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PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION: SPECIAL PROGRAMMES OF ASSISTANCE

Assistance to the Palestinian People

Report of the Administrator

Summary

In this report, the Administrator reviews the progress achieved in implementing the Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, particularly in light of Governing Council decision 82/13.

1. Since the twenty-ninth session of the Governing Council, the Administration has continued to give special attention to the implementation of Council decisions 79/18, 81/13 and 82/13 concerning the provision of assistance to the Palestinian people.
2. During 1982, the initial \$3.5 million allocated by the UNDP Governing Council in June 1979, by its decision 79/18, had been fully committed for projects designed to assist the Palestinian people in a variety of sectors, including pre-primary education, technical and vocational training, health manpower development, housing, industrial development, and children's and youth institutions. By March 1983, an amount of \$2.1 million had been expended. In addition, the parties directly concerned had indicated their strong desire to continue to enlarge the programme, both in terms of expanding activities in sectors where projects are already underway, as well as in new fields of activity. The provision by the Council at its last session of \$4 million from the Special Programme Resources for further activities up to 1986 will allow a substantial start on expansion. Additional voluntary contributions are being sought, as well.
3. On the basis of the regular consultations which have taken place during 1982 between the Administrator, represented by a Senior Advisor specifically responsible for UNDP's work in this field, and the parties directly concerned, it was possible to develop by the end of 1982 a "pipeline" of new project proposals for the West Bank and Gaza. The project proposals are described in the annex to this report and were selected on the basis of the following criteria:
 - (a) Activities reflective of the true needs of the Palestinian people and capable of implementation in a manner which will ensure continuation of the activities after the termination of UNDP participation;
 - (b) Activities which would receive the support of all parties concerned and attract the support of potential contributors; and
 - (c) Activities which have a relationship to those initially endorsed by the UNDP Governing Council in 1979.
4. The proposals involve institutions and organizations in the private sector to a greater degree than projects heretofore implemented; they include assistance to community centres, specialized training for the glass and ceramics industry, and assistance to private medical institutions. Consultants retained by the Administrator have been conducting project formulation missions in connection with the new proposals, and it is

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anticipated that implementation of a number of new projects will begin during the course of 1983, subject to the availability of resources. In addition, extensions and new phases of ongoing projects in the fields of health manpower development, the development and strengthening of health institutions, specialized training in agricultural development, and children's institutions will commence during 1983.

5. The project implementation process will be aided considerably by the outposting to Jerusalem of a staff member from the UNDP Office for Projects Execution (OPE) as from March 1983. Continued reliance will nevertheless be placed on the utilization of logistical services made available by virtue of the United Nations' presence in the area, in the interest of keeping administrative and other support costs to an absolute minimum.

6. While the governing arrangements as agreed with the parties concerned have not permitted execution of projects in the West Bank and Gaza in the usual manner by organizations of the United Nations system, it has been possible to utilize the services of International Labour Organization experts in their individual capacities, and efforts are under way to involve the United Nations Environment Programme in a particularly important sanitation project in Gaza.

7. Aside from a single project, already under implementation by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in the Syrian Arab Republic, all project activities currently under way or envisaged for the future are located in the West Bank and Gaza. The flexibility available to UNDP in carrying out its responsibilities in this area of activities will, however, permit the initiation of activities in other locations whenever circumstances so indicate.

8. During the latter part of 1982, the Administrator initiated contacts with potential contributors in order to facilitate the pledging of special contributions in support of the projects being planned for the third programming cycle, as called for by the Governing Council in June 1982 in its decision 82/13. The Administrator recommends that the Council reiterate its appeal to Governments and intergovernmental organizations to supplement the resources available from the Special Programme Resources to carry out this programme of assistance.

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NEW PROJECT PROPOSALS FOR THE WEST BANK AND GAZA

1. Development of Community Centres

Through local community initiatives and with heavy involvement of voluntary organizations, an excellent start has been made on a comprehensive centre in the kasba at Nablus, catering to the educational, social, recreational and cultural needs of the inhabitants of all ages. Preliminary on-site examination by UNDP has provided convincing evidence that provision of modest amounts of equipment, supplies and training opportunities would permit the expansion of this fledgling activity into a meaningful productive centre for community development.

UNDP is also examining similar needs of the Nakhla Quarter Community Centre in Rafah (Gaza), a recently completed facility which seeks funding assistance for programme development.

2. Glass and Ceramics Engineering

UNDP is anxious to respond to perceived needs in the West Bank for specialized training in glass and ceramic engineering technology. The Hebron area is well-known for its expertise in this work and it is foreseen that this new specialization will support the industry, open new job opportunities, increase the skilled manpower in local industries and contribute to foreign currency earnings in the territory.

The project concept covers provision of expertise in glass and ceramic technology training and fellowships for advanced training in glass and ceramic engineering, mechanical engineering and electrical engineering.

3. Sewage Disposal Schemes at Khan Yunis and Rafah

UNDP has been made aware of the critical sanitary problems in various parts of the territories, and after inspection of the situations at Khan Yunis and Rafah is in agreement with local authorities that urgent action is required. The Administrator has concluded that the UNDP mandate does not permit direct action by UNDP in the type of capital development work required. There is reason to believe, however, that under the general aegis of UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) might be able to carry out some of the massive efforts required.

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On several occasions, UNEP has approached UNDP with offers to provide support to development projects in the territories in the general field of water supply, sanitation and health for the Palestinian people, and that organization is now considering possibilities for participating in the Khan Yunis and Rafah projects.

4. Development of Agricultural Education Institutions at Tulkarem and El-Arub

UNDP has examined the existing facilities at Tulkarem and is in agreement with the authorities that relatively modest inputs could transform a marginal institution into a dynamic force for development in the agricultural sector. On the assumption that a similar situation would be found at El-Arub, UNDP proposes that project planning for assistance to the two institutions could be undertaken.

5. Specialized Training for Women

Aside from the pedagogical and nursing fields, women in the territories have little opportunity for training and eventual employment in specialized work. The restriction of advanced education to limited fields (arts, sciences, commerce, engineering, education, medical sciences, and Islamic studies) and the absence of courses in specialties particularly geared to women's participation have led to a lack of job opportunities accompanied by an acute shortage of skilled talent in certain fields.

The project would assist in remedying this situation through courses geared to women's needs, in specializations not presently covered properly. This project would be in addition to work undertaken in support of women's institutions (PAL/79/017).

Major inputs of UNDP would involve equipment and supplies, and expertise and fellowships over a period of perhaps three years.

6. Assistance to Higher Education

UNDP has been anxious to extend its programme of assistance to include the general field of higher education, but various circumstances have combined to prevent the elaboration of a specific project in this field, agreed by all concerned. The conclusion has been reached that it would therefore be preferable to focus on the means of overcoming present general shortages of qualified teaching staff, which are likely to grow as the capacity of universities expands over future years. UNDP is therefore concentrating on developing, through consultations with the institutions and the authorities, a system of post-graduate fellowships in specializations agreed by all concerned as most in need of additionally trained teaching staff.

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7. Ahli Arab Hospital (Ex-Baptist) in Gaza

UNDP has so far limited its assistance to public, governmental hospitals in the West Bank and Gaza. In the interests of a balanced approach, UNDP plans to lend support to health care in the private sector. The Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza, formerly the Baptist Hospital, represents an appropriate institution in this category which fills an important place in the health care field and which is in a position to utilize UNDP assistance effectively. Such assistance would, in the first instance, be provided in the form of medical equipment which is urgently required but which is not available from other resources.

UNDP also has under consideration a request for similar assistance from St. Luke's Hospital in Nablus.

8. Advisory Services in Agricultural Production

Citrus producers in Gaza have the capability of establishing suitable processing facilities, but would welcome UNDP advisory services in some technical aspects, including enhanced methods of production and marketing.

In the West Bank, tomato growers in the Jordan Valley and grape growers in the Bethlehem/Hebron area are anxious to receive specialized advice through UNDP on production and marketing problems.

9. Assistance to Gaza Fishermen's Co-operative

The Gaza Fishermen's Co-operative, established in 1973, has the objective of improving equipment, facilities and marketing conditions in a currently deteriorating situation. Restricted fishing grounds, high costs of equipment, fuel and transport, and the absence of any port facilities combine to depress production and economic viability of the industry. UNDP will assist the Co-operative in exploring possibilities for improving equipment, solving marketing problems, and seeking solutions for the number one problem: the absence of port and berthing facilities.

10. Reserve for Projects Outside the West Bank

While current conditions do not encourage specific planning and allocation of funds, the Administrator considers that a substantial financial reserve must be maintained for potential projects to be located elsewhere than the West Bank and Gaza. This mention is made pro memoria.

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