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SUPPORT

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

EVALUATION

Report of the Administrator

Summary

This is the third report of the Administrator on evaluation prepared in response to Governing Council decision 85/12, which inter-alia requested information on the arrangements for the evaluation of the results and effectiveness of the Programme.

The topics dealt with are: results of recent evaluations (1984), strengthening of the UNDP evaluation system, and strengthening of Government evaluation capacity. This report also refers briefly to the contents of the latest Joint Inspection Unit reports on the status of evaluation in the organizations of the United Nations.

As in previous years, the attention of the Council members is drawn to the reports on programme achievement by the Regional Directors for their respective regions with regard to specific evaluation activities conducted by them.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The year covered by this report has been one of consolidation of the UNDP evaluation system and one of broadening the base of its activities. Consolidation involves reinforcement of UNDP's evaluation capabilities through enhanced use of UNDP's revised procedures, training in support of these activities and continuing attention to strengthening the network of evaluation co-ordinators in field offices and regional bureaux. In the context of the renewed emphasis on evaluations, and consequent upon the creation of a Central Evaluation Office, continuing attention has been devoted to the proper integration of monitoring, evaluation and reporting activities into UNDP's decision-making processes. Continuing attention is being given to improving performance information through greater evaluation coverage, strengthened monitoring and evaluation quality control, improved feedback and training in support of these activities.

I. ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS OF RECENT EVALUATIONS

A. Project evaluations 1/

2. In 1984, a total of 236 in-depth project evaluations (196 for country projects and 40 for regional and interregional projects) were carried out. In UNDP's estimate, this level of evaluation activity, an increase of almost one-third in quantity over 1983, comes close to the expected coverage of the range of projects qualifying for evaluation under UNDP guidelines. 2/ As in 1983, approximately one-half of the evaluations planned in the country programme management plans (CPMP) were actually implemented, while one-quarter of those actually conducted were not planned in the CPMPs. This situation reflects a degree of responsiveness by management, as well as the real difficulties of scheduling evaluations. UNDP will continue to ensure that such evaluations, scheduled in the context of immediate operational needs, be prepared and implemented as carefully as those included in the CPMPs.

3. Looking at the broader picture during the two-year period 1983-84, 421 projects have been evaluated, three-quarters of which were located in the Asia-Pacific and African Regions (see table). The coverage over the five regions was also broad, with most of the field offices in major countries having had at least one evaluation during the period.

4. The distribution of evaluations, both by sector and executing agency, broadly corresponds to the overall distribution of the entire programme. About 80 per cent of the evaluations were in the sectors of agriculture, development planning, industry, transportation and communication, natural resources, employment and education. The correspondence extends to the other sectors as well, although fewer in number, (science and technology 20; health 11). FAO was the executing agency having the greatest involvement, with about 30 per cent of all projects evaluated. UNCTAD was next.

Table. Regional distribution of Evaluations conducted
during 1983 - 84 a/

Bureau	1983	1984	Total
RBA	63	99	162
RBAP	74	80	154
RBLAC	25	24	49
RBAS	14	24	38
UFE	7	5	12
DGIP	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>
Total...	<u>185</u>	<u>236</u>	<u>421</u>

a/ 1985 figures were not available at the time of writing.

5. Approximately 14 per cent of the projects evaluated during the two-year period benefited from cost-sharing inputs. Most of these projects were in the Latin-American region and the Arab States. Cost-sharing budgets ranged from a few thousand dollars to over \$4.5 million. Eight government-executed projects were evaluated during this period. This represents coverage consistent with that achieved over the programme as a whole and is also appropriate to the specific nature of this modality of execution.

B. Thematic and ex-post evaluations

6. Thematic evaluations in progress over the last year include those of aquaculture projects, in collaboration with the Government of Norway and FAO; of projects to support the use of Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), in collaboration with UNCTAD; and of trade information projects, in collaboration with International Trade Centre (ITC).

7. The study of GSP as an instrument of trade policy is completed (see annex). The study which deals with aquaculture projects is due for completion in mid-1986. The second phase of the trade information systems study is now being finalized, with completion expected by September/October 1986.

8. As far as ex-post evaluations are concerned, one joint exercise is being carried out with World Meteorological Organization (WMO) to study the use of meteorological equipment. The focus of the joint study with WMO has been how equipment, supplied via the United Nations system as part of the capacity building process, melds into the managerial and administrative systems of the countries concerned. In addition, UNDP and International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) are also undertaking several ex-post project evaluations. In the case of the civil aviation studies there is a broad concern to learn from projects perceived by the executing agency to offer significant lessons for replication.

C. Assessment of evaluations

9. As was done in the case of 1983 evaluations, CEO has examined the methodologies and findings of evaluations carried out during 1984 (the last year before the introduction of the revised procedures) and 1985. These reviews involved desk studies of evaluation reports and consultations with UNDP headquarters staff. The report for 1985 (DP/85/13) commented on the issues of timing, rationale, lack of uniformity, scheduling, whether evaluation outcomes were foregone conclusions, time constraints, terms of reference, the need to identify beneficiaries, briefings, and follow-up.

10. This year, there was also an attempt to ascertain whether it would be possible, by examining all the project evaluations in the forestry sector, to derive some sectoral or programmatic conclusions. The conclusion was that in their present form, evaluation reports reviewed in this sector have only limited value for programme development. It was noted that the evaluations concentrated on immediate operational questions at the project level. Information was neither sought, nor were assessments made, on the broader sector-level issues. However, the study confirmed the value of the evaluations for their intended purpose: a critical review of project performance. The clear conclusion was that since evaluations respond to their own terms of reference, programme level information has to be specifically sought by including relevant queries in the evaluation design. The inclusion of such questions, especially with regard to important cross-cutting issues such as the role of women, sustainability of project achievements, human resources development, environmental considerations, etc., will be pursued more systematically in the future: they could produce in a cost-effective fashion, programme information similar to that of thematic studies.

11. In other respects, this year's examination of evaluation studies offers some promising pointers. In order to assess whether important findings of the 1984 assessment had been addressed by operational units, a follow-up examination was performed in 1985. It demonstrated definite improvements over the previous year in terms of reference for, implementation of, and follow-up to in-depth evaluation missions. There had been systematic attention not only to the feedback from the initial study, but also to a subsequent and separate review of tripartite reviews carried out in the region in 1984 .

12. All the reviews confirm the close and positive relationship between the management of evaluations (briefing, terms of reference, debriefing, etc.) and the range and depth of issues examined in the report. In particular, the more specific the terms of reference, the more systematically the relevant issues are reviewed. In one region, it was also found that several reports examined more issues than requested in their terms of reference, while only a very few failed to examine issues as requested. A consistent shortcoming in evaluation reports, however, was a failure to examine important aspects of project design, such as relevance to development objective; explicitness and precision of objectives, activities and outputs; the logic of the relationship between various project elements; and the inclusion of indicators of progress and achievement. Most evaluations are content to take the relevance of the project objectives as given, and assess the project entirely on its own limited terms. Possible reasons for this may be the well-known deficiencies in project design, such as vagueness of objectives, which make evaluation a difficult task in practice, or a lack of specificity in evaluation terms of reference .

13. A significant proportion of evaluations considered the long-lasting effects of projects. When looking at this question, evaluators were hampered by the absence of baseline data against which their findings could be

measured. Many more evaluation reports considered the end-users or beneficiaries of project outputs and sought to relate project success to the creation of conditions that improved the well-being of specified target groups. UNDP anticipates further improvement as increasingly specific information is requested in terms of reference and project design more consistently includes definition of the end-users.

14. There are striking similarities in the coverage of issues by evaluations. Evaluations in general do give detailed attention to the inputs and outputs of the project under review. Relatively few, however, make a clear statement about the overall achievement of results, the reader being left to infer this from the tone of the report. Where projects had been identified as not being successful, the key elements identified were inadequate design; the inability of project management to adjust appropriately to changing circumstances or to develop viable workplans; and inadequacies in inputs. It is anticipated that improvements in the measurement of results will be associated with improvements in the rigour of project design and, consequently, of indicators. In the absence of uniform criteria for the measurement of project success, the conclusions reached by evaluators in 1984 that the great majority of the projects evaluated were either wholly or partially successful needs to be addressed, especially through the analysis of results and their causal factors. UNDP will continue to deal with these issues as an important aspect of the strengthening process.

15. A major difficulty facing evaluators in the field is the great variety and volume of information they have to deal with, which makes it difficult to consolidate the evidence in a form that can easily be measured. Limitations of cost and time are always inherent in the process, so proportionately greater efforts have to be made to prepare evaluations thoroughly.

16. In summary, there have been some clear improvements in the conduct of evaluations, and in the clarity and consistency of reports. More still needs to be done to ensure the coverage by reports of all essential issues, to facilitate the assessment of project results and to link these results accurately with causal factors. UNDP wishes to maximize the use of monitoring and evaluation in particular, to understand better the specific reasons for project achievement or failure. To this end, it will continue to develop useful guidelines for the preparation of quality terms of reference, urge that briefings be thorough and project-specific and that missions be assisted in investing some preparatory time in careful assessment of the kind of information which will yield clear-cut evidence on which to base future management action. The training workshops discussed below have stressed the importance of proper evaluation planning and management.

II. EFFORTS TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN THE EVALUATION SYSTEM

A. Introduction of the revised procedures on evaluation

17. Much time and attention of the United Nations system has been taken up by the implementation of the field trial of the revised procedures on evaluation, monitoring and reporting. This exercise, which will last through May 1986, calls upon all parties dealing with UNDP-assisted projects to answer two basic questions: does the monitoring and evaluation system as presently constituted, provide the information needed; and does it do so at a reasonable cost? Twelve countries will be selected for an in-depth review of experience gained and an independent analysis of the experience will be undertaken. Pending the presentation of the analysis to the Inter-Agency Working Group on Evaluation in the fourth quarter of 1986 and the results of those deliberations, the procedures will remain in effect for all UNDP-assisted projects until December 1986.

18. All existing UNDP procedures are subsumed in the system under trial, and UNDP continues to be concerned that all elements of substantive monitoring and the tripartite review mechanism be used effectively. Consequently, UNDP field offices have been urged to pay particular attention to the planning and implementation of monitoring and evaluation activities. Performance in this regard has improved over the year. The executing agencies have been fully involved in the process of developing the system. In the light of comments by the external auditors and resident representatives, every effort has been made to avoid duplication of procedures in the field trial.

19. Having been applied to all UNDP-assisted projects since January 1985, the new procedures should lead to an observable improvement in the conduct of regular reporting of progress, of tripartite review meetings and of in-depth evaluations. Consequently, UNDP has studied tripartite reviews and evaluations carried out in 1983 and 1984 in order to provide baseline data for the assessment of progress in the system's consolidation. The findings suggested that greater management attention needed to be paid by all parties to existing rules and guidelines. In particular, there was a need for greater care in preparing for the meetings, providing for substantive inputs from those concerned, ensuring participation of key personnel, and finally in effective reporting on and follow-up to such meetings. The regional bureaux and the field offices have responded positively to the findings and follow-up is being monitored by them. UNDP will continue to pursue these issues and reflect the results in its training and management arrangements.

20. The reviews of evaluations showed that greater government involvement is crucial to the most effective use of the results of evaluation. Governments need to be represented by independent evaluators not concerned with design,

management or implementation of the project. UNDP will continue to encourage the maximization of objective government involvement in in-depth evaluations.

B. Harmonization of evaluation and reporting requirements

21. The second report of the Administrator on evaluation (DP/1985/13) described actions taken towards the harmonization of evaluation and reporting requirements throughout the United Nations system, using UNDP's proposed system as a frame of reference. Pending the review of the implementation of the procedures, UNDP very much welcomes the decision by United Nations Conference on Trade (UNCTAD), United Nations Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (UNDTCD) and ITC to adopt the revised procedures for all projects financed from their regular budgets and trust funds. Among other agencies, ICAO employs the revised procedures to monitor and evaluate their trust fund projects. UNDP will continue to work with all other agencies in efforts to converge upon a simple, workable system of value to Governments. The question of system-wide application of the revised procedures will be on the agenda of the 1986 autumn session of the Co-ordinating Committee on Substantive Questions (CCSQ OPS) of the United Nations system.

C. Training

22. Training has been stressed as one of the key elements in the implementation of the revised procedures. Five courses have already been given on design and evaluation for the evaluation co-ordinators, normally the deputy resident representative, in each field office. Each of the regions have been covered. Separate courses were held for both francophone and anglophone Africa. The focus of the training has been operational, and the courses have permitted examination of country-specific problems, as well as broader management issues related to the strengthening of evaluation. They have also provided a channel for detailed feedback on the implementation of the revised procedures. The material for these courses has been shared with concerned United Nations agencies for their comments. The stress throughout has been on the importance of monitoring and evaluation planning; rigour in methodology of project design; and the establishment of a direct linkage between project design and evaluation.

23. This training effort is gradually being extended to other programme and support staff. Field offices will complement the process by pursuing the training and briefing of government officials using material conveyed in the initial courses. UNDP has encouraged executing agencies to carry out parallel training efforts, and will, through the inter-agency mechanism, seek to maximize collaboration in the design, conduct and monitoring of training efforts.

D. Effects of changes in technical co-operation
on the monitoring and evaluation process

24. The strengthening of evaluation practices depends heavily on the quality and scope of the monitoring process, since regular reports are an important source of data on the project. At the field level, this process involves project management and the UNDP field office. Changes in concepts affecting the management (shifting from international towards national staff) and the content of technical assistance projects have brought about modifications in the input mix.

25. The man-months devoted to long-term expert services declined from 48,000 in 1978 to 28,000 in 1984, while short-term advisory services and training elements have increased. This has shifted the burden of monitoring project achievement to national project management and the UNDP field office. The nature of the operations being monitored and the outputs to be evaluated have also been changing. Inputs and activities such as direct support short-term advisory services and very short duration high-level refresher training generate very little reporting on which effective monitoring can be based.

26. From these changes in input mix, project activities, reporting responsibilities and increases in the complexity of the system, UNDP draws the preliminary conclusion that there is a need to balance operational flexibility in response to the diverse needs of the countries, with retention of a rigorous core set of requirements which are simple and programme-wide in application. The forthcoming review of the system at work will take into account the interplay of these considerations.

E. Country programme evaluation

27. UNDP continues to seek methods to develop its country programme assessment and evaluation capabilities. Several regional bureaux have involved the Central Evaluation Office (CEO) in planning rapid country programme assessments for programmes to be presented to this Council. An independent evaluation of the country programme for Yemen is scheduled to commence in the first quarter of 1986. Other such independent evaluations are being planned with the Regional Bureau for Africa.

F. Participation in operational evaluations

28. The Central Evaluation Office has continued its participation in operational evaluations as time and staff resources have permitted. One objective of this involvement is to ensure the necessary blend of theory and

practice in the design and implementation of UNDP's monitoring and evaluation system. CEO staff have participated in two field evaluations in 1985, in addition to a survey of planning projects in Africa. (see chapter III)

29. The first of the field evaluations was a planning project, executed by the World Bank, of considerable importance to a least developed country. The second, in accordance with the Administrator's instruction in para. 19 of DP/1984/48, was an evaluation of a major regional project of support to the Pan African Documentation and Information System.

30. In both cases, the evaluation missions noted significant shortcomings in the design, implementation and monitoring of the projects, but also noted that the problems which these projects were intended to solve were of high priority and that the approaches towards their solution were as reasonable and sound in their conception as circumstances permitted. In the case of the planning project, many of the lacunae stemmed both from institutional weakness in the management of the development process by a newly independent country, and from over-optimism about potential achievements. In the second case, the project was operating in a field where there was no well-established body of experience and wisdom that could be referred to at either the design or implementation stage. The principal lesson is that it may be necessary for UNDP and the executing agencies to identify classes of such projects that a priori need closer monitoring than others and to devise systems for such monitoring.

G. Harmonization of evaluation within UNDP

31. The concept of a single monitoring and evaluation system applicable to funds and operations for which the Administrator is responsible is also a part of the harmonization of policies and procedures within UNDP. As was reported to the Governing Council in 1985 (DP/1985/13), UNCDF in 1983 established an evaluation system based on the UNDP framework but geared to the Fund's mandates and operational modalities. UNCDF has also given high priority to careful preparations for evaluations involving comprehensive desk reviews, based on which terms of reference are prepared and evaluators selected. UNCDF finds the approach cost-effective, eliminating as it does, the use of evaluators' time for preliminary data collection. Similarly, evaluation activities using the revised procedures are an integral part of management processes in UNDP's Office of Project Execution (OPE). Thus in 1983 and 1984, OPE participated in in-depth evaluations of 21 ongoing projects.

32. A report of the results of the UNCDF evaluations is presented in the annual report of the Administrator on the 1985 activities of the Fund (DP/1986/50), while the evaluations carried out by OPE are covered in the review in chapter II of this report.

III. STRENGTHENING GOVERNMENT EVALUATION CAPACITY

33. Strengthening government evaluation capacity has been pursued through increased government involvement in UNDP's monitoring and evaluation work at the project, programme or thematic level, and through efforts to delineate the prerequisites for successful technical co-operation designed to strengthen Governments' own monitoring and evaluation capacity.

34. With regard to the former, an examination of project evaluations indicated that government representatives on evaluation missions have in the main been senior officials drawn from sectoral ministries, with little use being made of independent expertise either within or outside the traditional public sector. The lesson for UNDP is to involve Governments in all aspects of the project cycle and more specifically in preparations for evaluations. The widest use of national evaluators will be encouraged, as will the financing of local costs of evaluation missions such as transportation. The revised procedures will be modified to place greater emphasis on the independent representation of Governments in in-depth evaluation. More effective participation of national management in internal evaluation of projects must also become part of the on-the-job training in projects.

35. CEO has carried out reviews in Africa and Latin America to determine what is the actual situation as regards monitoring and evaluation in a variety of countries. One such study, carried out in twelve African countries, has examined 13 UNDP-assisted development planning projects, which had strengthening of Government evaluation capacity among their objectives. A second study has been made of three countries in Latin America.

36. In Africa, a phased approach has so far been adopted in strengthening central evaluation capacity. Technical assistance has focused on establishing or strengthening central information systems as a prerequisite to creating a central monitoring and evaluation capacity. Information systems which performed elements of monitoring have in fact been established in six of the twelve countries reviewed, while in the others, no project activities have yet been undertaken in this regard.

37. Although a self-reliant planning capability was the ultimate aim of UNDP assistance to the planning sector, institution-building has progressed at a relatively slow pace. Much of the assistance became direct support and experts were invariably drawn into day-to-day operations of the ministry concerned. Transfer of skills was not fully successful. More importantly, transfer of capacity did not take place. The reasons appear to be the high turnover of national staff; the absence of clear procedures for systematic on-the-job training; and an expertise gap between national and international staff, whereby the rate of implementation of project activities was too high to ensure transfer of abilities.

38. The prospects that Governments will be able to sustain the information systems once UNDP assistance has terminated are mixed at best. This was clearly illustrated in one country where, one year after project termination, the central information system had all but collapsed. It is noteworthy that actual provision for training in the budgets of the projects accounted for only 8 per cent of the total, while expatriate expert assistance accounted for 82 per cent. Furthermore, it should be recalled that the findings of this study were quite similar to those of the thematic evaluation of comprehensive development planning projects undertaken by UNDP in 1978. 3/ The first study's findings and recommendations still apply eight years later, although the development environment in which the projects operate has clearly become more complex.

39. Greater attention has to be paid to the environment in which these technical assistance projects operate. Governments were surrounded by a wide variety of sometimes very sophisticated evaluation structures and procedures at sectoral, regional and local levels, often established to respond to donor evaluation requirements. The structures were not linked within the country, nor did they respond to the decision-making needs of the central planning authorities.

40. The lessons learned from this survey are many; some are already well-known. The problems are far less with the functioning of the technical systems themselves than with the capacity-building that is involved to ensure their use. Detailed, comprehensive analyses of the environment in which these systems are to function rarely precede their enthusiastic installation. Staff development programmes are rarely integral parts of projects. Legislative and executive authorities do not support central monitoring and information systems as much as they support audit and budgeting functions. However, it was also found that long-term and cumulative experience over a 12-year period can in fact lead to the development of a simple, effective computerized system such as the one now operating in Kenya. The system has effective links to budget and plan preparation and is basically self-reliant. The need for development agencies to pool and use information about which methods work better than others is increasingly vital, as is the need for this information to be shared with developing countries seeking to strengthen their central evaluation capacities.

41. The study in Latin America covered Brazil, Ecuador and Panama. UNDP has assisted all these countries in developing their monitoring and evaluation functions. The countries provided a good sample for the region, with different stages of development and institutional infrastructure for carrying out development co-operation activities.

42. The findings of the study in Latin America indicate that while the countries visited were at very different stages of development, they had the institutional structures required and the trained human resources to undertake

evaluation functions of development activities. Further strengthening is needed to develop evaluation and monitoring methodologies which are adapted to local conditions. Methods that take into account qualitative aspects of evaluation need further development, particularly criteria that incorporate socio-economic aspects rather than those which limit the scope of evaluation to financial/budgetary controls or to physical completion of tasks. Continuing research on integrated systems was suggested. Finally, although some efforts had been made by some of the more developed countries in Latin America, great opportunities for intraregional exchange of experiences, knowledge and human resources continue to exist.

43. The two studies, as well as specific experiences in other countries, imply that for the majority of cases in which UNDP involvement at the central level is sought, the most useful first step towards better evaluation capacity may be to reinforce the Government monitoring capacity of both externally and locally financed development. Initially, this may involve no more than strengthening the central information system.

44. A complementary effort to strengthen government evaluation capacity has been the collection and exchange of information on such strengthening efforts by the executing agencies. The purpose of this was to identify opportunities for co-ordination between United Nations organizations in this area. Once identified, these opportunities will be discussed in the forthcoming meeting of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Evaluation with a view to establishing a co-ordinated approach.

45. In addition to the above, UNDP has issued an updated version of the Directory of Central Evaluation Authorities of Governments. Usage of this 1985 directory will be reviewed before any further updating.

IV. JOINT INSPECTION UNIT REPORTS

46. As a part of its continuing review, the Joint Inspection Unit has recently issued a further report on the status of internal evaluation in the organizations of the United Nations. Previous reports in this series include an initial study in 1977 and a very comprehensive report in 1981. Also specific to UNDP was an important report of the JIU in 1983 (JIU/REP/83/5). This status review and its valuable recommendations coincided with UNDP's own analysis and proposals contained in DP/1983/ICW/6.

47. Both these studies were in general agreement on the emphasis and actions needed. They stressed the importance of re-establishing in UNDP a Central Evaluation Office, which would provide over-all management, leadership and support to the evaluation system. The Administrator was also to ensure that evaluation became an essential element within an integrated management system.

48. The many steps taken by the Administrator to strengthen and further develop the use of evaluation have already been detailed in this and in the previous two reports (DP/1984/18 and DP/1985/13). In this context, the most recent findings of the Joint Inspection Unit are relevant. In the summary assessment contained in JIU/REP/85/10 (Status of Internal Evaluation in Organizations of the United Nations System), it is stated that "UNDP has made substantial progress in the past two years to update and revise its internal evaluation policies, procedures and structures. However, the work required now to fully implement this revised system and firmly integrate it into operations will be a critical phase. The many tasks outlined above place heavy burdens on the present partial staffing of the UNDP Central Evaluation Office, which cannot yet effectively fulfil the essential system management functions which JIU stressed in its 1983 report on the UNDP evaluation system." Implementation of the JIU's recommendations would entail creation of three posts in addition to those already established.

49. The Administrator has always been mindful of the very valuable contribution made by the Joint Inspection Unit in the development of UNDP's evaluation system. In this spirit, he endorses the findings of the report and urges the Council to give fullest support to the recommendations, so as to ensure full implementation of the revised system and its firm integration into the management of the tripartite system.

V. CONCLUSION

50. Evaluation in UNDP is an instrument of management, the use of which must be cost-effective, whether furnishing pragmatic lessons to be fed into the management of operations, or ensuring the Administrator's accountability for the various Funds for which he is responsible. Therefore, in order to enhance its use in the improvement of programme and project quality, its closer integration in UNDP's decision-making processes will remain a major management concern.

51. After the lessons of the trial period of the revised procedures for monitoring, evaluation and reporting have been accounted for, it should be possible for the revised procedures to serve as the basis for a harmonized evaluation system for the United Nations development system. Such movement towards a common system would, by reducing the burden on recipient governments of meeting the diverse monitoring and evaluation requirements of a variety of funding sources, complement another purpose which UNDP seeks to achieve, namely, the reinforcement of government capacities with regard to monitoring and evaluation.

Notes

1/ Analysis of 1985 evaluations will be presented orally to the Governing Council.

2/ At the end of 1985, there were 1010 on-going projects which had budgets of \$1 million and above and which thus qualified for a mandatory in-depth evaluation once during their lifetime. Assuming an average lifetime of four years, the evaluation activity during 1984 was in the expected range.

3/ UNDP, Evaluation Study No. 1, Comprehensive Development Planning, June 1979 and Doc. G3400-1 (No. 1502) of 1 November 1978.

Annex

GSP as an instrument of trade policy

1. The thematic study of the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) as an instrument of trade policy involved consideration not only of the results achieved by the technical assistance provided by UNDP/UNCTAD in support of it, but also of the design, management and monitoring of the programme by the parties concerned. The study began in January 1985 with a desk study carried out by a lead consultant selected jointly by UNCTAD and UNDP. Following this, consultations were held with interested recipients and also with the major preference-granting countries to acquaint them with the main outlines of the study. Missions containing representatives from both beneficiary and preference-granting countries visited Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean to follow-up the hypotheses developed during the desk study.

2. The study concluded that while beneficiary developing countries consider GSP a very useful trade initiative, its potential benefits are under-exploited. The GSP technical assistance programme did make an important contribution to the dissemination of information on the GSP to the beneficiary developing countries. However, the goal of enabling the beneficiary developing countries to achieve self-reliance in dealing with GSP matters is as yet far from realized. While training elements were in the main adequately addressed, institution-building efforts for the creation of focal points in each country could have been dealt with more assiduously by all parties concerned.

3. The study also concluded that technical assistance should not be limited to the GSP programme alone, but that for the more developed beneficiary countries, it should focus on facilitating their capacity to deal with broader issues of trade policy, both those of formulation and implementation; for the less developed countries, specific tasks, such as export promotion and an increase in their overall ability to make the most of the export opportunities available, require continuing technical assistance support for some time to come.

4. The mission also identified other improvements needed in programme design, especially the specific inclusion of time frames and the introduction of a system of monitoring and self-evaluation. Three attributes that necessitate longtime frames were identified. The continuing review and revisions of the 16 different schemes in operation require long lead times before the complex documents can be converted into training materials. Equally, the groups of recipients for regional training are very heterogeneous in their infrastructures for dealing with trade policy issues, and finally, it may also be necessary to develop country-specific responses to solve particular problems.

