



**Governing Council
of the
United Nations
Development Programme**

Distr.
GENERAL

DP/1985/37
10 April 1985

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Thirty-second session
June 1985, New York
Item 6 of the provisional agenda
UNFPA

S U P P O R T

UNITED NATIONS FUND FOR POPULATION ACTIVITIES

Report of the Executive Director on
the implications of the recommendations of the
International Conference on Population, 1984, for the
activities of UNFPA

Summary

This report of the Executive Director is prepared in response to decision 84/21 IV, paragraph 1, of the Governing Council at its thirty-first session requesting a report on the implications of the recommendations of the International Conference on Population, 1984, for the activities of UNFPA. This document represents an overview of the subject based on an analysis undertaken by both UNFPA staff members and outside experts. After examining the general implications of the Conference recommendations for the activities of UNFPA, the sectoral implications for UNFPA programmes, improving the delivery of population assistance and UNFPA's role in international co-operation, the report ends with a summary and conclusions section.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Governing Council at its thirty-first session in June 1984 requested the Executive Director of UNFPA to report to the Council at its thirty-second session on the implications of the recommendations of the International Conference on Population (ICP) for the activities of the Fund, within its existing mandate (decision 84/21 IV, para. 1).
2. Since the conclusion of the International Conference on Population, held at Mexico City, from 6 to 14 August 1984, UNFPA has carried out a number of activities which have formed the basis for this paper, the most significant of which have been (a) an in-house exercise undertaken by UNFPA staff, studying the implications of the ICP recommendations, as well as the Mexico City Declaration on Population and Development, for the various sectoral activities of the Fund. The results of this exercise were reported in a paper prepared for the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination Ad Hoc Task Force, on the International Conference on Population, 1984^{1/}; and (b) the calling of an expert working group by UNFPA which brought together four international experts to make an in-depth analysis of the ICP recommendations and to advise the Fund consequently on the modifications and refinements that may be necessary in UNFPA programmes.^{2/}
3. The purpose of this document is to present an overview of the implications of the Mexico Conference for the work of UNFPA. While it draws heavily on both the UNFPA staff paper and the report of the expert working group, it is not a substitute nor an overall summary of the two documents. On the contrary, the two papers and the present document are complementary and provide a comprehensive view of the implications of the ICP recommendations for the work of UNFPA. In many ways, this document represents an update of the Executive Director's report on the "Future role of UNFPA: UNFPA in the 1980s"^{3/}.
4. This document is divided into five sections. After a brief introduction, the general implications of the recommendations of the Mexico Conference for the Fund are outlined in chapter I; the implications for the various sectors of UNFPA programmes are outlined in chapter II; the types of efforts that the Fund will undertake to strengthen the delivery of its assistance are given in chapter III; UNFPA's role in international co-operation is described in chapter IV; and summary and conclusions are provided in the final chapter.

I. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION, 1984 AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR UNFPA

5. The International Conference on Population was attended by representatives of 146 States plus Namibia, the United Nations, all of its regional commissions, 10 United Nations bodies and programmes, 5 United Nations specialized agencies, 13 intergovernmental bodies from all regions and

153 non-governmental organizations. Altogether some 3,000-3,500 participants, plus some 800 media representatives - one of the largest media groups ever to report on a United Nations conference - were in Mexico City. By consensus, the participants adopted the report of the Conference, the recommendations for the further implementation of the World Population Plan of Action (WPPA) and the Mexico City Declaration on Population and Development^{4/}.

6. The Mexico Conference reaffirmed the principles and objectives as well as the validity of the World Population Plan of Action and specified a series of activities which need to be undertaken at the national, regional and global levels in order to achieve the goal of improving the standards of living and quality of life of all people in the world. In 32 opening paragraphs and 88 recommendations, the Mexico Conference laid out a population strategy spanning such diverse matters as socio-economic development and the environment, the role and the status of women, development of population policies, population growth, morbidity and mortality, reproduction and the family, population distribution and migration, international migration, population structure, data collection and analysis, research, management, training, information, education and communication, as well as the role of national Governments and international co-operation in the implementation of these recommendations.

7. The major substantive shifts of emphasis in the Mexico documents vis-à-vis the recommendations as contained in the World Population Plan of Action refer to the areas of integration of population and development, formulation and implementation of policies, the role and status of women, the importance of changes in socio-economic and demographic structures and the focus on urbanization and population distribution.

8. An analysis of the Mexico recommendations clearly indicates that the present aims and purposes of the Fund, as set forth by the Economic and Social Council, continue to be valid:

"(a) To build up, on an international basis, with the assistance of the competent bodies of the United Nations system, the knowledge and the capacity to respond to national, regional and interregional and global needs in the population, and family planning fields, to promote co-ordination in planning and programming, and to co-operate with all concerned;

(b) To promote awareness, both in developed and in developing countries, of the social, economic and environmental implications of national and international population problems; of the human rights aspects of family planning; and of possible strategies to deal with them, in accordance with the plans and priorities of each country;

(c) To extend systematic and sustained assistance to developing countries at their request in dealing with their population problems; such assistance to be afforded in forms and by means requested by the recipient countries and best suited to meet the individual country's needs;

(d) To play a leading role in the United Nations system in promoting population programmes and to co-ordinate projects supported by the Fund."^{5/}

9. The implementation of the appropriate recommendations of the Mexico Conference by the Fund does not involve any modification of its present mandate, as set forth by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. The aims and purposes, as well as the mandate of UNFPA^{6/}, have been made operative by the Fund in the form of a "core" programme of assistance which includes the following activities: family planning programmes; population information education and communication activities in support of population programmes; collection of basic population data; research and training in population dynamics; formulation and implementation of population policies; special programmes related to population aspects of the status of women, youth, and aging; and various multisector and programme development activities^{7/}.

10. This core programme remains valid and can be adapted to any changes of emphasis suggested by the Mexico Conference recommendations. This is particularly so since the main thrust of the Mexico recommendations is essentially a further elaboration of those already contained in the World Population Plan of Action and since UNFPA also uses the Plan as the relevant framework for its own programmes of assistance.

11. Similarly, the Mexico Conference recommendations do not change the major self-instituted programming principles followed by UNFPA: neutrality, flexibility, and innovation, which will continue to be utilized in rendering assistance in the future. Equally valid will be the continuing adherence by the Fund to the objective of the attainment of self-reliance by developing countries in population programming, formulating programmes that benefit the disadvantaged population groups and the least developed countries and of enhancing the national absorptive capacity for population assistance for all developing countries.

12. As already stated, the "core" programme will continue to serve as the framework for the Fund's activities. The implications of the Mexico Conference suggest only a refinement of the activities within the "core". Accordingly, the next section traces the sectoral implications of the Mexico recommendations for UNFPA programmes. The sectoral implications are arranged according to areas that will receive further strengthening; areas that will demand increased attention; and other activities that will claim continued consideration.

II. SECTORAL IMPLICATIONS FOR UNFPA PROGRAMMES

A. Strengthening of selected critical sectors

13. The Fund's experience during the last decade and a half lends support to the view that certain critical sectors and/or areas within the core programme - family planning, activities related to information, education and communication, women's programmes and population and development integration - are in need of better co-ordination. The types of co-ordinating functions that are thus important which the Fund will undertake in the future with regard to these sectors are: (i) serving the population field as a population information centre by gathering and diffusing knowledge and information; (ii) identifying and commissioning appropriate research, as well as promoting the utilization of research findings in policy formulation and programme development; and (iii) formulating and supporting training activities. In view of their importance, some of the major issues and the main activities that the Fund will undertake in each of these sectors are elaborated below.

1. Family planning

14. The twin areas of fertility and family planning are closely interrelated. Neither one of them is the only determinant of the other, but a major one. Fertility reductions involve family planning acceptance and practice, and the goal of family planning is much more than mere fertility regulation. It needs to be recognized that fertility and family planning in a society are influenced by a composite of social, cultural, economic and political factors, as well as by health considerations. This recognition raises interesting operational issues and strongly suggests the need for co-ordination of diverse approaches affecting these two areas.

15. The programming experience dealing with the fertility and family planning area indicates the existence of an enormous difference in the relative significance of the various societal determinants of fertility, the differing contributions that family planning practice accounts for in fertility decline, the dissimilar strengths that family planning programmes enjoy in national contexts, the cultural acceptability of contraceptive methods and the receptivity of populations to educational and communication messages. Aware of this, the Mexico Conference made a number of programmatic recommendations on these aspects.

16. The Fund has also been studying these aspects for some time and in response to the Governing Council (decision 83/17 I, para. 11) is also submitting to the present Council session a paper providing a problem-oriented analysis of UNFPA's experience in the family planning area (DP/1985/31). It is evident from all the analyses that the Fund has made thus far that future emphasis in fertility and family planning field should be in three areas - (a) the situational context, encompassing the various socio-cultural, economic and political characteristics of the environment within which fertility and

family planning programmes are set; (b) the organizational context of family planning programmes covering aspects of design, management and administrative elements; and (c) the contraceptive context including the availability, suitability and effectiveness of methods of contraception.

17. While the Fund's involvement in each of these areas will not be the same given its mandate, resource limitations and programme focus, UNFPA will seek to ensure that programmes in developing countries are formulated and implemented in all three areas in a well co-ordinated way. In particular, UNFPA will pay increased attention to the following: (a) a better understanding of the socio-cultural context of reproduction and family planning by supporting anthropological, social and operational research, as well as their utilization in policy and programme development (recommendation 70); (b) strengthening national capacity of countries for family planning by supporting a variety of training programmes for medical, paramedical, health as well as paraprofessionals (recommendation 73); (c) focusing on operational aspects of programmes including management strategies, logistics systems, inventory and supplies, information systems to help improve monitoring and evaluation, and administrative streamlining (recommendations 28, 70 and 73); (d) promoting biomedical and contraceptive research and development (recommendation 69); (e) responding to situational variables by supporting activities to improve the role and status of women (recommendations 5 through 9); (f) articulating development strategies which give due attention to the determinants and consequences of fertility (recommendation 35), (g) strengthening informational, educational and communication campaigns in support of a wider acceptance for the small family norm (recommendation 25); and (h) co-ordinating donor assistance to this sector.

2. Information, education and communication (IEC)

18. In a free and informed context, proper information, appropriate education and adequate communication play a substantial role in influencing demographic behaviour. Furthermore, the success of a national population programme depends upon interest, commitment, participation and decision-making by a large number of persons at various levels of responsibility - the individual, family, community, and nation. It is clear that a large spectrum of activities related to IEC are required in the population field.

19. The Fund has always considered its efforts in this sector as a crucial component of its programmes. The Fund sees the objectives of its endeavours in the information, education and communication sub-sectors as clearly distinct, but complementary to each other. Public information is designed, for instance, to keep the general public and opinion leaders informed of population trends and their consequences, as well as of important developments in the population field. Population education, whether formal or non-formal, concerns the discussion of population issues and their implications for individuals and society over a period of time. Population communication mobilizes support for population-related activities such as censuses or the creation of demand for family planning services. It is also vital in bringing

awareness of population factors into development planning and in obtaining the involvement of the community in population projects.

20. The broadened approach to population and development that was endorsed at Mexico, the emphasis that was placed on the heightened role of the individual and community in population matters and the plea that was made on the need for international understanding of global interdependency necessitate further strengthening of activities in this sector. Furthermore, since no other single agency within the United Nations family has as comprehensive a mandate as UNFPA to look at all aspects of population - determinants, causes, consequences, policies, programmes and strategies, the Fund will take an active role in the future to co-ordinate activities in the IEC sector.

21. In continuing to fulfil its mandate to promote awareness, both in developed and developing countries, of the social, economic and environmental implications of population issues, the Fund will continue to give emphasis to a wide range of public information activities directly and through support to other groups and continue to work with non-governmental organizations, parliamentary groups and the scientific community.

22. Population education and communication are indispensable components of population policies and programmes at the national level and UNFPA will have an important function in co-ordinating such activities in country programmes. This should result in stronger, more coherent programmes which avoid duplication. In the same vein, UNFPA will play a co-ordinating role to make certain that communication and/or health education activities are well implemented.

23. Population education will remain a cornerstone of strategies to help improve the participation of youth in population programmes. In the future, there is a greater need to increase understanding of the rationale for population policies and their implications for families and communities. Thus, population education programmes should pave the way for broad public support for population programmes and should prepare the future leaders and parents to deal effectively with population issues by teaching them problem-solving approaches now.

24. The Fund will continue its long-standing emphasis on activities in the information, education and communication sector. Nevertheless, the following will receive increased attention: (a) promotion of further awareness of population issues through its extensive publication and audio-visual programmes (recommendation 74); (b) collaboration with Parliamentarians and their national, regional and international organizations (recommendation 86); (c) support for training and briefing programmes for representatives of print and electronic media in population report (recommendation 85); (d) collaboration with non-governmental organizations (recommendation 84); (e) support for the scientific community to activities that contribute to the inter-disciplinary study of population (recommendation 85); (f) support for IEC activities at the national level covering as many segments of society and using as many channels as possible so that the interests, concerns and needs

of communities, families and individuals are taken fully into account (recommendation 25); (g) support for communication research (recommendation 74); and (h) support for further development of clearing-houses for exchange of information and experience (recommendation 76).

3. Women's programmes

25. One of the important substantive developments at the Mexico Conference which won universal support was the central role given to women in population and development programmes. The role and status of women in most developing countries are influenced by a set of mutually reinforcing social and cultural factors, which are currently impeding a rapid transformation of their societies. An improvement in the role and status of women paves the way for social change, demographic transition and development. It has also become clear that a "trickle-down" approach to development will not assure a rapid transformation in women's status that is necessary for an accelerated socio-economic change. It is thus necessary to formulate special activities to foster improvements in educational, employment, occupational, health, social, political, and demographic aspects of women's lives in different societies.

26. In view of the importance given to the needs and concerns of women in the discussions and recommendations of the Conference, UNFPA organized a special task force on women, population and development. The task force has made recommendations in relation to women's programmes that will be incorporated into all regular UNFPA guidelines and procedures. Briefing sessions, special meetings and training courses will be held to ensure that the recommendations are followed.

27. UNFPA will continue to support women's activities that are directly related to population variables (e.g., in family planning programmes) and also those that may create an impact on development variables. In all projects, efforts will be made to ensure that women's concerns are taken fully into account.

28. As far as special projects for women are concerned, the following will receive greater emphasis: (a) support for specific research and communication activities, such as collection and analysis of basic data as well as socio-anthropological studies in order to identify the socio-economic and demographic situation of women (recommendation 62); research on legal rights and potential discrepancies between law and practice (recommendation 5) and information and education aimed at enhancing women's awareness of their rights (recommendation 5); (b) support for, and designing, of special projects which enhance the participation of women in all population programmes, income-generating activities, and other development schemes (recommendation 6); (c) support for activities aimed at increasing the participation of women's organizations (recommendations 5, 12, 28 and 84); (d) support for projects which promote active involvement of men in all aspects of family responsibility including family planning and child-rearing (recommendation 9); and (e) support for training activities for women in all sectors and at all levels (recommendation 7).

4. Population and development planning

29. Experience has shown that although development may be divided conceptually into sectors such as health, agriculture, education, industry, housing or manpower, the interdependence of the sectors is such that rapid development can take place only when the sectoral programmes are well co-ordinated. Given that population considerations are factors in all sectors of development and that demographic behaviour is one of the characteristics which define societies, population policies and programmes can only succeed in concert with efforts to improve other aspects of life.

30. The conceptualization of programmes in this area is particularly difficult given the fact that the scope of population policies has been constantly enlarging to include all types of demographic behaviour, while at the same time it is considered essential to incorporate the interrelationships between population, resources, environment and development into policy development. Formal integration of population and development at the policy and planning levels in this broadened context is yet to be achieved in most developing countries. The Fund therefore recognizes that a number of basic activities need to be supported in this sector. Specifically, UNFPA will extend support for (a) conceptual, methodological and operational aspects of integrated approaches which take into account the interrelationships between population, resources, environment and development (recommendation 1); (b) formulation of broad-based population policies that pay particular attention to the individual, the family and community needs, as well as to other factors at both the micro and macro levels (recommendation 11); (c) analysis of policy making processes in developing countries and operational research on formulation, implementation and evaluation of population policies (recommendation 72); (d) programmes to train persons in sufficient numbers for the effective formulation and implementation of integrated population and development policies, plans and programmes at all levels (particular attention is being given to training of policy makers and executives who plan and implement development programmes (recommendation 75) and, as a result of a technical meeting held immediately after the Conference, UNFPA has already developed the elements of a prototype training programme); and (e) support for the population component in international development strategies and for the incorporation of population components in the sectoral development programmes of other United Nations organizations (recommendations 79 and 80).

B. Areas needing increased attention

31. One of the striking features in the population situation of developing regions during the last 15 to 20 years has been the emergence of individual demographic differences, largely brought about by (a) varying rates in fertility and mortality declines, (b) relative significance of migration in population growth and distribution, (c) differential impact of demographic inertia and (d) differences in the rapidity of population aging and

youthfulness of population. Parallel to these demographic divergencies, there have been wide disparities in natural endowments and development potentials, in the strength of institutional, organizational and manpower capacities of countries, and in the appropriateness of development planning strategies used, generating a complex set of population and development concerns in the developing countries.

32. While almost every population issue is inextricably linked to development, and thus requires a well co-ordinated package of population and development policies and programmes, the three population concerns which will merit special attention in the future by all agencies dealing with population and development are (a) migration, urbanization and population distribution; (b) youth; and (c) aging. While the immediate determinants of these phenomena are mostly demographic in nature, the content of policies and programmes to deal with them go well beyond the population sector. However, it should be noted that, at the international level, there is no single agency that deals with all of these concerns. To fill this void, the Fund will co-ordinate, collaborate and disseminate relevant programmatic information in these areas, while supporting only the population aspects of such programmes.

1. Population distribution

33. Issues related to migration, urbanization and population distribution have emerged as major concerns in a large number of developing countries. There are many reasons, including the high rates of population growth, slow economic growth rates, wide interregional disparities in income and levels of living, differences in the degree of exploitation of natural resources and adverse effects on the environment. Because of these factors, the spatial distribution of population in developing countries is generally exerting forces which act against optimal patterns of development and the equitable distribution of the benefits of such development. Thus, in the United Nations Fifth Population Inquiry, of a total of 109 countries responding to the survey^{2/}, 77 countries desired changes in their population distribution, of which 64 were developing countries.

34. The Mexico Conference recommendations call for a rational strategy comprising a number of programmes and activities to slow down migration to large metropolitan centres; to direct migrants towards small or medium-sized towns and/or under-populated rural areas; to reduce or even reverse population movements from the countryside to the urban areas; and to reduce rural-urban and regional inequalities (recommendation 41).

35. The Fund is aware that the solution of problems related to migration, urbanization and population distribution will involve a number of mutually supporting activities in population and rural development, urban development, regional development and community development. The Fund will co-ordinate activities in this sector and will provide financial and technical assistance for the following activities: (a) formulation of comprehensive population redistribution policies aimed at improving the quality of life and

socio-economic and environmental conditions (recommendation 37); (b) designing of sectoral strategies dealing with urban development, rural development, regional development and community development and their integration with overall process of development planning (recommendation 41); (c) promotion of activities that will help assure methodological developments of integrating population factors in territorial and spatial planning (recommendation 39); and (d) adoption of programmes to assist women migrants, and among non-migrants, those women, children and the elderly left unsupported in rural areas (recommendation 44).

2. Youth

36. Until the 1950s, almost all developing countries were characterized by high fertility and relatively high mortality. This resulted in a young age structure (a high proportion of population under 15 years of age) of population in those countries, and the mortality decline that has become nearly universal in those countries during the last few decades has only increased the youthfulness of their population. It is obvious that any country with a very large proportion of its population in the young age category will have to invest more in consumption and social development sectors than would be necessary if it had a smaller proportion of its population in "young" ages. Furthermore, with a time-lag, it becomes essential in such countries to rapidly create employment opportunities to absorb the rapidly growing labour force and provide for family planning and other population services to accommodate the expanding cohorts of men and women in reproductive ages.

37. The number of youths, defined as population in the age group 15-24, is projected to increase from 940 million in 1985 to 1062 million by the year 2000, requiring immediate attention to a range of issues related to fertility, mortality, nuptiality, sexuality, educational, employment and contraceptive aspects of young peoples' lives. Recognizing the crucial role that this group will play in shaping the future demographic and developmental courses in developing countries, the Fund will emphasize the following four elements in its assistance: (a) population education through formal and non-formal channels; (b) sex and family life education and information on family planning; (c) family planning services for adolescents; and (d) promotion of the participation of youth in planning and implementation of such programmes.

38. The formulation of appropriate strategies and programmes for youth in developing countries is a very delicate and complex exercise since the feasibility of dealing with such aspects as sexuality and contraceptive practice among young people is determined by cultural and other factors. With its traditional respect for national sovereignty, individual rights and cultural sensitivities, the Fund will collaborate with relevant national, local and community institutions in specific countries in developing programmes related to youth. The types of activities that the Fund will support include (a) efforts at data collection and analysis of issues

related to sexual activity, nuptiality, pregnancy, contraception and fertility among adolescents (recommendations 7 and 8); (b) efforts to create a better awareness of the importance of these issues among national policy and decision makers (recommendation 74); (c) activities related to the provision of information, education, communication, and family planning services specifically designed for youth (recommendations 18 and 29); and (d) meetings and seminars of young people to discuss both problems and programmes relevant to their situation. In all these activities, the Fund will give preference to those activities that will benefit more girls and young women.

3. Aging

39. One of the important demographic consequences, with long-term implications, of sustained declines in the rates of fertility and mortality, is the process of population aging. This can be viewed either as a structural issue meriting adaptations of macro socio-economic and related policies to accommodate the increasing proportion of elderly in a population or as a social issue stemming from a rapid increase in the total number of elderly, needing social welfare and other policies to help integrate their role and contribution into the economy and society.

40. Although the advent of population aging either as a structural or a social issue is of recent origin in most developing countries, it is bound to become a serious concern in the future given the unprecedented numbers of people involved. Besides, with the process of fertility transition being accelerated by population policies and programmes, the time-lag needed for societal adjustment for changing age structures have been substantially shortened. Furthermore, with a virtual absence of social security, post-retirement benefits and old-age services in most developing countries, population aging will become a grave problem in the future. With only 6.3 per cent of their population aged 60 and over, the developing countries currently already have more older people than the developed countries - 230 million as against 185 million. Also, the number of elderly will more than triple in the next few decades in developing countries. And emerging trends in migration, urbanization, the role of women and family structure are likely to modify the traditional systems of support accorded to the elderly in those countries, requiring the formulation of special programmes to deal with population aging.

41. The Mexico Conference, while reaffirming the recommendations contained in the International Plan of Action on Aging^{9/}, has called for further expansion of efforts concerning the issue of aging in a positive way, recognizing the roles of older persons as both contributing and participating members of societies. Recognizing that there is an urgent need to study the issue, compile and synthesize the existing experience, disseminate information on programme design and implementation, provide technical advice and help co-ordinate activities related to these aspects, the Fund will pay greater attention in the future to aging as a population issue. In particular, it plans to support the following activities: (a) data collection and analysis of aging (recommendation 58); (b) policy research on the implications and consequences of aging (recommendation 44); (c) social and cultural adaptation

to population aging (recommendation 58); and (d) dissemination of information on legislative, programmatic and training aspects of population aging (recommendation 76).

C. Other activities

42. In addition to the sectors and areas that have been discussed thus far, there are a number of other activities which are included in the "core" programme. Such activities will continue to receive the Fund's consideration. While it would be beyond the scope of this paper to describe every one of them in detail and since they are described in the other two papers^{10/} dealing with the implications of the Mexico Conference, only a brief presentation is made here.

1. Basic data collection and analysis

43. The role of appropriate data and adequate analysis in population policy and development planning has been well recognized. While the need to continue activities in this sector remains critical, especially in Africa and other least developed countries, the broadened approach to population policy and its incorporation into development planning will demand the undertaking of innovative activities in this area. In line with the many recommendations (recommendations 60 through 68) adopted at the Mexico Conference, the Fund will give emphasis to the following activities: (a) development of durable capabilities in developing countries for collection, processing, analysis, utilisation and publication of population data (recommendation 60); (b) full exploitation of existing data and examination of its implications for policy, planning and programmes (recommendation 66); and (c) support for innovative methods of collecting data for population policy formulation and evaluation, for integration of population with development, and for operational enquiries on maternal and child health, family planning services and programme impact (recommendations 68 and 70).

2. Research and training

44. One of the most crucial elements in the attainment of self-reliance by developing countries in the field of population is enduring institutional development. The Mexico Conference gave considerable importance to this issue, lending further support for the continuation of the Fund's activities. In addition to establishment and strengthening institutional facilities, the Fund will give emphasis to: (a) a range of research activities encompassing biomedical, demographic, operational and programme aspects (recommendations 69 through 71); (b) a coherent programme of research on fertility, mortality, migration, both internal and international, urbanization, aging, women's concerns and in all other sectors (recommendations 17, 38, and 69 through 72); (c) improving dissemination and utilization of research for policy and planning in the various sectors (recommendations 76); (d) support for institutional strengthening in developing countries for undertaking local level training (recommendation 73); and (e) development of a corps trained in

population policy, in integration of population and development, in information, education and communication, and in management and evaluation (recommendation 75).

III. IMPROVING THE DELIVERY OF POPULATION ASSISTANCE

45. International population assistance is likely to face formidable challenges in the coming decades. As a consequence of both a rapid expansion in the scope of population activities in developing countries and the necessity to adopt an integrated approach to population and development, many of the current programme strategies require further refinement. When this substantive challenge is conjoined with the present trend in international population assistance to decline in real terms, the need to improve further the quality and efficiency of population assistance becomes even more urgent. The Fund, in addition to steps already taken, will take further steps to ensure an overall improvement in the delivery of assistance.

46. Improving the overall efficiency of the delivery of population assistance will involve (a) strengthening of national capacities for programme development, implementation, management and evaluation, (b) enhancing the substantive capacity of the Fund, (c) expanding the network of UNFPA field staff, (d) streamlining of procedures and programme strategies; and (e) increasing the quality of technical assistance provided by executing and implementing agencies.

47. The issue of strengthening national capacities is closely associated with the UNFPA's commitment to the objective of the attainment of self-reliance by developing countries. A number of improvements in the administrative, managerial, substantive, technical and financial aspects of programmes in individual countries is required. In line with Mexico recommendations 16, 28, 68, 70, 71, 73 and 77, the Fund will give particular attention to project design and planning; evaluation, and monitoring; logistics, procurement, storage and distribution; use and maintenance of equipment and supplies; management information systems; financial management including budget control; impact evaluation; diagnostic and operational research; and training.

48. The provision of appropriate and timely advice by the Fund to countries seeking UNFPA assistance can be better realized with an improvement in its substantive capability in general and particularly in those areas that need further strengthening and in which the Fund will take an increased role. Specifically, expertise needs to be added in migration and urbanization, population and development planning, women and development, management and evaluation, operational research, IEC, management information systems and training.

49. In order to better co-ordinate and implement its programme of assistance to developing countries, the Fund is convinced that its network of field staff needs to be further expanded and strengthened in order to ensure that the delivery of its assistance is well managed and proceeds without delay. Specific proposals in this regard are outlined in document DP/1985/38.

50. Equally important will be the formulation and revision of guidelines on project formulation, project appraisal, monitoring and evaluation. Likewise, there is a need for in-depth analyses of sectoral strategies and for an informational memory of UNFPA project experiences. Similarly, an efficient feedback between project design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and policy formulation will also be required. The crucial elements among all these are the initiation of training programmes for staff of UNFPA as well as the establishment of an efficient monitoring system of population programmes.

51. The quality, timeliness and cost-effectiveness of technical assistance will have to be replenished and in this context, there should be a more active collaboration between UNFPA and its executing agencies. Since UNFPA alone has the advantage of a comprehensive overview of its assistance to the various sectors and since the executing agencies have their own distinct but narrowly defined focus, the Fund will strengthen its co-ordinating activities in the future.

IV. UNFPA'S ROLE IN INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

52. Recommendations 79 through 87, which are grouped together under the title "Role of international co-operation", are addressed first to the international community in general and then to organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system as well as to donor Governments. UNFPA, as the largest source of multilateral population assistance and as the major organization concerned with promotion of awareness of population issues around the world, is expected to play a crucial role in the implementation of the Mexico City Declaration on Population and Development and the Conference recommendations in the international arena.

53. One of the major tasks for UNFPA will be to increase and improve international support for population policies and programmes, which are formulated and implemented by Governments in the context of their national needs and priorities. Identification of the needs and requirements of recipient countries and a concerted effort to increase the volume of international population assistance to meet these needs and requirements are called for in line with recommendation 82 which urges increased assistance for population assistance and General Assembly resolution 39/228 which calls upon the international community to provide adequate and substantial international support and assistance for population activities, particularly through UNFPA.

54. To improve the effectiveness of international support for population activities, the Fund will continue to organize meetings of donors for specific countries or regions, collaborate in co-ordination of research, particularly contraceptive research, and increase efforts to co-ordinate donor support at the national level.

55. Over the past 15 years, UNFPA has worked closely with the competent organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system in providing assistance to developing countries and, in light of the ICP recommendations, will further strengthen its co-operation with these bodies.

56. The Executive Director feels that it will be useful to keep the arrangements for such co-operation under regular review so as to maximize the support provided to Governments of developing countries and to minimize the overall administrative and programme support costs.

57. The Mexico City Declaration recognizes that "non-governmental organizations have a continuing important role in the implementation of the World Population Plan of Action and deserve encouragement and support from governments and international organizations" (para. 21 of the Declaration). There are also numerous references to the role of non-governmental organizations in the Conference recommendations; and in line with recommendation 84, UNFPA will seek to increase its collaboration with a wide variety of non-governmental organizations, including women's organizations and to make greater use of the Non-governmental Organizations in implementing UNFPA projects.

58. Conference recommendations 85 and 86 place a special emphasis on the role of members of parliament, the mass media and the scientific community in increasing awareness of population and related issues around the world. UNFPA will continue to provide support for their activities in this area, as outlined in paragraph 24.

59. General Assembly resolution 39/228 requests "the Secretary-General to take, without delay, appropriate steps regarding the relevant recommendations, in particular recommendation 83, for further implementation of the World Population Plan of Action concerning the role of international co-operation, taking note also of the suggestions offered by various delegations and benefiting, in the process, from the deliberations of the Economic and Social Council; and to report to the General Assembly through the ECOSOC on their implementation as soon as possible, but not later than 1986". The Executive Director of UNFPA has submitted to the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation some ideas and suggestions on how UNFPA could be strengthened, without in any way changing UNFPA's status as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly or the role of the Governing Council vis-à-vis UNFPA. He has suggested that the Secretary-General's report focus on the following:

(a) An examination of the relationship between organizations and units such as UNFPA, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, on the one hand, and the Population Commission, the Governing Council, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly on the other, in order to see how best to improve the flow of communication between all these bodies and how the process of decision-making can be harmonized by the United Nations in the field of population with a view to delivering population assistance to the countries, in the most effective and efficient manner possible;

(b) A careful review of the United Nations experience in supporting population programmes in developing countries with a view to determining how the effectiveness of such assistance could be increased in operational terms

in the future and how the resources raised by the United Nations through UNFPA for population assistance can best be channelled to developing countries, with the minimum amount of money being spent on administrative and support services in the United Nations system as a whole;

(3) An examination of the relationship between UNFPA and other funds and programmes the work of which may have a direct relevance to the work of UNFPA, e.g., the fund for aging.

The Director-General proposes to produce a report on the implementation of the General Assembly recommendation, after appropriate consultations.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

60. The Mexico Conference will prove to be a watershed in the population field. It symbolizes the transformation of the population debate from one of concept to one of procedure. Associated with this shift are the changing characteristics of demographic transition, demanding attention to newly emerging population concerns and refinements of traditional activities. One critical implication of the Mexico Conference for international population assistance is the urgent need to further improve both the quality and effectiveness of delivery of population assistance. To respond effectively to these substantive and programmatic tasks, the Fund will give major emphasis to the following activities:

61. The Fund will continue to adhere to its basic principles of programming - remaining neutral in policy, respecting national sovereignty and individual human rights, and remaining mindful of cultural sensitivities - and will continue its policy of addressing the needs of disadvantaged population groups and being flexible in supporting the least developed countries.

62. The Fund will continue to support its programme of assistance in the "core" areas, with appropriate modifications to accommodate the necessary changes.

63. With a view to enhancing the effectiveness of assistance as well as to reflect the changes of emphasis implied in the Mexico recommendations concerning traditional sectors, UNFPA will strengthen its programmes dealing with family planning; information, education and communication; women's activities; and population and development.

64. In remaining responsive to the needs of developing countries, the Fund will pay greater attention to the newly emerging concerns with regard to population distribution, youth and aging.

65. By recognizing the continued significance of data collection and analysis as well as research and training in the various sectors of assistance, the Fund will continue its support, with appropriate modifications, to these activities.

66. To enable the Fund rapidly to enhance the delivery of population assistance in all sectors in all countries, it will help support the strengthening of administrative, managerial, and evaluation capacities of countries and will also improve its own capability for formulation and monitoring of programmes. Efforts will be made to further improve the quality of technical advice and backstopping provided by the executing and implementing agencies.

67. The Fund will continue its activities to help increase awareness of population and related issues by collaborating with parliamentarians, media, scientific community and non-governmental organizations.

68. In order to meet the increasing needs of developing countries for population assistance, the Fund will seek to increase both the volume and appropriateness of multilateral population assistance.

69. The Fund will continue to co-operate and collaborate with the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation and will look forward to his report on the strengthening of UNFPA as called for in recommendation 83 of the Mexico Conference.

Notes

1/ UNFPA, "Implications for UNFPA of the International Conference on Population, 1984," a paper submitted to the meeting of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination Ad Hoc Task Force on International Conference on Population, 1984, New York, POP/ICP/IAC.4/CRP.1, 13-15 February 1985.

2/ Fred Sai, Leon Tabah, Dirk Van de Kaa and Wickrema Weerasooria, "Recommendations of ICP and the UNFPA: Future Implications", a report of an Expert Working Group submitted to the Executive Director, UNFPA, 1 February 1985.

3/ UNFPA, "The future role of UNFPA: UNFPA in the 1980s", report of the Executive Director to the Governing Council (DP/530), 23 April 1981.

4/ United Nations. Report of the International Conference on Population, 1984, Mexico City, 6-14 August 1984 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.XIII.8.).

5/ Paragraph 1 of the Economic and Social Council resolution 1763 (LIV), 18 May 1973.

6/ For a comprehensive interpretation of UNFPA mandate, reference should be made to the relevant resolutions and decisions taken by its various legislative bodies, particularly the General Assembly, Economic and Social Council and the Governing Council. In this regard, the most important

references include: (a) General Assembly resolutions 2815 (XXVI) of 14 December 1971, 3019 (XXVII) of 18 December 1972, 31/170 of 21 December 1976 and 34/104 of 14 December 1979; (b) Economic and Social Council resolutions 1763 (LIV) of 18 May 1973 and 2025 (LXI) of 4 August 1976; and (c) Governing Council decision numbers 75/33 A, 76/42, 78/33 I, 81/7 I, 82/20, 83/17 I and 84/21 I.

7/ For a description of the core programme, see, DP/186, report to the Governing Council at its twenty-second session, June 1976. "Priorities in future allocation of UNFPA resources"; and also, DP/530, op cit., p.14.

8/ United Nations, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs. Population Division. "Concise Report on the Fifth Inquiry Among Governments: Monitoring of Government Perceptions and Policies on Demographic Trends and Levels in Relation to Development as of 1982" (E/CN.9/1984/3), 5 December 1983.

9/ United Nations, Report of the World Assembly on Aging, Vienna, 26 July to 6 August 1982 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.82.I.16.).

10/ UNFPA, "Implications for UNFPA.....," op cit.; and Fred Sai, et al., op cit.