEP at its eighth session (UNEP/GC/8/4), stated that "financing was a major constraint on the overall implementation of the recommendations of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, and additional funds and means of financing were required within the United Nations system in order to allow for a more comprehensive response by the system to the 28 recommendations adopted by the Desertification Conference".

74. ACC recommended in its report that high priority should be given, within each of the United Nations agencies and bodies concerned, to activities which would complement the present implementation of the Plan of Action by the United Nations system, as well as to the financial support for such activities (UNEP/GC/8/4, para. 39). ACC also expressed the view that "there was an urgent need for external sources of financing to increase their assistance".

75. In the Sudano-Sahelian countries, the capital needed to finance only those drought and desertification control projects which had already been identified with the assistance of UNSO amounted, at the end of 1980, to more than \$1.2 billion, while the real global needs totalled several billion dollars.

#### A. The United Nations Trust Fund for Sudano-Sahelian Activities

76. The Trust Fund was established in 1973, and in 1980 it was included with other funds in the annual United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities. <sup>14/</sup> The financial resources of the Fund consist of voluntary contributions from Governments and governmental, non-governmental and private organizations. In addition, UNEP and UNDP announce each year, after approval by their respective Governing Councils, equal contributions to the Fund which are used to cover UNSO's operating costs and part of its programming activities.

77. Contributions to the Fund are either earmarked by the donors for implementation of a given project in a given country or are made without any specific earmarking, in which case they would be allocated after consultations with the States members of UNSO concerned.

78. The rules governing the use of funds by UNSO derive from the general guidelines established by the Governing Council of UNDP in June 1975 and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 3405 (XXX). UNSO uses the resources of the Trust Fund to finance the following activities:

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<sup>14/</sup> See General Assembly resolution 35/72.

(a) Feasibility studies to ensure that projects are fully formulated. Trust Fund resources are also used to attract larger amounts for use in implementing the project (the "seed money" approach);

(b) Creation of mechanisms to enable more than one donor to participate in the implementation of a major project;

(c) Technical assistance in the pre-investment and investment phases, as required by the project;

(d) Technical assistance and contribution to the implementation of regional and country projects;

(e) Assumption of responsibility for part of a project so that the other components can be financed from other sources;

(f) Where appropriate, meeting the local costs and operating costs of a project for a fixed period, by agreement with the Government, if the latter is unable to bear those costs.

In undertaking these activities, UNSO encourages the execution of projects by government "force account" (en régie) whenever possible.

79. Although contributions to the Trust Fund represent, in comparison with the total resources earmarked for projects, a small proportion (11 per cent), they are nevertheless quite sizeable in absolute terms (\$33.2 million as at the end of 1982 for desertification control activities and \$60.4 million for drought control), and in particular they play a crucial catalytic role in mobilizing larger resources and in filling the gap between two phases of a project or between pre-financing and the time when the amounts pledged actually become available.

80. In the countries he visited, the Inspector was able to appreciate the great flexibility which financing from the Trust Fund lends to UNSO projects, especially because of that part of the contributions which is not earmarked. In many cases, it would have been impossible to start a feasibility study, or to begin project operations on time, or to attract other donors or fill the gap between two phases of a project if UNSO had not been able to draw on the unearmarked contributions to the Fund. It is in the interest both of donor countries and agencies and of the States members of UNSO itself that the unearmarked part of contributions to the Fund should be considerably increased in order to make UNSO projects more flexible and more effective.

B. Mobilization of funds through the Consultative Group for Desertification Control (DESCON)

81. At its thirty-second session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 32/172 authorizing the Executive Director of UNEP to convene a consultative group comprising the organs and organizations of the United Nations system and other organizations, donor countries, multilateral financial agencies and developing

countries having an interest in combating desertification to assist in mobilizing resources for the financing of desertification control activities. 15/

82. The Consultative Group held its first session at Nairobi, from 2 to 5 May 1978 (DESCON I), a second session at Nairobi from 12 to 14 March 1980 (DESCON II) and a third session at Geneva from 26 to 28 August 1981 (DESCON III). The Group had before it at its first session six project proposals, two of which related to the Sudano-Sahelian countries: the transnational green belt in the Sahel and the transnational project for livestock and range management in the Sudano-Sahelian region (SOLAR). At DESCON II, 27 project proposals were submitted, 17 of which came from 13 States members of UNSO, and at DESCON III, 12 project proposals were submitted, including six presented by UNSO on behalf of six member States.

83. The agencies and organs of the United Nations system and the organizations and donor countries which are members of DESCON expressed interest in practically all the projects submitted. In the case of the 23 projects submitted by UNSO on behalf of its members at DESCON II and III, \$13 million out of a total of \$41 million that was sought has been obtained in the form of assistance from UNSO through the Trust Fund.

84. The value of DESCON as a mechanism for mobilizing resources to combat desertification is therefore unquestionable and its methods of work are being enhanced with the passage of time, judging by the procedural improvements adopted by DESCON III, such as the appointment by each country submitting a project of a representative who would not only attend the DESCON session but would serve as the focal point in the country for pursuing the negotiations leading to the signing of agreements for financing. The participation of UNSO in the work of DESCON is therefore of prime importance.

85. Nevertheless, among the conditions laid down for the consideration of projects submitted to DESCON, 16/ there is one that the countries visited find oppressive and would, quite reasonably, like to have relaxed. The condition in question is that countries must commit themselves in advance for 60 per cent of the cost of a project before it is submitted to DESCON. Although so high a figure is the best means of establishing the interest and priority which countries attach to the projects they submit, some of the Sudano-Sahelian countries, and especially the poorest among them, may well have a case for the lowering or removal of the barrier, by way of exception, so far as they are concerned. According to information obtained from UNSO, this clause was not applied to projects submitted to DESCON III.

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15/ For the membership of DESCON, see document A/35/411, pp. 5-6.

16/ See the report of ACC to the Governing Council of UNEP at its tenth session (ACC/1981/33 of 12 October 1981), and in particular para. 23 concerning the improvement of DESCON's work.

86. Some of the countries visited also argued, quite reasonably in our opinion, that the rule limiting the number of projects submitted to DESCON to one project per country was not fair, since some countries are more seriously affected than others by desertification, which threatens most if not all of their territory over an area of hundreds of thousands of kilometres, whereas in other countries it affects only limited areas.

87. The slowness in mobilizing funds through DESCON was another point mentioned as a cause of concern by the countries visited. This slowness is due to a number of reasons, including lack of instructions to the representatives of donor organizations or countries attending DESCON sessions, which means that they cannot directly commit their principals but have to refer back to the competent authorities, with resulting delays.

88. All these questions could be the subject of recommendations by ACC 17/ with a view to expediting and making more effective the work of DESCON and encouraging greater fairness in the search for funds mobilized through the Group.

C. The search for bilateral and multilateral financing

89. From 1973 to 1978, UNSO was concerned exclusively with drought control and, as a result of the development of project planning and execution, the number of projects undertaken with UNSO assistance by way of drought-related recovery and rehabilitation activities increased from 52 in 1975 (21 regional projects and 31 country projects), estimated at approximately \$153 million, to 129 (32 regional projects and 97 country projects), requiring total financing of more than \$700 million. By the end of 1982, more than \$431 million had been mobilized from various sources, especially bilateral and multilateral sources. Of that amount, UNSO mobilized more than \$130 million, of which \$60.4 million was raised through the Trust Fund. 18/ For more details, see the first part of table 5 in annex I, which gives the figures as at 28 December 1982.

90. After 1978 UNSO was able, in addition to its drought control functions, to undertake intensive activities for the implementation of the second mandate. This led to the identification of 258 projects requiring financing of \$710 million, of which \$404 million is already pledged by bilateral and multilateral sources. UNSO has mobilized directly more than \$56 million, including \$33.2 million through the Trust Fund (all the figures given in this paragraph are as at 28 December 1982 (see annex I, table 6)).

91. Whatever the position with regard to financing, most of these funds come from a few Western European countries. UNSO should therefore be enabled to intensify its efforts vis-à-vis the rest of the developed countries in other continents and

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17/ See the criteria established by the high-level group of experts (DESCON 3/2), as endorsed and elaborated by ACC (UNEP/GC.9/4/Add.1).

18/ A/37/209.

those developing countries which are potential donors, with a view to having all of them become more involved in the financing of drought and desertification control projects.

92. In addition, it can only be beneficial for UNSO to involve potential donor countries in the project identification and formulation phase, as it is already doing on a still limited scale. This would shorten the time lag between the identification of a project and its financing by the donor country or countries. It would also make it unnecessary to update, or even amend, a project document prepared in the absence of any potential donor in order to meet whatever criteria the latter may establish.

93. UNSO should continue, whenever possible, to arrange meetings of potential donors to consider with it the possibility of allocating resources to projects which have not yet obtained financing. This would have the effect of reducing the time lag and probably of involving more than one donor in each project that was considered. It would also be useful if UNSO either was accorded the right to be invited to participate in the meetings of institutions of donor countries, such as the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC), when that is possible, or was requested to submit project proposals under its programme.

94. The Inspector had the impression that UNSO enjoyed considerable support both from the recipient countries and from a good number of donor countries; this seems apparent from the contacts he made and from the summary records of discussions in the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Governing Councils of UNDP and UNEP. In this connection, UNSO's special role would be performed more effectively if it could be invited to attend, or to submit proposals to, the meetings of intergovernmental development finance bodies.

95. UNSO should continue as a regular practice, whenever possible, to involve in the search for financing a qualified and authorized representative of the requesting country and to put him in touch with the potential donor country or countries; this would enable the two parties to negotiate the terms of implementation directly and in a practical manner at the field level, thus shortening the time needed to obtain funds.

D. Value of the methods used by UNSO in mobilizing funds

96. As far as the mobilization of additional financing is concerned, the value of the innovative methods for technical co-operation introduced by UNSO seems to extend beyond its programme alone. These innovations might be applicable in other sectors of economic and social activities also. At a time when resources for traditional technical co-operation are tending to decrease in real terms, the principles and methods applied by UNSO would merit consideration in order to make it easier to obtain resources to offset the decline in funds allocated to technical co-operation. In this connection, it is edifying to note that the Secretary-General, in his report of 30 June 1982 on the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa (A/37/296), of which the Economic and Social Council took note in resolution 1982/54 of 29 July 1982, stated that "the consultative technical meetings do not seem to be the only means of securing

external funding. Another approach would be for ECA, OAU and the specialized agencies of the United Nations to assist countries, after consulting with potential donor agencies on specific projects, in formulating and presenting their requests and even to help them later with negotiations to mobilize the necessary funding."

97. When seeking ways of improving both qualitative and quantitative technical co-operation, ACC could perhaps consider to what extent the method applied by UNSO and the approach suggested by the Secretary-General to mobilize funding for the programme of the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa would be applicable to other areas of technical co-operation.

#### V. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

98. Since the staff at its headquarters and its Regional Office is relatively small, UNSO relies on the technical services of UNDP, UNEP and the specialized agencies and on the network of UNDP resident representatives to provide all necessary technical support to the implementation of the drought and desertification control projects for which it is responsible and, if need be, to monitoring, evaluation and follow-up. This is essential, for reasons of efficiency, and makes it possible to avoid duplication and to keep UNSO staffing at a reasonable level.

##### A. Project implementation and monitoring

99. The implementation of UNSO-assisted projects can take various forms, especially as regards the main body entrusted with the task by the project document. This may be a specialized agency of the United Nations system, or the UNDP Office for Projects Execution (OPE), or a government department of the country concerned.

100. The impression gained from a visit to the field is that implementation by specialized agencies or by OPE does not appear, as a rule, to pose any particular problems in the case of drought and desertification control projects which require specific solutions. Obvious exceptions were, however, noted in some countries. Implementation by Governments should, according to the Governments themselves, be more frequent than is still the case. The Inspector emphasizes the importance of government execution and recalls, in this connection, paragraph 66 above.

101. The following paragraphs will therefore deal mainly with the principal problems encountered by Governments in the implementation of desertification and drought control projects which are completely or partially financed by UNSO.

102. Some of the Governments visited would like - quite reasonably, it seems - to be entrusted with most projects, particularly those relating to the construction of feeder roads to provide access to areas affected by drought or desertification, just as they are in the case of reforestation operations. Such projects call for the mobilization of a labour force with varying degrees of skill, which is often available locally and does not require the use of highly sophisticated equipment. It is these projects, and a number of others falling in the same category, that

lend themselves best to the involvement of the populations concerned. In more than one case, implementation by government departments, with practically no assistance except that of the local population - other than a few indispensable experts or consultants - resulted in substantial savings which were used to exceed the quantitative targets of the project; one example is the gum-tree plantations in the Sudan, where the participation of the local population in the implementation of the project produced results 40 per cent greater than originally planned, without any increase in costs.

103. Where implementation is entrusted to Governments but the recruitment of some experts and the procurement of some equipment are left to the specialized agencies or to OPE, government departments would like to be consulted more closely and have a say on a number of important points, such as the need to recruit experts or consultants with a thorough knowledge of the country and its specific conditions, the possibility of procuring local equipment whenever feasible, and effective participation in drafting the terms of reference, inviting tenders and choosing equipment or contractors and in organizing the training required for the implementation and continuity of the project. UNSO should continue to encourage on-the-job training, on real problems affecting the country, locally or in neighbouring countries rather than outside the region.

104. UNSO should assist the Sudano-Sahelian countries so that measures will be taken at the project document formulation phase to ensure that Governments are not faced with the problems mentioned in the preceding paragraph. UNSO should also give due attention to the great number of counterparts with which Governments have to deal in carrying out a project and each of which requires different formalities and procedures, making implementation very difficult. Both at the time of preparation of the project document and during the implementation phase, UNSO should assist the Governments concerned, particularly through its Regional Office for reasons of proximity, with a view to harmonizing procedures and formalities and facilitating the task of Governments in this respect.

#### B. Evaluation and follow-up

105. Most projects under UNSO auspices provide for a tripartite review generally comparable, as regards procedure and consequences, to the tripartite reviews applied to other projects in accordance with the instructions given in the UNDP policies and procedures manual. The overall purpose of such a review, whether made during the project or when it is completed, is to verify that the various stages of the project are carried out as planned and to take whatever corrective measures may be necessary if and when the overall objectives of the project are revised or reoriented. It has little in common with an evaluation, which would be aimed at determining the project's impact on the physical or human environment, gauging the extent to which the implementation of the project contributes to the medium-term and long-term goals of desertification and drought control in particular and of the economic and social development of the country in general and, finally, to extracting lessons in order to improve the formulation and execution of future projects.

106. While UNSO should not be forced to increase the cost of its projects by including additional evaluation expenses which would have to be deducted from the sums available for carrying out its projects, it ought to consider the possibility of adopting a simple and inexpensive procedure within the tripartite review itself to assess their impact. <sup>19/</sup> This would necessitate determining very carefully from the outset, in the case of major projects, the short-term, medium-term and long-term objectives and, so far as possible, the expected impact of the project on desertification and drought control in particular and the development of the country in general, and then requesting the parties concerned to make, at the time of the tripartite review, a special effort to assess the extent to which the project has contributed to the achievement of those objectives, what changes have to be made and what measures must be taken to achieve them without, of course, exceeding the funding which might be available.

107. The inclusion of meaningful parameters or ratios in the financial reports on project implementation would mean that the tripartite review exercise could be based on quantified data that would allow the effectiveness of projects to be measured. UNSO should take steps to introduce these recommendations in project documents whenever it is considered feasible and necessary.

108. UNSO, both at headquarters and at its Regional Office, should also consider the possibility of undertaking, as part of its regular activities, occasional reviews of the methodology, procedure and impact of its programme of activities. A comparative study of similar UNSO-assisted projects, using statistical data and field surveys made by UNSO staff members during their programming, formulation and implementation review missions, would make it possible to identify the positive contributions of these projects and pin-point their weak spots with a view to correcting them.

109. UNSO should consider the possibility of participating, as part of its activities and in collaboration with the specialized agencies or the United Nations departments concerned, in thematic evaluations of certain drought and desertification control activities, particularly at the level of priority sectors, such as new sources of energy or the application of basic research and of certain aspects which are common to most drought and desertification control projects, such as training, follow-up or measures to prevent serious defects.

110. Turning from evaluation to follow-up, the Inspector noted that, in some cases, projects carried out with external financing experience difficulties in continuing, for lack of either working capital or human support. UNSO should continue, as it has already been doing for a number of projects, to satisfy itself, before recommending the commencement of a new activity, that it would not be more prudent to advise the continuation of a pre-existing similar project and to discuss the matter with the Government concerned and examine with it ways and means of ensuring that, when current external financing comes to an end, such a project would not

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<sup>19/</sup> See the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU/REP/78/3) on the role of experts in development co-operation, particularly para. 65 on the tripartite review and para. 66 on project evaluation.



stop for lack of funds. Furthermore, UNSO should continue to make systematic use of national structures for implementing projects, thus enabling the recipient countries to create or strengthen national capacities to maintain works that have been completed or to carry out similar works in the future.

## VI. RELATIONS AND CO-ORDINATION

111. In carrying out its functions and responsibilities, UNSO co-operates with various United Nations bodies and agencies, including UNEP, UNESCO, FAO, the FAO Office for Special Relief Operations, ILO, WMO, WHO, UNIDO, ECA, the World Bank, UNICEF, the United Nations University, the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the World Food Programme, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development of the United Nations Secretariat. <sup>20/</sup> UNSO also works closely with the UNDP Regional Bureaux for Africa and for Arab States on all matters affecting their drought and desertification control programmes and activities in the 19 Sudano-Sahelian countries. Regular contacts are also maintained between UNSO and other sections and units of UNDP through co-ordination arrangements.

### A. Relations

112. In reply to the questionnaire mentioned in paragraph 9, which JIU sent to various organizations of the United Nations system, and in particular to the question about the relations between them and UNSO, some organizations had a number of comments to make concerning their relationship with UNSO. WHO suggests that health activities should be linked to UNSO programmes. In particular, the UNSO water management programme should be co-ordinated with the WHO programme on "promotion of the environment and public health". The WHO Regional Office for Africa and the UNSO Regional Office at Ouagadougou should be able to co-ordinate their activities at the regional level and examine the possibility of drawing up, as suggested by WHO, a joint WHO/UNSO plan of action in accordance with the aim of "health for all by the year 2000" in the States affected by drought and desertification.

113. FAO believes that its relations with UNSO can be considered to be good and close whenever a specific activity or project is involved. In particular, UNSO/FAO emergency relief projects have, in the opinion of FAO, been carried out in a generally satisfactory manner. FAO also feels that the programming missions organized by UNSO are an excellent approach to the problems of desertification and that the reports produced are generally good and contain very useful information. FAO regrets, however, that in many cases it has been called upon only when the project has been formulated and discussed with the Government. While continuing to favour the carrying out of joint activities with UNSO, FAO would like a precise definition of their respective roles, with UNSO increasing the awareness of Governments and mobilizing funds while FAO makes available to the countries concerned its experience in the field and its technical capacity for carrying out jointly agreed activities and projects.

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<sup>20/</sup> For more details, see A/37/209.

114. UNESCO expresses the view that the impact of UNSO activities on drought and desertification is very positive, since the activities undertaken involve the major factors of development (studies, planning, training, strengthening of infrastructures, etc.), and notes the establishment of extremely close co-operation between UNSO and the UNESCO Division of Ecological Sciences, which is the division most directly concerned with the problems of drought and desertification. UNESCO suggests that UNSO, while continuing to seek the financial support needed for sectoral projects, might place the emphasis on integrated pilot projects, the results of which should make for a better definition of physical planning and desertification control strategies. In conjunction with such pilot projects, research, training and demonstration activities should be encouraged with a view to promoting endogenous development and the dissemination and application of the results.

115. Finally, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) points out that, although General Assembly resolution 32/197 assigned to it the role of co-ordinating United Nations activities at the regional level, its contacts with UNSO and CILSS have remained limited. ECA notes that, as far as the future is concerned, a joint UNSO/ECA seminar was to be held towards the end of 1982 and two joint studies are included in the programme for the period 1982-1983. One will deal with the problems of deforestation and soil degradation as a result of population pressure and the use of wood for household purposes and the other with the exploration of groundwater resources. ECA is firmly resolved, however, to support any approach aimed at strengthening its co-operation with UNSO.

116. At the regional level, CILSS is UNSO's principal partner. While UNSO is closely associated at the level of the Council of Ministers and the Conference of Heads of State of CILSS, working relations with the CILSS secretariat require a dynamic approach permitting, as the need arises, a regular review of the joint programmes and activities of the two agencies and effective collaboration at the field level.

117. In this connection, the periodic meetings between senior officials of the two agencies recommended in the conclusions of the joint document drawn up at Dakar in 1979 might provide a context for increased collaboration. Judicious use might also be made of the presence of the UNSO Regional Office in Ouagadougou to strengthen contacts and co-operation between the two agencies, facilitate harmonization of their methods for project identification and planning and promote a pooling of efforts to mobilize resources. Such harmonization would also obviate a number of problems linked to conflicts between regional and national priorities.

118. UNSO and the organizations of the United Nations system should encourage the States of the Sudano-Sahelian region to implement drought and desertification control projects themselves, either directly or by drawing, if possible, on the expertise of the countries of the region or other developing countries; this would give substance to greater participation by Governments and local populations, promote the strengthening of technical co-operation among developing countries and set their inter-State agencies on a better footing.

119. Should the idea of making CILSS an executing agency (CILSS Council of Ministers, Praia, 1981) become a reality, new modalities for co-operation between CILSS and UNSO would have to be considered.

120. UNSO maintains close relations with regional bodies, which welcome its assistance; they include the Institute of the Sahel, the AGHYMET Centre and the LIPTAKA-GOURMA Authority. However, WAEC would like its relations with UNSO, which have thus far been limited to meetings and exchanges of information, to be developed further and culminate in specific collaboration activities, through the dispatch of joint missions to mobilize resources and secure joint financing for projects in countries and sectors of common interest. In that connection, WAEC would have appreciated active UNSO participation in its renewable sources of energy project, which is intended to reduce the consumption of fuel wood in the Sudano-Sahelian region.

#### B. Co-ordination

121. In accordance with recommendation 27 of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification and General Assembly resolution 32/172 of 19 December 1977, concerning the United Nations Conference on Desertification, an inter-agency working group on desertification was established for the purpose of co-ordinating the activities of the United Nations system relating to implementation of the Plan of Action. The working group has been meeting regularly, twice a year, at Geneva since 1978. Its activities are still in their initial phase; they comprise the preparation of a compendium of activities of the United Nations system relating to the implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification and the drafting of a questionnaire in order to obtain comparable information on system-wide activities under the Plan of Action. UNSO is a member of the group.

122. To facilitate system-wide co-ordination, UNSO organized at Dakar, from 30 May to 1 June 1979, a meeting of UNDP resident representatives in countries of the region and representatives of the other United Nations bodies concerned and regional bodies. The conclusions of this meeting recognize the need for systematic national planning and co-ordination and for regional co-operation involving innovative approaches. In addition, UNSO should keep the resident representatives regularly informed of its activities so that they can ensure that effective priority is given to drought and desertification control activities, both in the course of their everyday dealings with Governments and when assistance programmes are being prepared.

123. UNSO also organized national seminars in two countries (Kenya and Mauritania) to facilitate the establishment of national plans of action to combat desertification. This experience was extremely useful. It would be helpful to organize a regional seminar on the following topics: planning and co-ordination; implementation by Governments and populations; and rules for project implementation and monitoring. Some of the countries visited emphasized the value of such an initiative, which would allow exchanges of information and experience and would be conducive to the adoption of uniform rules for project planning, co-ordination and implementation.

124. At such a seminar, institutional rules could be studied in depth, while both operating rules for national co-ordinating committees and the nature of potential UNSO assistance in this area could be defined. These rules should concern project co-ordination and co-ordination between projects and among a number of ministerial departments so that not only UNSO but other regional and international bodies and donors would need to deal with only a single national spokesman. Such co-ordination at the national level is essential, since it ensures programme follow-up and consistency in the selection of priorities while affording a considerable saving of time for everyone involved.

125. Anything that might make the proposed national co-ordinating committees bureaucratic should be avoided. Their role should be limited to gathering, analysing and distributing information and promoting joint decision-making by all the State authorities concerned. Thus, responsibility for project implementation, monitoring and evaluation should rest, as it does in the Sudan and Kenya, with the appropriate governmental technical services and not with the committees. UNSO should consider the possibility of providing human and financial support for the setting up of these national co-ordinating committees.

126. On the basis of the considerations put forward in paragraph 124, the Inspector believes that the proposed seminar might lead to a meeting of specialized agencies with national services, regional organizations and donors with a view to finding solutions to the problems mentioned above, particularly in paragraphs 59 to 68 and 105 to 110. The draft programme for the seminar or seminars might be prepared by UNSO in consultation with States and specialized agencies and be submitted to the inter-agency working group referred to in paragraph 121. An inter-agency group co-ordinated by UNSO and composed of the most competent individuals in the field should prepare in advance a document outlining a strategy for combating drought and desertification in Africa, taking into account the recommendations of the world-wide Plan of Action to Combat Desertification. Such a document would facilitate the deliberations of the seminar and should make possible, in addition to exchanges of experience by the participants, the formulation of a clear strategy which will, of course, take into account the specific features of different geographical areas, countries and micro-climates.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

127. The Sudano-Sahelian countries are severely affected by the damage resulting from progressive desertification. This damage has an even harsher and more tragic impact on the inhabitants of some of those countries (members of CILSS), where a persistent drought drags on and is tending to become structural. These countries are all making intense efforts to combat drought and desertification and are trying to mobilize international assistance, both bilateral and multilateral. In this context, UNSO makes a contribution, which is appreciated by the countries concerned, at several levels: project identification and formulation; assistance in project implementation; and assistance in the formulation of a strategy to combat drought and desertification in the region. The Inspector's visit to several countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region enabled him to gauge the great value of UNSO activities and the importance attached by those countries to the

intensification and expansion of such activities, which, taken as a whole, they find positive, effective and expeditious. As a result of discussions with the Governments concerned and with UNDP resident representatives, visits to a number of projects, pertinent analysis of the replies to the questionnaire mentioned above and several working sessions with senior officials of UNSO, the Inspector has drawn up a number of recommendations aimed at making UNSO activities even more effective in fully meeting the urgent and immense needs of the Sudano-Sahelian countries (paras. 1-16).

#### A. Mandates and organization of UNSO

128. Originally, UNSO covered only the eight States members of CIISS and its task was to co-ordinate the medium-term and long-term activities of the United Nations system for the rehabilitation and development of their economies, which had been seriously affected by drought. Since December 1978, following the adoption by the United Nations Conference on Desertification of a Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, UNSO has been entrusted with the implementation of the Plan of Action in the eight CIISS countries and in 11 other Sudano-Sahelian countries. UNSO's activities range from the identification to the monitoring of country and regional projects and include formulation, evaluation and the search for additional bilateral or multilateral financing, either through the Trust Fund for the Sudano-Sahelian region or from direct contributions to projects. In carrying out its second mandate, relating to desertification control, UNSO acts on behalf of UNEP under the UNDP/UNEP joint venture. Although the geographical area covered by UNSO is enormous, extending from West Africa to East Africa, and although its task is complex, involving the many and varied problems created by drought and desertification, its size remains modest: 11 Professional and 21 General Service staff members in New York, and 6 Professional and 16 General Service staff members at the UNSO Regional Office in Ouagadougou (paras. 17-46).

#### Recommendation 1

129. Having thoroughly considered UNSO's mandates, the Inspector came to the conclusion that, while its activities should be placed in the context of a global and integrated effort to combat the medium-term and long-term consequences of both drought and desertification, the ill-effects of which combine and aggravate each other, UNSO should energetically continue its specific activities to combat drought, the consequences of which are still seriously affecting several Sudano-Sahelian countries and could, unless prompt action is taken to combat them, make the desertification process markedly worse.

#### Recommendation 2

130. The Inspector recommends that, if UNSO's mandate and geographical area of responsibility remain as they are, its staff should not exceed the present relatively modest size, so that the Office may retain the advantages of an uncomplicated and operational structure. It would, however, be advisable to strengthen the Regional Office at Ouagadougou and diversify the specialized skills of the Professional staff assigned to it so that they could cover as much as possible of the range of activities required by the Sudano-Sahelian countries and

thus dispense, as far as is practical, with the services of consultants in the identification, formulation and monitoring of projects, and also in the organization of seminars and the provision of assistance to strengthen national services.

B. Planning, programming, identification and formulation of projects

131. UNSO provides assistance to the States members of CISS in carrying out, up to now, 119 projects (91 country projects and 28 regional projects) under its first mandate and 236 projects (219 country projects and 17 regional projects) in 19 countries under the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification (second mandate). A good number of these projects, which emerged either from CISS recommendations or as a result of inter-agency programming missions, have been identified or formulated and, in some cases, have been executed or begun with UNSO assistance (paras. 47-69).

Recommendation 3

132. While appreciating the quality and the results of the efforts made by UNSO in the planning, programming, identification and formulation of projects, the Inspector recommends that the planning and programming of drought and desertification control projects by UNSO, at the request of Governments, should be closely linked to economic and social planning, wherever such planning is used. That would make it possible to verify that the priority accorded to such projects, and the criteria for selecting them, were in harmony with the priorities and criteria contained in national economic and social development plans within the sectors and subsectors concerned. In order to facilitate such planning at the national level, UNSO should encourage the formulation of a global strategy for combating drought and desertification in Africa by co-ordinating the activities of an inter-agency group composed of the most competent individuals in the field, who would draw up a document to be considered at a regional seminar which it would organize and which would bring together national technical services, regional organizations, relevant United Nations organs and specialized agencies and donors.

C. The search for financing

133. The funds mobilized to finance UNSO-assisted projects increased from \$152 million in 1975 to \$835.6 million as at 28 December 1982 (\$431.3 million under the first mandate and \$404.3 million under the second), through:

(a) Direct bilateral, multilateral or multibilateral financing, including fund-raising through DESCON (\$584.1 million);

(b) The Trust Fund (\$93.6 million);

(c) Financing mobilized directly by UNSO but not passing through the Trust Fund (\$92.7 million);

(d) National financing (\$65.2 million).

These sizeable amounts clearly indicate the effectiveness of methods used by UNSO to mobilize financial resources for combating drought and desertification. However, the Inspector has come to the conclusion that it is still possible to improve the procedures for mobilizing funds in ways that would significantly increase the amounts raised, which, according to estimates by the recipient countries and the organizations concerned, fall far short of the real needs (paras. 70-97).

#### Recommendation 4

134. The Inspector recommends a number of measures, which are spelt out in the body of the report. As a first stage, the Inspector believes that UNSO should concentrate its efforts in the following areas:

(a) As regards the portion of financing earmarked for a specific project, increased involvement of potential donors in identifying projects, or even in drawing up project documents with a view to inducing them to assume responsibility for their financing and avoiding having to update project documents or make them more explicit at the request of a number of potential donors;

(b) In addition, the Inspector recommends that UNSO should try to get donors to accept the principle of setting aside even a small part of their contribution for the UNSO activities referred to in paragraph 80; this would give UNSO more scope for flexibility and adjustment.

#### D. Project implementation, monitoring, evaluation and follow-up

135. Since its staff at headquarters and in the Regional Office is of moderate size, UNSO relies on the technical services of UNDP, UNEP and the specialized agencies and on the network of UNDP resident representatives to provide all the technical support that is needed for the implementation of the drought and desertification control projects entrusted to it and for monitoring, evaluation and, if need be, follow-up to such projects. While appreciating the advantages of such a division of labour, especially in keeping the size of UNSO's staff at a modest level and in avoiding duplication of functions, the Inspector advocates a number of improvements (paras. 98-119).

#### Recommendation 5

136. Project implementation should be more frequently entrusted to the Governments concerned, either directly or with the assistance of the specialized agencies under the supervision of UNSO and of the funding bodies. The local populations concerned should also be closely involved in carrying out the projects, whenever possible. On-the-job training or training in the countries concerned, on a basis of regional co-operation and in the conditions prevailing in the region, is preferable to training outside the region. It should also be possible to consider trying - even in a limited way and without diverting UNSO from its urgent tasks - to make an occasional but thorough evaluation of the impact of its activities, in order better to adapt its efforts to the needs and priorities of the region. Exchanges of experience on these and other matters could be the subject of regional seminars, as described in detail in paragraphs 124 to 126.

E. Relations and co-ordination

137. In carrying out its functions and responsibilities, UNSO co-operates with various units of the United Nations Secretariat and the specialized agencies. UNSO also collaborates closely with the relevant regional bureaux of UNDP. Regular contacts are maintained between UNSO and other units and sections of UNDP, through co-ordination arrangements (paras. 111-126).

Recommendation 6

138. As a result of his visit to the field and his thorough discussions with government departments, UNDP resident representatives/co-ordinators and regional intergovernmental organizations, including ECA, WEAC and CILSS, the Inspector recommended that UNSO should pay constant attention to strengthening its collaboration with the latter organizations in order to bring it up to the same level as the excellent relations it maintains with the Governments of the 19 countries. UNSO should accord high priority to assisting these Governments to establish, at their request, national committees to co-ordinate drought and desertification control activities. The committees should have a simple structure and a small staff, and they cannot replace or overlap with government services, their role being simply to co-ordinate. However, they should be presided over by the appropriate national service in order to achieve the required efficiency in their co-ordinating role. The national service in question should have sufficient authority to ensure the desired co-ordination.

F. Value of the methods used by UNSO in mobilizing funds

139. In paragraphs 96 and 97, the Inspector made clear the value of the methods employed by UNSO in mobilizing funds and, in that connection, quoted the report of the Secretary-General on the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa (A/37/296 of 30 June 1982), which suggests that a new approach, very similar to the method applied by UNSO, should be used to finance that programme.

Recommendation 7

140. At a time when resources for technical co-operation are tending to decrease in real terms, the Secretary-General might ask ACC to consider, when seeking ways of improving technical co-operation both qualitatively and quantitatively, to what extent the method applied by UNSO and the new approach suggested above (para. 96) by the Secretary-General himself would be applicable to other areas of technical co-operation, in order to facilitate the mobilization of financing.



## Annex I

Table 5. MEDIUM-TERM AND LONG-TERM REHABILITATION PROGRAMME

(First mandate)

All amounts in millions of US dollars

28 December 1982

	A	B	C	D	E		F	G	H
	Number of projects	G + H Total cost	Financing initially available	Government contribution	Funds mobilized by UNSO		Bilateral funding	C+D+E+F Total financing available	Financing sought
					Trust Fund	Financing otherwise than through the Trust Fund			
Cape Verde	13	14.8	-	0.5	0.8	1.1	3.5	5.9	8.9
Chad	10	42.3	-	0.3	7.3	9.3	-	16.9	25.4
Gambia	9	21.5	3.5	0.5	6.5	2.0	2.5	15.0	6.5
Mali	14	89.2	13.4	0.9	19.7	10.1	29.4	73.5	15.7
Mauritania	15	65.7	3.2	1.2	3.7	25.3	-	33.4	32.3
Niger	13	115.1	14.8	13.2	7.1	9.2	35.8	80.2	34.9
Senegal	13	78.4	-	4.6	7.5	1.4	21.7	35.1	43.3
Upper Volta	10	38.3	12.2	3.7	3.8	10.9	-	30.6	7.7
Country projects	97	465.3	47.1	24.9	56.4	69.3	92.9	290.6	174.7
Regional projects	32	235.5	-	6.2	4.0	0.3	130.2	140.7	94.8
Total (first mandate)	129	700.8	47.1	31.1	60.4	69.6	223.1	431.3	269.5

Source: UNSO statistics.

## Annex I

Table 6. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN OF ACTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION IN THE SUDANO-SAHELIAN REGION

(Second mandate)

	A	B	C	D	E		F	G	H
	Number of projects	G + H Total cost	Financing initially available	Government contribution	Funds mobilized by UNSO		Bilateral funding	C+D+E+F Total financing available	Financing sought
					Trust Fund	Financing otherwise than through the Trust Fund			
Benin	14	15.2	-	3.4	1.3	-	-	4.7	10.5
Cape Verde	6	29.4	7.5	0.3	2.8	1.3	2.0	13.9	15.5
Chad	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Djibouti	9	5.6	-	-	0.2	-	-	0.2	5.4
Ethiopia	8	78.8	63.3	2.0	8.7	1.9	2.4	78.3	0.5
Gambia	16	6.1	-	0.5	1.9	-	-	2.4	3.7
Guinea	12	10.7	0.5	0.1	0.1	-	-	0.7	10.0
Guinea-Bissau	8	9.6	-	0.5	0.1	-	1.2	1.8	7.8
Kenya	8	182.9	167.8	-	0.1	-	-	167.9	15.0
Mali	13	44.8	9.8	0.8	0.9	0.2	1.6	13.3	31.5
Mauritania	18	35.0	7.1	0.4	3.4	5.4	-	16.3	18.7
Niger	22	23.1	0.4	1.2	2.4	-	0.2	4.2	18.9
Nigeria	5	8.9	3.7	-	-	-	-	3.7	5.2
Senegal	26	99.1	6.7	1.1	2.0	10.7	2.4	22.9	76.2
Somalia	17	49.7	21.6	4.8	1.8	-	3.8	32.0	17.7
Sudan	16	39.7	-	11.5	2.8	-	-	14.3	25.4
Uganda	15	14.0	-	0.5	-	-	-	0.5	13.5
United Republic of Cameroon	7	11.7	-	2.4	0.1	-	-	2.5	9.2
Upper Volta	17	38.2	11.2	3.9	2.7	0.3	-	18.1	20.1
Country projects	238	702.5	299.6	33.4	31.3	19.8	13.6	397.7	304.8
Regional projects	20	7.7	-	0.7	1.9	3.3	0.7	6.6	1.1
Total second mandate	258	710.2	299.6	34.1	33.2	23.1	14.3	404.3	305.9
Total first mandate	129	700.8	47.1	31.1	60.4	69.6	223.1	431.3	269.5
Grand total First and second mandates	387	1 411.0	346.7	65.2	93.6	92.7	237.4	835.6	575.4