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PROGRAMME PLANNING: THE THIRD PROGRAMMING CYCLE, 1982-1986

COUNTRY AND INTERCOUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

Note by the Administrator

Pursuant to a request by the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the United Nations, the Administrator is circulating, in the annex to this note, for the information of delegations, the Final Declaration of the Kuwait Regional Seminar on Appraisal of United Nations technical assistance held in Kuwait from 12 - 17 March 1983.

STATE OF KUWAIT
MINISTRY OF PLANNING
IN CO-OPERATION WITH
U.N.D.P.

FINAL DECLARATION
KUWAIT REGIONAL SEMINAR
ON
APPRAISAL OF U.N. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
KUWAIT, 12 - 17 MARCH 1983

Upon the invitation of the State of Kuwait, the "Kuwait Regional Seminar on Appraisal of The United Nations' Technical Assistance" was held in Kuwait during the period 12 - 17 March 1983.

The Seminar was sponsored by the Ministry of Planning in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme Office in Kuwait (UNDP).

The Seminar was attended by Representatives from the following States:-

- Bahrain
- Iraq
- Kuwait
- Oman
- Qatar
- Saudi Arabia
- United Arab Emirates
- Yemen
- Representative from the Secretariat of the Gulf Co-operation Council "G.C.C."

The Seminar started with opening statements delivered by H.E. Mr. Abdul Latif Yousef Al-Hamad, the Minister of Finance and Planning of the State of Kuwait, and Mr. Othman Abdul Salam Hashim, the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme in Kuwait.

After the Opening Ceremony, the Seminar took place at the Computer Training Centre of the Ministry of Planning.

The sessions of the Seminar were organized according to the Agenda which was prepared by the organizers as follows:-

- A - Discussion on the basic information contained in the document which was prepared by the Ministry of Planning, collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and which consists of:-
- * UNDP Organizational Structure and the active departments of U.N. in the field of technical co-operation.
 - * Role of Executing Agencies in implementing the development projects and programmes.
 - * Country Programme for Technical Assistance.
 - * The experience of the State of Kuwait in preparing the Country Programme.
 - * Design, formulation and appraisal of Project Documents.
 - * Regional, Inter-regional and Global Programmes.
 - * Financial Resources.
- B - Discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of the U.N. Technical Assistance.
- C - Recommendations on the appraisal of U.N. Technical Assistance.
- The participants expressed the appreciation of the Arab Countries towards the important role of UNDP and the Specialized Agencies

in supporting and implementing the development projects and programmes in the developing countries, especially the Arab Countries.

Recognizing the importance of this role, the participants reviewed the document which is submitted by the Seminar organizers. It includes a comprehensive revision of the organizational structure of the U.N. agencies which specializes in technical co-operation and their executive role in studying, formulating, implementing and following up the National Developmental Projects and Programmes. They also discussed positive aspects which help in implementing these Technical Programmes, and the negative aspects which impedes their implementation.

I. Advantages of U.N. Technical Assistance:-

1. The technical assistance provided through United Nations and its specialized agencies, is considered one of the active resources which help in:
 - Preparing and implementing developmental projects, training of national staff, and transfer of technology and skills through providing expertise, advisory and consultancy services and fellowships and training courses.
2. The Country Programme for technical assistance provides the best approach for co-ordination and management of U.N.

activities, in which all Experts and Projects are gathered under one umbrella. So all these projects can be supervised, followed-up and evaluated. This programme gives in advance the chance to know the needs of the concerned authorities of technical assistance for the coming years, and emphasizes the availability of capacities and obligations which is required from the country such as Finance and Counterparts.

II. Disadvantages of U.N. Technical Assistance:-

- 1 - The delay in receiving the experts nominations and recruitment measures through UNDP - which takes a long time in most cases for one year - results in extending the duration of the project and delaying its implementation, in case of unavailability of experts in time and of the required number.
- 2 - The unavailability of certain high calibre experts - sometimes - through UNDP and its specialized agencies results in nominating poor quality candidates by UNDP to work as project experts.
- 3 - Preference of U.N. Experts to work in countries which provide facilities such as housing, transportation, etc.
- 4 - The delay in receiving some equipments and requirements on time which are included in the project document, results in delaying the project and programme implementation.

5 - The specialized agencies do not - sometimes - implement the scholarships and training courses foreseen for the national staff, in addition to the complicated measures in sending the national staff for Training.

6 - The Technical Assistance which is provided by UNDP is less beneficial for some countries due to the following:

- A - Reducing the (IPF) which is offered to countries by UNDP.
- B - Raising of overhead cost of the Project from 8% to 14%.
- C - The UNDP keeps 20% from the (IPF) as Reserve, so the Government covers any deficit in financing the country programme.
- D - The high increase of the Experts cost, affects the projects cost and implementation.
- E - The Country should bear any additional expenses in implementing programmes which are approved, due to UNDP rules and regulations towards its financial problems.
- F - In some cases - the project document is not technically or adequately prepared - which leads to misunderstanding of the objectives and the work plan of these projects therefore leading to financial, administrative and technical difficulties at the implementation stage.

- 7 - In performing their duties, some of the experts deliberately slow down their work progress and do not exert continuous efforts to train the National Counterparts, for the purpose of prolonging their assignment and hence keeping their posts for as long as possible.
- 8 - The selection of the expert is depending only upon information received by UNDP and its specialized agencies on his (C.V.) which at times may not be true. Besides, it does not fit his job description. This action leads to spending time and effort for receiving other candidates.
- 9 - The UNDP and the specialized agencies try to enlarge the number of experts with the project, and widen the range of work without any reasonable justification. This brings an extra income to these agencies. On the other hand, the Government will bear extra expenses, regardless of the quality and the level of the project.
- 10 - The delay of sending the feasibility-studies of projects, will delay both, the adoption and the implementation of these projects.

- 11 - The delay in the expert's evaluation and the delay in sending a progress report will not give chance to governments to improve work at project and to avoid any difficulties before implementation.
- 12 - Most of the experts - when they prepare any study - refer to studies and reports which have been done by previous experts.
- 13 - Reports which are prepared by evaluation missions, concentrate on revealing only the good advantages of the project, and neglecting the disadvantages, so as to give a good impression about the project and to justify its continuity.
- 14 - Some of the executing agencies - sometimes - transfer their experts to work at projects in other countries without replacing other qualified experts in time.
- 15 - Reports, which are prepared by experts on projects do not represent the actual progress and achievements made.
- 16 - The National agency which is responsible for the project, does not take part in preparing the periodical report on the project.

17 - Some of the project documents do not include enough information about:-

- Objectives of the project
- Experts duties and responsibilities
- Duration for the required achievements of the project

which makes the implementation of the project in variance with what was intended of the project. This usually leads to the need for effort for revising the project document and affects the implementation of the project.

18 - The bad organization of visits of the regional experts and consultants to the concerned Governmental bodies, which are scheduled without informing the officials or the concerned Governmental bodies, and without giving enough time to these authorities to approve or to arrange programmes for these visits.

19 - Many of the specialized agencies, sell their projects, by dealing directly with ministries and other Governmental bodies without communicating with the National Co-ordinating agency for technical co-operation (N.F.P.) or with the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme. This results in many Technical, Financial, Legal and Administrative problems.

- 20 - The duration required for preparing the country programme is a long one (18 months) This delays the efforts of the concerned Governmental bodies, who usually can assess their needs and implement their projects within a short period; bearing in mind, that some countries have the ability and experience for assessment of their needs of experts and technical projects within a short time period. However some countries may need much time (more than 18 months) for preparing their country programmes.
- 21 - Spending much time (5-6 months) for sending the first draft of the country programme to the Headquarters for revision and to be sent again to the concerned country. Besides, there is no need to seek the approval of these specialized agencies and organizations, especially, when the country programme is fully funded by the Government.
- 22 - In some countries, the UNDP interferes as in the country's estimate for the cost of its country programme which indeed does not fit the country's needs especially, when the country bears the full costs of its country programme.

- 23 - In most cases, the Tripartite Evaluation Missions organize visits for project evaluation in some countries, although these visits are useless especially when the project is nearing completion.
- 24 - The long-term visits by the Evaluation Missions for the project, add extra expenses to the project.
- 25 - The shortage and the instability of the counterparts and their transfer to other jobs cause difficulties and disorder of the project and results in not providing other counterparts for a very long time.
- 26 - The tendency of some of the national staff who are working at projects and who are being sent for training courses and workshops to change their work after returning, hence they do not add any experience or benefit to the project. This is due to lack of incentives.
- 27 - The Counterparts and the Governmental bodies are not capable to evaluate the Expert, because of the lack of technical efficiency of the concerned authorities to do so.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS:-

1. To formulate necessary arrangements for reducing the time which is needed for selection of experts.
2. The UNDP should provide the accurate information and other necessary additional documents concerning the nominated expert, because his C.V. is not enough for selection.
3. The UNDP should not differentiate in its dealing with Countries whether be it those who are fully financing their country programme, or those whose programme is financed by UNDP, through the I.P.F.
4. The UNDP and the Executing Agencies, should offer training courses and the necessary required equipments on time, in order to achieve the objectives of the project.
5. The Government should provide all arrangements, obligations and counterparts for the project before the timely delivery of experts, so as to avoid the delay of the expert's mission and not to adversely affect the technical staff in conducting their work.
6. The expert should not involve himself in any administrative work at the project, which result in spending much time on matters that have no relation with the basic purpose of his assignment.

- 7 - Depending upon the national or the arab manpower in carrying out the required duties at projects, beside the assistance of U.N. Experts when it is necessary.
- 8 - To benefit from U.N. inter-regional and regional consultants, whose free-services are offered for one month. So the country can benefit from their availability for specific short-term assignments.
- 9 - The progress reports prepared by experts on projects should include the opinion of the concerned national authority (N.F.P.) or the opinion of the assistant of the project leader.
- 10 - The project document should include - in addition to the objectives and duties - the standards of evaluation and follow-up of implementation, which assist in achieving the objectives of the project.
- 11 - The Government should have the right in reviewing the project document according to its circumstances and requirements and according to the development and the progress of work at the project.
- 12 - The local offices of UNDP should inform the technical co-operation authority (N.F.P.) at the Government about the exact time of the visits of experts, regional consultants or experts from international specialized agencies, at least one month before the visit and specify its aim in order to

give the national co-ordination authority enough time to arrange these visits.

- 13 - The national authority which is responsible for technical co-operation (N.F.P.) and the UNDP should take part in implementing projects in co-operation with international specialized agencies and organizations. This will reduce the costs of the project and will provide supervision, follow-up and co-ordination with other on-going projects or with future projects.
- 14 - The country should have the right to determine the suitable duration for preparing its country programme, because of the possibility of submitting the country programme to regular sessions or special meetings of the Governing Council of UNDP.
- 15 - Offering incentives and providing convenient circumstances for counterparts to attract them to join work with projects and assuring their continuity.
- 16 - To utilize qualified National Experts to serve on projects, which would lead to developing their experiences and achieving self-reliance in implementing developmental projects.
- 17 - To request the AG Fund and the OPEC Fund for development (Special Fund) for supporting the developmental projects in Islamic, Arabic and friendly countries and in the least

developed countries; and to request the National Institutions to prepare the necessary studies for projects and to take part in implementing them without depending upon - as much as possible - international specialized agencies and organizations.

- 18 - The necessity of establishing a co-ordinating agency for technical co-operation to act as a focal point between the Resident Representative of UNDP and the international Specialized Agencies, which in turn contacts the Governmental bodies to benefit out of these technical assistance.
- 19 - The importance of strengthening the Governmental departments and authorities concerned with technical co-operation with qualified capacities and experts, in order to be able to organize and manage technical co-operation with the United Nations and its specialized agencies, besides the Arab, Regional and Islamic organizations and others.
- 20 - The permanent delegations at the United Nations in New York should strengthen the contact with the Arab Regional Bureau in UNDP in order to collect any required information about technical assistance.
- 21 - To emphasize the role of the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme as a Co-ordinator with the U.N. Executing Agencies and Organizations. And not encouraging the establishment of new offices belonging to

these agencies at the region to avoid duplication and to assure co-ordination.

- 22 - The Arab Regional Bureau in UNDP should prepare an annual or periodical document on proposed regional projects. It should also follow-up the implementation of these projects and submit related progress reports.

TRIBUTE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF KUWAIT.

In closing this valuable seminar, the participants expressed their sincere gratitude to His Highness the Amir and to the Government and the people of Kuwait for their courtesy and hospitality and for offering this opportunity to promote an exchange of views and experience.

The participants also expressed their thanks to H.E. the Minister of Finance and Planning, the Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Planning, the Director of General Department for Technical Co-operation at the Ministry of Planning, the Resident Representative and the Staff of the UNDP and finally to the Seminar Organizers for their efforts towards the success of this Seminar.