



**Governing Council
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29 May-19 June 1987, New York
Item 5 (b) of the provisional agenda

COUNTRY AND INTERCOUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

FOURTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR LESOTHO

Note by the Administrator

I. PROCESS OF THE PROGRAMMING EXERCISE

1. Lesotho is in a unique geopolitical situation: completely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa, its progress towards economic self-reliance is heavily influenced by that country, which also reinforces its dependance in terms of employment and trade. The absence of economic infrastructure at independence has shaped UNDP efforts during the previous country programmes to assist the Government in transforming this meagre inheritance into a viable economy based on agricultural and rural development in contrast to its present status as a distribution network for migrant remittances, customs revenues and external assistance.
2. The fourth country programme for Lesotho is the culmination of a dialogue which began in December 1984 between the Government of Lesotho and UNDP. The process started with a desk review of the third country programme within the context of the socio-economic situation of the country.
3. The Resident Representative formally initiated the programming process in his note of 1 March 1985 to the Government, in which he highlighted the constraints inherent in the third country programme which impeded the achievement of its targeted development objectives. The country programme was too broad, open-ended and represented a conglomeration of projects without focus. This made it difficult to achieve any significant impact in key sectors, the more so because Government machinery was not sufficiently strengthened to provide the necessary backstopping in management, counterparts, etc. The Government experienced difficulties in identifying national counterparts, given the overall shortage of trained manpower.

4. Against this background, it was agreed that new activities within the fourth country programme should be limited to a few sectors, strengthening the development machinery, improving economic management and addressing the development of human resources through direct training.

II. THE FOURTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME

5. The fourth country programme has taken into account the following major factors:

(a) The country's unique geopolitical and economic situation;

(b) The possibility of a sudden repatriation of the Basotho work-force from South Africa;

(c) The policy guidelines on which the Fourth National Development Plan is predicated and which will form the basis of the Government investment programme.

6. In addition, the country programme has taken into account the Lesotho Highland Water Project, the largest development scheme ever to be undertaken in the country, which will transfer water from the Senqu River to the Vaal River basin and will generate hydropower for Lesotho.

7. This project, scheduled for completion in 1996, will have a major impact on the Lesotho economy by improving the national income and balance of payments, creating domestic employment opportunities and improving socio-economic conditions. As a result of the completed feasibility studies, which were co-ordinated by UNDP and co-financed with the European Development Fund (EDF) and the European Economic Commission (EEC), a treaty was signed in October 1986 between the Republic of South Africa and the Government of Lesotho to commence the engineering phase of the project. UNDP, together with the Government of Lesotho and bilateral and multilateral organizations will participate financially in the design and engineering phase of the project for which the estimated cost is \$39 million. UNDP will also participate in the overall parallel development of the Senqu River Basin.

8. Due to the fact that, at any given time, about 50 per cent of the country's able bodied men are working away from their homes as migrants, approximately 70 per cent of the productive tasks in the agricultural sector are performed by women, who, in addition, are the principal decision makers in the households.

9. Consequently, all agricultural programmes are directed towards women. The aim of these programmes is to reduce the burdens of women, particularly with regard to water and fuel. The introduction of labour saving devices, farm modernization at the intermediate level and the identification and introduction of other incentives are envisaged.

10. The overall thrust of the country programme gives priority to strengthening the capacity of the Government in development planning and administration and, in

the development of manpower resources, through direct training. Because of the continued shortage of qualified manpower during the next IPF cycle, the orientation of the programme will lean heavily toward direct support.

11. As a result of continuing deterioration of the situation with South Africa, Lesotho is affected by a number of "spillover effects" to which other front-line States are less subjected. Events in the Republic of South Africa, including factional fighting in the mines employing Basotho migrant workers, have created a tense atmosphere. The sectoral consultation planned with Government and major donors on rural development will be a major step towards developing strategies and programmes to address the eventual return of migrant workers from South Africa.

III. MANAGEMENT OF THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME

12. The overall implementation of the country programme will be undertaken by the Central Planning and Development Office of the Ministry of Planning, which will be strengthened under the UNDP technical assistance programme to assume that responsibility effectively. The Office will be assisted in the organization and management of technical assistance resources through effective aid co-ordination machinery.

13. In its implementation efforts, the Government will be assisted by an increased number of volunteers, whose role has always been significant in Lesotho.

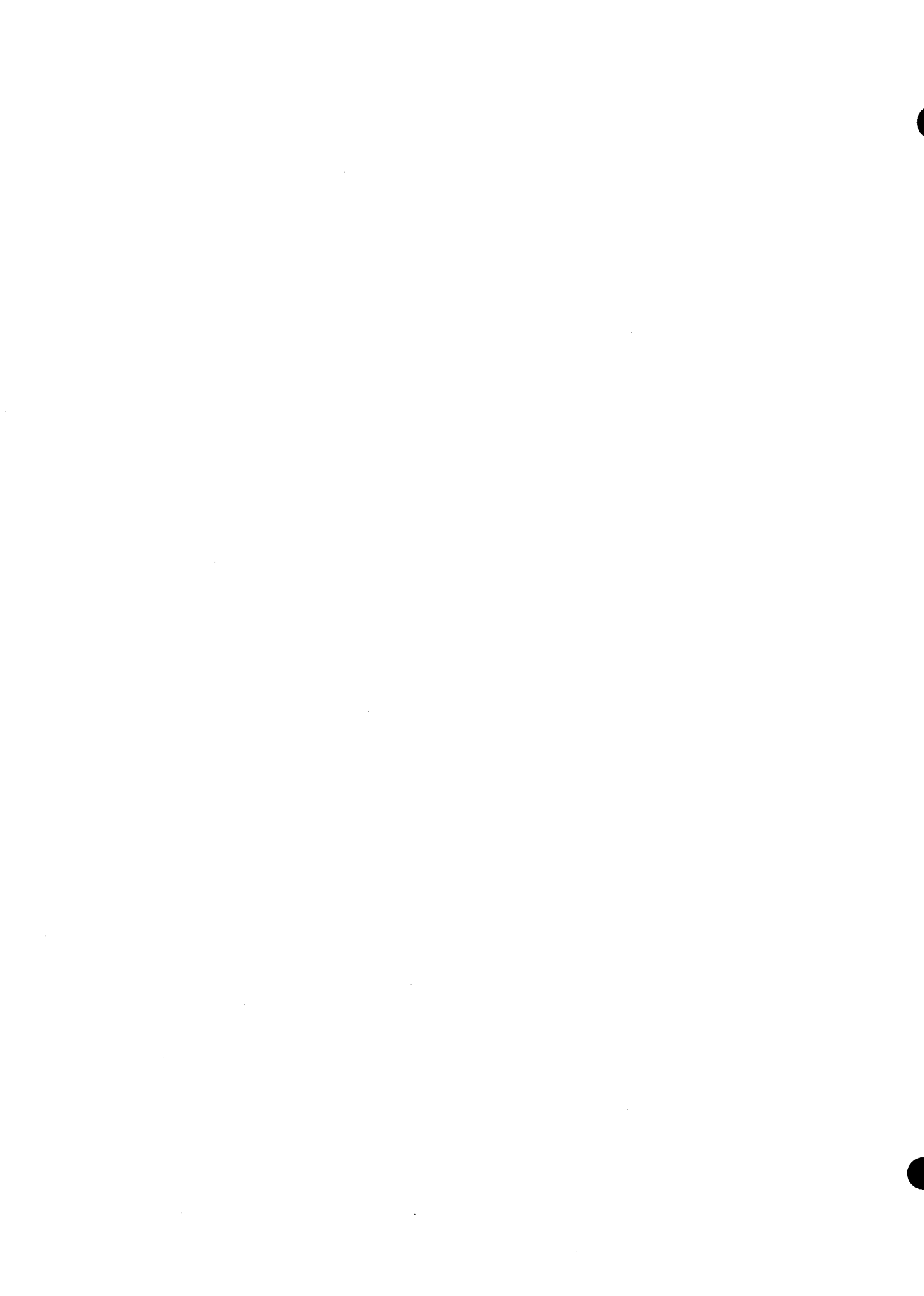
14. Aid co-ordination mechanisms include monthly resident donor meeting, round table consultations, scholarship and volunteer organizations committees. UNDP is playing the lead role in co-ordinating the activities of non-governmental organizations and also the Food Aid Co-ordination Committee, which monitors the utilization of food aid against the background of emergency operations. The latter was established by UNDP.

15. Because of the widening internal deterioration within South Africa which is expected to disrupt the functioning of the provision of basic Government services and effective management of the Lesotho economy as well as its development programmes, the country programme will be reviewed as early as possible in the cycle.

16. To ensure continued relevance of the country programme and the progress of its implementation, the usual monitoring mechanisms will be used: tripartite reviews, annual reviews, evaluations and corrective measures that may be necessary.

IV. RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

17. In light of the foregoing, the Administrator endorses the fourth country programme for Lesotho and recommends its approval by the Governing Council.





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