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S U P P O R T

UNITED NATIONS FUND FOR POPULATION ACTIVITIES

Report of the Executive Director

on the programmes of the regional and interregional  
demographic training and research centres

Summary

This report was prepared pursuant to Governing Council decisions 84/21 I, paragraph 7, and 84/21 V, paragraph 4, as well as decision 85/19 I, paragraph 15, which requested the Executive Director to provide a progress report on the extent to which the regional and interregional demographic training and research centres, particularly those located in sub-Saharan Africa, have incorporated the principles related to funding and programming outlined in document DP/FPA/PROJECTS/REC/8, submitted to the Council at its thirtieth session, and including steps taken by such centres to achieve self-reliance. It also reports on the measures being taken to transfer to participating member States the responsibilities for the regional institutes in Africa. This report reviews the progress that has been made to date by the demographic training and research centres in implementing the funding and programming principles and in achieving self-reliance.

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## INTRODUCTION

1. This report was prepared pursuant to the Governing Council decisions 84/21 I, paragraph 7, and 84/21 V, paragraph 4, as well as decision 85/19 I, paragraph 15, which requested the Executive Director to provide a progress report on the extent to which the regional and interregional demographic training and research centres, particularly those located in sub-Saharan Africa, have incorporated the principles related to funding and programming outlined in document DP/FPA/PROJECTS/REC/8, submitted to the Council at its thirtieth session, and including steps taken by such centres to achieve self-reliance.

2. This document presents a report on the progress that has been made to date by the various demographic training and research centres in implementing the principles enumerated in document DP/FPA/PROJECTS/REC/8 (see para. 4 below). In response to Governing Council decision 84/21 V, paragraph 4, this document reports on measures being taken to transfer to participating member States the responsibilities for the regional institutes in Africa; it also reports on the measures under way to effect this transfer. This report is based on information derived from missions that have been undertaken to the centres and from regular monitoring reports that have been submitted to the United Nations and to UNFPA during the past two years.

## I. BACKGROUND

3. At its thirtieth session in June 1983, the Governing Council, in decision 83/17 I, paragraph 10, authorized UNFPA to provide up to \$3.5 million per year to the following seven regional or interregional demographic training and research centres: (a) International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), India; (b) Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE), Chile; (c) The Regional Institute for Population Studies (RIPS), Ghana; (d) Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographiques (IFORD), Cameroon; (e) Cairo Demographic Centre (CDC), Egypt; (f) Centre Démographique ONU-Roumanie (CEDOR), Romania; (g) Demographic Training Programme, Moscow State University, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

4. In providing assistance to these centres, UNFPA has encouraged them to adopt training and research strategies that are cost-effective and responsive to the needs of the countries and regions that they serve. More specifically, UNFPA has been working with the centres to assist them in implementing the principles set forth in document DP/FPA/PROJECTS/REC/8, section III. These principles are as follows:

(a) The number, duration, content and emphases of training programmes at the centres should closely reflect the needs of the countries which are served by the centres. It may thus be necessary to review carefully the programmes and to introduce the needed modifications and changes into them. While regional variations will continue to exist in regard to the relative emphasis placed on the various types of training activities conducted at the centres, it would appear necessary to concentrate training courses on demographic analysis, population policy formulation and evaluation and the interrelationship between population and development;

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(b) It would appear desirable that each centre, recognizing its own specific situation and regional needs, formulate the goals and objectives to be attained during the period 1984-1987. This should not only help each centre in defining its priorities among its planned activities, but also in its own subsequent assessment of its achievements;

(c) In this regard, the form of the future institutional structure of the centres should be decided upon during the period 1984-1987. The centres may wish to explore various alternative forms of arrangements compatible with their own individual situations. The centres may wish to consider establishing themselves as viable independent institutions with high academic standards, or alternatively, actively pursuing integration with a national university as a long-term goal;

(d) The centres should achieve diversification in the sources of their support in the short run and financial independence in the long run;

(e) The regional focus of the regional centres should be maintained for considerations of cost, substance and institutional support. In this context, (i) programme content should specifically meet regional needs; (ii) the training and other activities of the centres should enjoy regional support; (iii) financial and other contributions from participating countries should rapidly grow in the near future in support of the centres; and (iv) countries of the region should make more effective use of the facilities at the centres;

(f) Consideration should be given by the authorities at the centres to standardizing the policies and practices among the centres in regard to: (i) selection and admission to the courses and the examination and grading systems; (ii) policies with respect to the number and payment of national and international fellowships; and (iii) faculty and staff recruitment as well as the job descriptions and educational and professional background of international advisers;

(g) The monitoring and evaluation of programme activities at the centres should be improved by all the parties concerned. The involvement of the United Nations, the regional commissions, the UNDP resident representatives and the UNFPA deputy representatives and senior advisers on population should be strengthened.

## II. IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDED PRINCIPLES AT THE CENTRES SINCE 1984

5. On balance, the centres have made considerable progress in implementing the seven principles enumerated above. The governing bodies of the respective institutions have taken a close look at ways to improve financial stability, administrative efficiency and the appropriateness of the curriculum in light of the needs of the countries served. The involvement of the United Nations system has been strengthened as evidenced not only by its participation in the sessions of the respective governing bodies, but also through regular missions undertaken to work with the centres in incorporating the measures specified by the UNDP

Governing Council during its thirtieth session. The institutions have made conscientious efforts to pave the way for attaining self-reliance. For some of the centres, however, particularly those in Africa, this is not a goal that can be achieved in the short term.

6. As might be expected, progress towards achieving financial independence has varied among the centres. IIPS has largely become a national institution, relying on external assistance only for the provision of fellowship costs. Indeed, the institutional, administrative and financial evolution that has occurred at IIPS can serve as a model for the other training centres. UNFPA's contribution to the Demographic Training Programme at Moscow State University will decline in 1986 as an increasing proportion of needed resources are provided by the Government of the USSR and the USSR/UNDP trust fund. During the past two years, the Cairo Demographic Centre has succeeded in diversifying its sources of funding and is securing broader co-operation from the Government of Egypt. The paragraphs which follow present a more detailed account of the actions taken by the various centres.

A. Regional demographic training and research centres

7. International Institute for Population Sciences. IIPS, located at Bombay, India, is now a national institution largely supported by the Government of India. The only UNFPA assistance to IIPS is through the programme of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) which supports fellowships. UNFPA funds are used to develop and strengthen population manpower in the countries of the Asia and the Pacific region by providing fellowships to government nominees for undertaking one-year certificate or two-year diploma programmes in population studies. For the four-year period 1984-1987, UNFPA has allocated funds as follows: \$115,159 for 1984; \$106,102 for 1985; \$164,279 for 1986; and \$90,000 for 1987.

8. In recent years, the member States of ESCAP have indicated increasing interest in the IIPS fellowship programme. Consequently, the number of fellows nominated by the various Governments of the ESCAP region increased from 19 in the 1979/1980 academic year to 32 in the 1983/1984 academic year. Two out of three of these fellows are from the least developed countries in the region. The fellowship programme of ESCAP and IIPS is making a concrete contribution to manpower development in the field of population in the countries of the region.

9. Latin American Demographic Centre. In 1975, CELADE was incorporated into the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) as a permanent institution with its own identity and given the responsibility for carrying out the Latin American regional population programme. During the past two years, CELADE has intensified its efforts to become more responsive to the needs of the countries it serves. In 1985, to reinforce population activities in the English-speaking Caribbean countries, a joint ECLAC/CELADE demography unit was established at the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, and a CELADE senior demographer, supported by the regular budget, was seconded to the ECLAC office in Buenos Aires, Argentina,

to provide better support to the countries of the Rio de la Plata. The regional population programme is financed mainly by UNFPA with contributions from other donors, such as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the International Development Research Centre of Canada (IDRC) and the Government of the Netherlands. Efforts have also been made to obtain other sources of financial assistance.

10. Bearing in mind the priorities established in the regional conferences on population, CELADE's 1984-1985 work programme emphasized several activities aimed at strengthening the capacity of Governments to incorporate demographic variables into socio-economic development planning, as well as in the formulation, execution and evaluation of population policies.

11. CELADE has concentrated on training in the use of demographic analysis techniques, the provision of consultancy and advisory services to government institutions in the Latin America and Caribbean countries and the development of demographic and socio-demographic research. While these areas of activity have been maintained throughout the years that the institution has been in existence, the gradual incorporation of other areas has given rise to a steady diversification of CELADE's activities. This process has been accelerated in recent years to meet the very specific needs of the countries of the region, as a result of the significant change in government awareness of the importance of population issues as a fundamental factor in development planning.

12. During 1984-1985, CELADE was able to obtain a small number of microcomputers from various donor agencies, and the staff has developed a highly interactive and user-friendly system for applying the most suitable techniques for demographic analysis in the region. The use of these and other systems was taught in microcomputer training courses in Central and South America.

13. CELADE's training programme has been expanded and diversified in order to benefit a greater number of students and covers a broader range of subjects, particularly in connection with the programming and execution of population activities related to social and economic planning and the formulation of population policies and programmes. This was in answer to the new demands made by Governments in recent years.

14. UNFPA expenditures/allocations to CELADE training programme for the period 1984/1986 are as follows: 1984, \$435,824; 1985, \$565,120, and 1986, \$262,980. In addition five professional posts are financed by ECLAC's regular budget and CELADE is receiving various services from ECLAC in support of the backstopping, research and training activities.

15. Regional Institute for Population Studies. RIPS, which serves 12 English-speaking countries of Africa, is located at the University of Ghana in Accra. It is a subsidiary body of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) but has its own Governing Council which has the responsibility for prescribing the general principles and policies governing the operations of the Institute and giving

general directives as to their implementation. An Advisory Board on Studies and Research advises the Governing Council on the academic programmes of the Institute. Prior to 1986, there were two courses of study - a master's degree course and a diploma course. The diploma course has been modified and from 1986 onwards there will be only one course of study - a 12-month master's degree programme in demography per se or population studies if a student elects a concentration in the social sciences. As of early 1986, no decision had been reached on the continuation of the Ph.D. programme. RIPS also provides guided research, ad hoc courses and in-service training. UNFPA has approved assistance for the four-year period, 1984-1987 in the amount of \$3.04 million. Funds for the first two years have been allocated and it has been agreed to review the programme before allocating funds for the remaining years. This review was planned to take place in April 1986. By the end of 1985, a total of approximately \$1.5 million had been expended out of the approved funds.

16. The meeting of the RIPS Governing Council convened in June 1985 was attended by 9 of the 13 members, as well as by UNFPA. At this session, the Council reviewed the Institute's performance from February 1984 to June 1985; considered the report of the Advisory Board on Studies and Research; reviewed the status of contributions from member States; and discussed the future of the Institute, particularly the financial and administrative principles that had been endorsed by the UNDP Governing Council. At that session, there was yet another strong consensus among the participating countries to develop the Institute as a viable and independent regional training institution. The Council noted with satisfaction the redesignation of the diploma course to a master's degree to be approved by the University, as recommended by the Advisory Board. The Council further recommended the reduction of costs in order that the Institute would be able to operate at a financial level that could be sustained by African countries themselves. With respect to the Institute's future, the Council agreed that ECA would prepare a strategy paper describing how the Institute would attain a level of self-reliance within the African context.

17. Institut de Formation et de Recherche Démographiques. IFORD, which serves 12 French-speaking countries of Africa, is located at Yaoundé, Cameroon. Like RIPS, it is a subsidiary body of ECA and has its own Governing Council and an Advisory Committee, which advises the Council on the academic programmes of the Institute. The work programme for 1984-1987 consists of a two-year course leading to the "diplôme d'études démographiques," which is equivalent to a master's degree. In addition, it conducts short-term courses and seminars and promotes demographic research in the member countries. UNFPA has approved assistance for the four-year period 1984-1987 in the amount of \$3.05 million. As in the case of RIPS, allocation of funds was approved for two years; pending a review of the programme, scheduled for April 1986, funds will be allocated for the remaining years.

18. The meeting of the Governing Council of IFORD, convened in July 1985 and attended by representatives of 8 of the 12 countries served by the Institute, ECA and UNFPA, discussed activities undertaken since the last session of the IFORD Governing Council (1983); the findings and recommendations of the Consultative

Committee, which had been set up by the Governing Council in 1983 to review financial and administrative matters; and the report of the ad hoc committee established by ECA to examine the training and research activities as well as the Institut's future.

19. The Council noted that, since its last meeting, IFORD had gone through some difficult times owing to acute financial shortages as a result of the failure to contribute on the part of some member States. As of January 1986, the host country agreement negotiated between the United Nations and the Government of Cameroon had not been signed. The Council accepted the recommendation of the Consultative Committee on course content, namely, to give greater emphasis to the interrelationship between population and development, and to shift away from the previous mathematical orientation. The Consultative Committee also recommended that efforts be intensified to secure world-wide recognition of the IFORD diploma. At present, the IFORD diploma is not recognized by most African countries. Therefore, degree recipients are not eligible for career advancement when they return to their respective countries after their training at IFORD. The IFORD Governing Council recommended that member States be encouraged to contribute. The Council noted that shortage of staff was a serious constraint, but made no recommendation as to how to solve that question, leaving it for the consideration of the Consultative Committee. The Governing Council agreed with the ad hoc committee concerning the future of IFORD that it should remain a viable and independent institution.

20. Regarding the status of government pledges and contributions, IFORD has been more fortunate than RIPS in that at least eight countries have contributed to its budget, six on a regular basis. Unlike RIPS, IFORD itself is not affiliated with a national institution and thus must meet all of its own overhead costs. Consequently, any variation in the level of contributions directly affects its performance. UNFPA has approved assistance for the four-year period, 1984-1987 in the amount of \$3.04 million. Of this amount, approximately \$1.3 million had been expended by the end of 1985. With respect to interim measures, ECA has taken the same measures as in the case of RIPS. Future courses of action for both institutes will be determined in accordance with the conclusions of the extraordinary joint meetings of the respective governing bodies, scheduled for March 1986, and ratification thereof by the ECA Joint Conference of Planners, Statisticians and Demographers (March 1986) and the Conference of Ministers (April 1986). These recommendations will be subsequently submitted to the General Assembly of the United Nations.

#### B. Interregional demographic training and research centres

21. Cairo Demographic Centre. The thirty-first session of the Governing Council of CDC took place in December 1985. In addition to the members of the Governing Council, representatives from the United Nations, the executing agency, and UNFPA, the funding agency, attended.

22. In presenting the annual progress report for the year 1985, the Director of



CDC reported on the steps being taken to implement the general principles for future direction which were recommended by the UNDP Governing Council in June 1983 at its thirtieth session. In this regard, the following was noted:

(a) The training programmes have been thoroughly reviewed and the curricula revised to reflect the highest academic standards. In addition, the special diploma course was adopted to become a course on population and development based on the population dynamics programme of the general diploma, thus serving the needs of the countries benefiting from CDC. The master's degree programme now includes a training component to acquaint students with recent developments in the fields of demography and population and development. Students now carry considerable research responsibilities;

(b) One post for a national expert in research has been introduced in lieu of an international expert for 1985 and onward;

(c) Research activities, along with the provision for wide dissemination of research findings (seminars, papers and monographs), have been emphasized in response to an acute need for research workers in developing countries serviced by CDC. Furthermore, research contributes to a clearer understanding of population problems in these countries, their determinants and consequences and their implications for development. To facilitate research, the library has been expanded and a microfiche system has been set up to store and retrieve information;

(d) An International Symposium on Population and Development took place in November 1985. This symposium was the first in a planned series of symposia dealing with policy-oriented topics;

(e) CDC has achieved considerable diversification in its base of financial support and every attempt will be made to extend this diversification. The financial contribution of the Government of Egypt has increased three-fold between the budget years 1980/81 (\$70,000) and 1984/85 (\$210,000), and another increase has been approved for the year 1986/87, thus increasing the Government's contribution to \$329,300. Other contributions were obtained from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in the amount of \$425,000 (\$125,000 in United States dollars, with the remaining balance in local currency). These funds supported rental of premises, computer equipment and operating costs as well as research projects on the population situation in Egypt. In addition, IDRC contributed \$98,300 to CDC;

(f) In its efforts to help CDC achieve self-reliance, the Government of Egypt is considering granting the Centre a piece of land and will be soliciting funds from donors, including UNFPA, to construct a building to house the Centre. This facility would include a students' hotel for the international fellows. This would save the cost of the rent currently being paid by the Government and USAID and would reduce the cost of fellowships.

23. UNFPA assistance to CDC for 1984 and 1985 amounted to approximately \$1.2 million.

24. Centre Démographique ONU-Roumanie. CEDOR, which had been established in 1974 in Bucharest, Romania, as an independent interregional institution offering courses on population and development to French-speaking middle-level government officials from developing countries, closed on 30 June 1984 at the request of the Government of Romania. During its 10 years of operation, CEDOR trained 187 fellows from 39 developing countries in its nine-month course and 195 fellows in short-term courses. Fellows who had already been selected for the 1984/1985 academic year were placed elsewhere, mainly at the Catholic University of Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium. The total expended for CEDOR by UNFPA, from its inception through 1984, amounted to approximately \$3.3 million. Aware of the growing need for training and research in population and development, UNFPA has in recent years been exploring ways to increase the availability of such instruction. The closing of CEDOR lent a new urgency to delineating a programme that would respond to the need for training and research in the field of population and development, in particular for a programme tailored to meet the needs of candidates from French-speaking developing countries. This effort has culminated in plans to establish an international centre for training and research in population and development at the Catholic University of Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve. A proposal for Governing Council approval of UNFPA funding of such a programme is being submitted to the thirty-third session of the Governing Council in document DP/FPA/PROJECTS/REC/33.

25. Demographic Training Programme - Moscow State University. The Demographic Training Programme in population and development planning has been jointly sponsored by the United Nations and the Government of the USSR since 1977. In 1986, these four-month courses will be financed almost entirely by the Government of the USSR and by USSR/UNDP trust fund with UNFPA contributing \$55,513, an amount considerably less than originally anticipated. Arrangements for 1987 and onwards are under discussion among the parties concerned. As in the past, lecturers from the United Nations and the USSR will conduct the courses twice a year in English for middle- and high-level government officials from developing countries around the world. The United Nations will continue to execute the project in co-operation with UNDP.

26. The content of the training courses is reviewed on a regular basis and is adjusted and updated to ensure that it meets the needs of trainees from developing countries in the area of population and development. The most recent review was undertaken in September 1985.

### III. REGIONAL INSTITUTES IN AFRICA: TRANSFER OF RESPONSIBILITIES

27. This section, in response to paragraph 4, section V of Governing Council decision 84/21, examines the steps that have been taken to transfer responsibilities for the activities of the two regional institutes to participating member States.

28. At the conclusion of a joint session of the Governing Councils of RIPS and IFORD that took place from 3 to 14 March 1986 at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, several

recommendations were adopted in accordance with the principles related to funding and programming outlined in document DP/FPA/PROJECTS/REC/8, which were submitted to, and endorsed by, the Governing Council at its thirtieth session. The recommendations of the joint session of the Governing Councils were subsequently endorsed by the Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers and were scheduled to be presented to the ECA Conference of Ministers at its meeting in April 1986.

29. The joint session of the Governing Councils recommended a transition period of five years starting in 1988 for both centres, during which the UNFPA contribution would be gradually decreased while that of the member countries would be gradually increased. The joint session also recommended that the salary structures at the centres be changed; in the case of IFORD, the change would be to a level similar to that of the University of Yaoundé plus allowances on the same pattern as the Regional Centre for Training in Aerial Surveys (RECTAS) and, in the case of RIPS, on a basis similar to the salary structure of RECTAS.

30. Specifically, with regard to RIPS, the joint session recommended that:

(a) RIPS be given a transition period of five years at the end of which the UNFPA's contribution to the non-fellowship component will not exceed 50 per cent;

(b) Funding for fellowships should continue;

(c) Given member countries' contributions, it should be possible to maintain present staff strength, subject to the adjustments of salaries as indicated below;

(d) RIPS should undertake urgent measures to streamline its administration in order to make it more cost-effective;

(e) The ECA Secretariat as a matter of urgency should review the contribution criteria and the method of pledging and submit this information to the ECA Conference of Ministers for consideration.

The joint session also pointed out that (a) the recommended professional staff strength of four or five would be inadequate to maintain minimal standards at RIPS; (b) in view of the fact that member countries will not be able to afford United Nations salary scales, the RECTAS scale should form the basis for fixing salaries for staff, provided that in fixing actual salaries, due consideration is given to high calibre staff needed to implement RIPS programmes and that uniform salary scales should apply to all staff at RIPS; (c) it is understood that renewals of contracts after 1988 would be in accordance with scales proposed above; and (d) new conditions would be made known to all staff a year in advance.

In regard to students and fellowships, the joint session recommended that (a) a minimum of 40 fellowships per annum should be provided; (b) the level of stipends should continue to be determined in accordance with the present practice;

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and (c) given the functions of RIPS to train trainers, the present programme mix at RIPS (M.A., M. Phil. and Ph.D.) should be maintained, provided that the offers at any time will depend upon staff strength.

31. Specifically, with regard to IFORD, the joint session recommended that, in view of the fact that the principle of restructuring of the institutes in order to reduce their operating costs had been accepted, a transitional period beginning 1 January 1988 should be observed in order to enable member States and ECA to prepare the new structural standards on the basis of which IFORD will operate. During this transitional period, it was recommended that (a) member States and ECA should prepare statutes that would govern the new structure of the Institute; (b) local conditions in the host country be examined in detail and a prototype operating budget prepared which, while taking into account the funding capacity of member States, must also meet the needs of the Institute in the light of its mission, namely the training of high-level demographers and the promotion of population research in Africa (the cost structure of the University of Yaoundé, improved by incorporating in it the type of allowances offered by RECTAS, could serve as a base); (c) at each Governing Council meeting, a member State should be designated to audit the budget performance accounts in respect of the contributions by member States; (d) the Executive Secretary of ECA should impress upon all IFORD member States the need to pay their contributions regularly; and (e) UNFPA contributions should be gradually phased out as the following measures are taken, with a concomitant increase in member States contributions: abolition of the post of Administrator, reduction of equipment and fellowship costs, and abolition of one teaching post towards the end of the transitional period. It was recommended that after the transitional period member States should take over almost the entire financing of the Institute in conformity with the new structural standards of operation which will have been prepared during the transitional phase. Contributions should be apportioned among member States in the following manner: part of the contribution (half) should be fixed and the rest proportional to the number of students sent to IFORD by each country. It was also indicated that member States hope, however, to continue to receive assistance from the international community, particularly UNFPA, in support of research projects after the transitional phase.

32. On the basis of the above recommendations, the Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers resolved that African Governments should progressively take over the financing of the institutes so that at the end of the five-year period they would have assumed the financing of a significant portion of the budgets of the institutes. The Conference further appealed to UNFPA to continue its funding in order to allow the African Governments to assume progressively financial and administrative control. Finally, the Conference invited the Executive Secretary of ECA to undertake a restructuring of the institutes on the basis of the recommendations of the joint session of the RIPS and IFORD Governing Councils, including a revision of the statutes and salary scales, as necessitated by the restructuring.

### III. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

33. This report has reviewed the measures that have been taken during the past two years by the demographic training and research centres in order to comply with the principles enumerated in document DP/FPA/PROJECTS/REC/8, paragraph 15. The willingness of the centres to conform to these guidelines has been demonstrated by the specific measures taken with respect to revising curricula, improving administrative efficiency and devising financial policies designed to enhance the achievement of self-reliance. ECA and the Governing Councils of the two regional centres in Africa have undertaken extensive reviews of the programmes at RIPS and IFORD in order to bring them into line with the principles endorsed by the UNDP Governing Council. These efforts culminated in an extraordinary joint meeting of the respective governing bodies in Addis Ababa in March 1986. At that meeting, the problems confronting the two institutes were thoroughly discussed and recommendations resulting from that meeting are recounted in paragraphs 28 to 32 above.

34. In view of the efforts that have already been implemented by the various centres as well as those measures that are now under consideration by the respective governing bodies of these institutions, it would appear that the centres have made considerable progress in becoming more responsive to the needs of the countries served and are committed to pursuing policies geared to the eventual achievement of self-reliance.

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