



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

Distr.  
LIMITED

DP/1986/BFC/L.2/Add.14  
18 June 1986

Original: ENGLISH

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BUDGETARY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE  
Thirty-third session  
June 1986, Geneva  
Item 10 of the agenda of the Budgetary and  
Finance Committee

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE BUDGETARY AND FINANCE  
COMMITTEE TO THE GOVERNING COUNCIL

Draft report of the Budgetary and Finance Committee

Addendum

Rapporteur: Ms. MKHONZA Adelaide Phindile (Swaziland)

Chapter I. MATTERS REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE BY THE PLENARY

B. Measures to promote better understanding of the role and activities of UNDP and of the resources needs of the Programme - Information Support projects for the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (IDWSSD) and Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (TCDC)

1. For consideration of the financial aspects of these two subjects (included under item 4 (b) of the Council's agenda), the Committee had before it a note by the Administrator (DP/1986/16), containing his recommendations for the continuation in 1987 and subsequent years of information support projects for IDWSSD and for TCDC.

2. The Administrator's proposals in respect of both projects were introduced by the Associate Administrator. With regard to IDWSSD, he stressed the key role being played by UNDP, which provided the chairman for both the Inter-Agency Steering Committee for Co-operative Action and for its sub-committee on information. He referred to the close co-operation between UNDP, the World Bank and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in the development of low-cost water hand-pumps and latrines respectively and to the quarterly publication "Decade Watch", which was produced in four languages and whose 13,000 copies were estimated to reach a total readership of approximately 65,000. Emphasizing that this informational support to the Decade was an integral part of the activity, he explained that the Administrator's recommendation was to provide further support from Special Programme Resources (SPR) at the rate of \$320,000 per annum for the four years 1987 to 1990, the last year of the Decade, for a total of \$1,280,000, most of which was required to cover the production costs of "Decade Watch".

3. In introducing the Administrator's proposal for information support to TCDC activities, the Associate Administrator explained that of the total amount of \$1,600,000 requested from SPR for the fourth cycle, approximately \$875,000 was required to cover the costs of producing the publication "Co-operation South", formerly "TCDC News", approximately \$170,000 for the three media seminars proposed, and \$555,000 for staff costs. It was proposed that these amounts be provided out of the programme development component of SPR.

Summary of the discussion in the committee

4. Most members expressed their support for the Administrator's proposals. With regard to TCDC, one member felt that its impact could be strengthened if it were to include more practical information, such as actual examples of TCDC

opportunities and achievements. Another member believed that much remained to be done in this field, that new ideas could emerge in this context, and that the possibility of further financing should be kept open.

5. Some members, while giving their general support to the proposals, referred to the difficulties of evaluating information activities and urged that their usefulness be continually reviewed. One member stressed the importance of knowing what the results of these activities were in comparison to what had been planned and that the activities should be the subject of cost-benefit analysis.

6. A number of members requested further information on these activities. One queried the necessity for media seminars, given present telecommunication possibilities; another asked why the Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (TCDC) proposal could not be met from the UNDP trust fund for Economic Co-operation among Developing Countries (ECDC), since that fund appeared to be dormant; another requested further information on the role of UNDP in these activities and asked whether the provision for salaries were for consultants or regular UNDP staff; how many journalists would participate in the media seminars; and what were the costs of these activities in the third cycle. One member felt that the TCDC activities should be primarily the responsibility of the Governments concerned; another that the time for publicity and promotion of TCDC should now be replaced by a concentration on operational activities. Another member stated that there should be a closer link between central and local authorities in connection with these activities.

Response of the administrator

7. The Associate Administrator stressed that while organizations were very good at developing new ideas, they were not always successful in disseminating them to the people they were intended to help. He fully agreed with the suggestion that "Co-operation South" could be improved by making it a more

practical source of reference, giving concrete examples of how particular TCDC projects had been conceived and developed. He did not, however, agree that the time for publicizing and promoting TCDC activities had passed; publicity was still necessary and it was essential to disseminate information on successful projects so that they could be multiplied.

8. In response to particular questions raised by the members, the Associate Administrator explained that the programming of funds available in the UNDP trust fund, which had been established for ECDC, rather than TCDC activities, was in any case controlled by the Group of 77, not by the Administrator, that although there could be unallocated SPR funds available from the third cycle, the present proposals did not include a request to apply any of this specifically for TCDC purposes, that the amount of \$555,000 requested for staff costs in the TCDC proposal was to provide for special contract staff for the TCDC unit: one editor, one information specialist and one secretary, and that for IDWSSD, one editor, one assistant editor and one secretary were foreseen. He emphasized that production costs of such publications were high because of the need to publish them in four languages. With regard to the evaluation of these services, he stated that readership surveys could provide valuable information and that a further readership survey would be taken in another two to three years. The present proposals for earmarking \$320,000 per year for IDWSSD promotional activities in the fourth cycle represented approximately the same rate of annual expenditure as had been approved for the last three years of the third cycle. For TCDC publications, \$150,000 had been earmarked from SPR over the three years 1984 to 1986. In his view, notwithstanding present-day possibilities for teleconferences, experience had shown there was no substitute for on-the-spot exposure and participation.

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