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SUPPORT

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 in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, under the terms of Governing Council decision 84/13.

I. STATUS OF THE PROGRAMME

1. The UNDP programme of assistance to the Palestinian people became operational in September 1980, following authorization by the Governing Council at its twenty-seventh session in June 1980. This fifth anniversary year represents, in the view of the Administrator, an appropriate occasion for UNDP to renew a commitment to deliver the maximum possible assistance for economic and social development to Palestinian residents in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. As the only intergovernmental development programme with large-scale, continuing operations in these territories, UNDP bears a unique and important responsibility on behalf of its member Governments, particularly since under present conditions these Governments have very restricted possibilities for undertaking directly other forms of assistance.

2. In 1980, prevailing circumstances dictated that the efforts of UNDP should be modest in size and scope. It was clear that longer-range planning and consideration of projects designed to meet fundamental development needs would have to await the results of actual experience on the ground and the reactions to the work of UNDP on the part of the directly concerned parties, including, first and foremost, the Palestinian people themselves.

3. The Administrator takes great satisfaction in reporting that the time has now been reached when the programme has come fully of age. A solid record of programme delivery has been achieved, as reflected in the next section of this document, and those who benefit directly from the programme, as well as those who share in its governance, have recorded their positive reactions to the manner in which UNDP has been able to carry out complex tasks under conditions far different from those ordinarily encountered. In this regard, the Administrator would wish to record again his gratitude to the Council for permitting the programme to function under flexible and sometimes unorthodox procedures in order to permit progress in difficult situations.

4. The arrangements for direct execution of projects by the Office for Projects Execution (OPE) have worked well, and OPE will continue to be designated as the executing agency for Palestinian projects under new organizational plans. These plans call for the programme to function as a separate operational entity, with directly assigned staff and facilities under the overall supervision of the Special Representative of the Administrator. The resources needed are proposed in the 1986/87 biennial budget for the support and other services normally provided by a resident representative.

5. To date, project formulation and implementation techniques have reached a satisfactory stage, and organizational arrangements have been modified to enable longer-range planning and increasingly substantial activities. The programme is thus positioned to undertake far more extensive and fundamental development work in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. It is for member States to decide upon the extent to which advantage is taken of the opportunities for far greater services on behalf of the Palestinian people, since only financial constraints now limit rapid expansion of the small but well tested UNDP machinery.

II. RESOURCES AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

6. By decision 79/18, the Governing Council allocated \$3.5 million to the programme of assistance to the Palestinian people from the 1977-1981 Programme Reserve. In its decision 82/13, the Governing Council allocated another \$4 million in the third programming cycle to provide the programme with a total of \$7.5 million in resources. As of 1 March 1985, the Programme had 20 projects at various stages of implementation and had totally committed the resources provided by the Council:

(a) Completed

- PAL/79/002 - Specialized Training in Industrial Management
- PAL/79/003 - Promotion of Pre-primary Education
- PAL/79/005 - Promotion of Technical and Vocational Training
- PAL/79/008 - Development and Strengthening of Health
Institutions
- PAL/79/009 - Specialized Training in Agricultural Development
- PAL/79/014 - Training in Housing
- PAL/79/018 - Children's Institutions
- PAL/83/006 - Development of Health Institutions

TOTAL: \$2,400,000

(b) Under implementation

- PAL/79/007 - Health Manpower Development
- PAL/79/010 - Agricultural Training Centres (Syrian Arab
Republic)) 1/
- PAL/79/016 - Youth Programmes
- PAL/83/001 - Training in Anesthesiology
- PAL/83/002 - Medical Services Training Centre 2/

TOTAL: \$2,900,000

(c) Implementation to start in 1985

- PAL/79/013 - Training in Industrial Development (Olive Oil Laboratory)
- PAL/79/017 - Women's Institutions
- PAL/83/003 - Sewage Disposal Scheme (Gaza Strip)
- PAL/83/004 - Development and Strengthening of the Agricultural Educational Institution at El Arub
- PAL/83/005 - Assistance to the Gaza Fishermen
- PAL/85/001 - World Health Organization Collaborating Centre in Primary Health Care Research, Ramallah (WHO-financed)
- PAL/85/003 - Agriculture and Hydrology Laboratories

TOTAL: \$2,200,000

GRAND TOTAL: \$7,500,000

7. In addition to the projects listed above, UNDP has assisted the development efforts of other organizations and institutions in a variety of ways. As an example, UNDP identified Palestinian candidates and provided administrative services for the course entitled "training for trainers" and given by the International Labour Organisation at the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training at Turin, Italy.

III. PIPELINE OF READY PROJECTS

8. In co-operation with the directly concerned parties, UNDP has undertaken on-site explorations designed to produce a pipeline of project concepts which would be agreed by all to be of high priority, for future implementation as and when funds become available. The sources of possible project concepts have included Palestinian leaders, specialists and community workers; representatives of non-governmental organizations working in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; and others concerned with economic and social advancement in the territories.

9. After concluding that a prima facie case for consideration of a proposal could be made, and that the proposal in question would, in fact, make a real contribution to Palestinian advancement, UNDP has entered into negotiations with the directly concerned parties to determine whether general agreement on the basic idea could be achieved.

10. The result of these efforts, which have proceeded throughout 1984 up to the present time, is the following list of project concepts ready for detailed formulation and implementation immediately upon the assurance of necessary funding.

A. Projects of the highest priority

11. As mentioned earlier, the project for a sewage disposal scheme (Gaza Strip) (PAL/83/003) is scheduled for implementation commencing in 1985. This represents only the first phase of a massive effort considered essential by all parties to correct sanitary conditions throughout Gaza. These conditions have been described in a report by a senior consultant of UNDP dated September 1984 as "simply appalling". The report added that "for all practical purposes, it can be stated that no sewage treatment facilities exist in the Gaza Strip at the present time." UNDP has found that this situation represents a grave danger to public health, both because of the disease factor and, in the very short term, pollution of aquifers containing the already endangered and limited domestic water supplies.

12. Initial engineering studies have identified a series of projects, totalling approximately \$20 million, which could provide within a reasonable time the systems for sewage disposal and effluent re-use required to protect the public health and to relieve the pressure on usable aquifers. In view of serious financial constraints, UNDP is unable to proceed with even the first portion of a four-phase effort, each phase covering a separate geographical portion of the Gaza Strip. Future work will be entirely dependent on the rate at which additional funding becomes available, through further allocations of UNDP resources and voluntary contributions. An additional \$2 million is needed in order for first phase activities of this urgently needed project to get underway.

B. Other urgent projects

13. The desperate need for action on sanitation in Gaza cannot, in the view of the Administrator, be permitted to delay action on other development activities of fundamental concern to the Palestinian people in both the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The following listing, drawn from the current pipeline of projects ready for implementation once assured funding is at hand, provides a general picture of the types of urgent projects currently awaiting financing:

- (a) Mobile Clinics for Villages;
- (b) Water Supply in Villages;
- (c) Development of Stone-Cutting;
- (d) Rural and Village Classrooms;
- (e) Glass and Ceramic Engineering Technology (Hebron);
- (f) Village and Rural Roads;
- (g) Assistance to Small-Scale Farmers;
- (h) Primary and Secondary Education, including Educational Materials;
- (i) Medical Equipment for Hospitals.

14. Total funding requirements to cover the entire existing pipeline, including the specific projects mentioned above, total approximately \$50 million. While past experience does not suggest that funding of this order of magnitude can be anticipated within the immediate future, recent developments indicate that member States and intergovernmental organizations are displaying increasing interest in supporting the UNDP programme. The Administrator therefore plans to maintain these further project proposals in a state of constant readiness for immediate action at such time as assured funding is available.

IV. FINANCIAL SITUATION

15. For the past several years, the Council has formulated an annual appeal for additional voluntary contributions to supplement funds made available from the central resources of UNDP. Although the General Assembly regularly endorsed the appeals of the Council, and numerous Governments and organizations expressed full support, the programme reached the latter part of 1984 without assurance of further funding, aside from a contribution from the Government of Tunisia. Funds from UNDP central resources, which amounted in total to \$7.5 million since the inception of the programme, were fully committed to projects completed or under way by that time.

16. It was therefore with special satisfaction that the Administrator greeted a pledge to the programme of up to \$1 million, announced by the Government of the United States at the Pledging Conference for Development Activities held on 7 November 1984. Shortly thereafter, H.R.H. Prince Talal Bin Abdel Aziz Al-Saud, President of the Arab Gulf Programme for the United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND), announced the intention of that organization to contribute \$1 million. These two generous contributions, supplemented by already earmarked funds from UNDP resources, permitted the Administrator to initiate preliminary activities early in 1985, for the first phase of the sewage disposal scheme described in paragraphs 11 and 12 above.

17. While the Administrator recommends that the Governing Council take note with appreciation of the contributions mentioned, he also asks that additional financial support for the programme urgently be provided to this increasingly important aspect of international development assistance. In pursuit of this, it will be noted from document DP/1985/20 that resources could be made available from the Third Cycle Special Programme Resources (SPR) which would allow the Programme to begin the first phase of the project PAL/83/003. Therefore, the Administrator recommends that the Council consider the allocation of an additional \$2 million to the programme of assistance to the Palestinian people, for the remainder of the third programming cycle so that the programme's momentum can be maintained and a smooth transition into the fourth cycle can be ensured.

18. Since the total of resources to be set aside under SPR is not likely to be finally determined before the Council's thirty-third session in 1986, the Administrator further recommends that, for forward planning purposes, the Council endorse a provisional planning allocation of at least \$10 million for the programme of assistance to the Palestinian people pending the determination of the total amount of the fourth cycle SPR.

Notes

1/ PAL/79/010 is the only project outside the West Bank and Gaza Strip; it is implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations under normal UNDP procedures.

2/ The architectural plans are completed; funds are now awaited for construction and furnishing.

