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PROGRAMME PLANNING

Country and intercountry programmes and projects

FOURTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR SOMALIA

Note by the Administrator

I. PROCESS OF THE PROGRAMMING EXERCISE

1. The preparation of the country programme has benefited from a series of recent studies analysing Somalia's development problems and prospects. The World Bank's Somalia towards Economic Recovery and Growth (August 1985), the Government's national development strategy and programme (September 1985) and the UNDP/World Bank technical co-operation assessment mission (October 1985) have served as very important inputs to the formulation of the country programme.

2. Furthermore, account was taken of other studies, notably the World Bank's Agricultural Sector Review in which UNDP participated actively and the studies in manpower, civil service and rural development supported by the United States Agency for International Development. The public investment programme for 1986-1988 has also been used extensively to link as much as possible the technical assistance programme to the investment programme.

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3. The formal country programming process started with a three-day review of the third country programme (September 1985) in which the Government, represented by virtually all Ministries, UNDP, including headquarters staff, and most United Nations agencies participated. This review provided a critical overview of the programme implementation and led to some reshaping of approaches and implementation procedures for future years. Finally, the Resident Representative's note put forward ideas and suggestions which the Government used in the formulation of the country programme.

II. THE FOURTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME

4. These studies and reviews, along with the UNDP experience in Somalia, indicate that the fundamental problems facing Somalia -- budget deficits, inadequate domestic savings, low productivity and lack of qualified manpower -- continue to persist. Recurrent drought conditions and the presence of a substantial number of refugees are also major constraints in the country's development. It is widely recognized that these problems can be resolved only over a number of years and with the continuous support of the donor community. They were discussed in some detail by the technical co-operation assessment mission which suggested a number of measures designed to improve the performance of development assistance. These measures include improvements in planning and aid co-ordination as well as in programme orientation and modalities of implementation.

5. The general thrust of the country programme is broadly consistent with the country's needs and objectives. It covers a mix of activities including planning and management, research and training and rural and community development. These are the three fundamental areas of weakness in Somalia's development efforts that require concerted support from external assistance. Other areas of concern are environmental rehabilitation and conservation, expansion and improvement of communications, development of natural resources and promotion of the industrial sector.

6. The first priority is the management of the development process itself which, by virtue of the fact that the entire development budget is funded by external assistance, is inextricably bound up with project planning, formulation, appraisal and evaluation. For several years UNDP has been supporting the Ministry of National Planning in these areas towards a self-sustaining planning capability. In line with the recommendations of the technical co-operation assessment mission, a new approach incorporating a full programme of training and advice on institutional reform will be made in the new country programme.

7. The second self-evident priority is manpower development. There is virtually unanimous agreement within the Government and the donor community on the importance of strengthening the human resources base for development. UNDP has been supporting Government institutions through several relevant

projects, notably the Technical Teacher Training School and Somalia Institute for Development Administration and Management, and it is planned to continue such efforts in this programme emphasizing technical and vocational education and multi-sectoral skills for national development.

8. The third priority, and most innovative objective, is to support integrated rural development projects in co-operation with the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities in the pursuit of multi-faceted community and "grass-root" development. This programme will place a distinct emphasis on the delivery of assistance directly to the more deserving beneficiaries.

9. Finally, it should be mentioned that the priority concerns of women and refugees are met, often indirectly through projects of community development, infrastructure and environmental management.

10. In addition to the \$30.05 million indicative planning figure (IPF), the country programme will utilize approximately \$33 million from other funds principally the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office, several United Nations agencies and bilaterals under third-party cost-sharing arrangements. This proportion between IPF and non-IPF resources constitutes a commendable feature of the country programme which will serve as a framework of reference for several other donors. There are good prospects of external assistance continuing at relatively high levels but the Government is concerned that such assistance be channelled to the areas of major priority.

III. MANAGEMENT OF THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME

11. At the 1985 country programme review, a number of recommendations were made to improve the management of the programme and enhance delivery of UNDP-funded projects. Because UNDP expert input has been large (about 75 per cent), the Government wishes to see a reduction in the proportionate size of the personnel component in the next programme in favour of short-term consultancy services and training activities. While this is a desirable objective, it should be noted that any significant reduction in the inputs of foreign expertise may be difficult to accomplish in view of the lack of adequately trained nationals working in Government development programmes.

12. As regards training activities, the Government and UNDP agreed that they should be conducted as far as possible within Somalia. Fellowships should be limited in duration except for post-graduate training and increasingly undertaken in relevant institutions in other developing countries.

13. The complexity of the circumstances in the country demand that special attention be paid to project conception and design which have often suffered from the assumption that modes of assistance implemented elsewhere can simply

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be replicated. These deficiencies place on UNDP an important responsibility for supervising the design of projects to ensure realistic conception, minimize project drift away from original objectives and guard against the likelihood of multiple extensions.

14. With serious funding shortages in the public sector, the Government wishes to see cost-sharing arrangements explored through active consultations with the authorities concerned and with multilateral and bilateral sources of assistance.

IV. RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

15. The Administrator recommends that the Governing Council approve the country programme for Somalia.

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