OTHER MATTERS

ACTION TAKEN BY OTHER ORGANS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM IN 1983

Action taken in response to General Assembly resolution 37/228

Report of the Administrator

Summary

This report provides information to the Governing Council on actions to be undertaken by UNDP in response to General Assembly resolution 37/228 on the role of qualified national personnel in the social and economic development of developing countries. A decision by the Governing Council is required concerning both the course of action proposed by UNDP as well as the administrative and financial resources required to carry it out. The Administrator points out that in order to carry out the tasks specified in the General Assembly resolution $100,000 would be needed.
1. The subject of the role of qualified national personnel in the social and economic development of developing countries was first addressed by the General Assembly in its resolution 33/135 of 19 December 1978, and several previous reports have been reviewed by the Governing Council prior to their submission to various sessions of the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council. The Governing Council at its twenty-eighth session, following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 35/80, reviewed the relevant report of the Administrator (DP/516), and in decision 81/19, paragraphs 4 and 5, authorized the Administrator to implement his proposals and to utilize programme resources in the amount of $80,000. Subsequently, the Administrator prepared a report for the twenty-ninth session of the Governing Council (DP/1982/9) in close consultation with specialized agencies, particularly the International Labour Organisation, which was transmitted to the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session, 1982. The Administrator's report formed the basis for resolution 37/228.

2. Resolution 37/228, in its operative paragraphs 3 and 6, calls for actions which go beyond the conclusions contained in the report of the Administrator, paragraphs 90 through 95. DP/1982/9 had concluded that since there was a close convergence between the information on various national experiences, communicated to UNDP through the specially devised mechanism in accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/80, and the information which is normally available to the organizations of the United Nations system, such existing mechanisms of the United Nations system could respond fully to any foreseeable reporting requirements concerning the training and effective utilization of qualified national personnel. The report further concluded that any future exchange of experience on training of national personnel should be carried out through each component part of the United Nations system in accordance with the areas of competence of the various specialized agencies. This approach would take full advantage of existing programmes and would avoid duplication and the creation of expensive additional mechanisms. The General Assembly, however, in operative paragraph 3 of its resolution 37/228, requested the Secretary-General to ensure, within available resources, the preparation and distribution of periodic and analytical surveys of national reports on the experience of all countries in the field of human resources development and international co-operation in training. Moreover, in operative paragraph 6 of that resolution, the Secretary-General is requested "... to consult with Member States and relevant organizations of the United Nations system on possible elements of general guidelines on principles, objectives and structures of education and training of personnel of developing countries ...".

3. UNDP was designated by the Secretary-General as lead agency with respect to implementing resolution 37/228. UNDP did not take immediate steps to implement the resolution. However, when the actions needed to be taken to implement the resolution were reviewed in detail it was concluded that such actions could not be carried out within existing staff resources. It is estimated that the additional resources needed to undertake the tasks requested would be approximately $100,000.
4. When what was to become resolution 37/228 was presented to the General Assembly for consideration and adoption, it would appear that no financial implications were taken into account on the assumption that the cost of follow-up action would be absorbed within existing resources. However, UNDP was not directly associated with the discussion leading to this resolution and was therefore not in a position to point out the impact the implementation of this resolution would have on staffing and on other administrative arrangements.

5. The Council, in determining whether UNDP should find the resources needed to carry out this resolution or whether the matter should be referred back to the Secretary-General to seek an allocation of the needed funds from the General Assembly, may wish to take into account the factors set forth below concerning the implementation of a previous, related resolution.

6. Even though the previous resolution of the General Assembly, 35/80, was less ambitious in scope, it posed difficulties in its implementation. In order to obtain the required information, UNDP in 1981 had issued a Note Verbale to Governments; the number and quality of replies, however, were disappointing. Only a few Governments replied by the established deadline. Taking into account all replies, moreover, only 18 Governments responded and most responses were restrictive in the information supplied. It is clear, therefore, that in order to respond effectively to the broader request of operative paragraph 3 of resolution 37/228, a more intensive consultation process with Governments would be required, including visits by consultants to some countries. In addition, the results would have to be reviewed with the specialized agencies in order to avoid duplication. An attempt in this direction had been made in the preparation of previous reports on this subject by convening a working group under the auspices of ILO. The Administrator would intend to pursue a similar arrangement.

7. The request of operative paragraph 6 concerning the development of general guidelines raises an additional problem for UNDP since this is normally a function which falls within the constitutional responsibility of specialized agencies in their respective fields of competence. It would therefore be necessary to undertake extensive consultations with agencies and Governments, as requested in the resolution, and to inform the General Assembly of the existing efforts in this area.

8. This task will require more staff resources than were needed for dealing with the previous resolution. The Council is invited to determine whether the needed resources should be provided by UNDP or whether the matter should be referred back to the General Assembly for further consideration. The amount of $100,000 would be required to supplement existing staff resources for the collection and analysis of information on training and to carry out consultation on the development of elements for guidelines. Also foreseen are resources which would be required for convening consultation meetings, for travel of consultants to certain countries and for producing the necessary reports.
9. The Administrator will subsequently report to the next session of the Governing Council on the relevant decision of the General Assembly and on actions taken by him including the preparation of the report if the necessary resources were to be provided.

Notes

1/ To date, the following reports have been submitted on this subject to successive sessions of the Governing Council: DP/409, DP/443, DP/516 and DP/1982/9.
