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PROGRAMME PLANNING

Country and intercountry programmes and projects

FOURTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Note by the Administrator

I. PROCESS OF THE PROGRAMMING EXERCISE

1. The preparations for the Republic of Korea's country programme commenced with the fielding of a UNDP country programme review mission in November/December 1984 to review UNDP co-operation since 1972, when country programming was first introduced. This review included a comprehensive assessment of the overall programme and specific project performance in relation to national development priorities. It also included a study of experience with various programme modalities, as well as their implications for the future. The findings and recommendations of the review were frankly discussed with the Government and provided valuable guidance to those concerned with the preparation of the fourth country programme. Government participation in the country programming exercise was enhanced further by a joint Government/UNDP sponsored seminar on UNDP policies and procedures held in July 1985 for the representatives of planning and sectoral ministries dealing with ongoing and proposed pipeline projects.

2. To help facilitate the country programming exercise, a UNDP technical assistance needs assessment mission was fielded in April/May 1986. This proved to be most useful to the Government in helping to relate proposed country programme objectives and their corresponding projects to the overall priorities of the Government's new Sixth Five-Year Economic and Social Development Plan (1987-1991).

3. An innovative aspect of the exercise was the establishment of an inter-ministerial Project Selection Committee to screen project proposals submitted by the various ministries and institutions for inclusion in the fourth country

programme. This procedure had a number of beneficial side effects, including a generally improved awareness of UNDP country programme priorities, project selection criteria and operating procedures. It also helped ensure increased co-ordination of UNDP project activities with those under other national programmes and external assistance in related fields.

II. THE FOURTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME

4. UNDP notes with satisfaction that the fourth country programme was prepared so as to optimize the contribution that the relatively modest UNDP technical co-operation programme could make in the context of Korea's dynamic market economy situation. In this respect, the new country programme will:

(a) Be restricted to a few priority Sixth Plan objectives so as to complement and reinforce the major public and private sector contributions being made;

(b) Concentrate on consultancies, training and other human resource development requirements that the United Nations system can provide most conveniently;

(c) Be catalytic in nature, mobilizing supplemental public and private sector contributions for equipment and other essential supporting requirements; and

(d) Promote greater national self-reliance in the adaption of modern science and technology to local development requirements.

5. Given these emphases, the IPF resources of the fourth UNDP country programme have been concentrated on four specific themes: (a) reorganization of the industrial structure, giving greater stress to the essential supporting requirements of medium and small industries able to reduce the current massive imports of foreign capital and consumer goods and services; (b) strengthening of science and technology, in so far as it relates to the practical requirements of agriculture and industry and helps reduce dependence on imported technologies; (c) upgrading of human resource capabilities, especially for women, the handicapped and other disadvantaged segments of the population; and (d) improvement of environmental management and protection to help mitigate the negative effects of rapid industrialization and population congestion. Specific projects selected for inclusion within the fourth country programme are intended to help achieve a better balanced regional socio-economic development within the country.

6. UNDP is particularly pleased to note the Republic of Korea's determination to share its impressive development experience more systematically with other countries in the Asia and Pacific region and elsewhere during the fourth country programme period through increased initiatives for technical co-operation in development (TCDC). It intends to establish a TCDC Centre, with UNDP assistance, to help co-ordinate increased training and other learning opportunities of interest to other developing countries.

III. MANAGEMENT OF THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME

7. The Republic of Korea has a substantial number of well trained and experienced national personnel. Drawing on this human resource, the Government intends to appoint Korean nationals as project directors in almost all cases. Similarly, it plans to increase the number of Government-executed projects during the new country programme period. UNDP welcomes these new measures which should help to reduce project costs while ensuring the maximum self-reliance possible in the management of UNDP-financed co-operation.

8. Management of the fourth country programme will be facilitated by the preference of the Government to keep the size of projects relatively small - about \$300,000 on the average - as is consistent with the proven effectiveness of this scale of project assistance during the third country programme. In this respect, UNDP funds will be used largely for foreign expertise, fellowships and other in-country training requirements, while reducing further the equipment provision from the third country programme average of about 27 per cent of total project costs to 10 per cent.

9. In addition to day-to-day project level contacts, more formal management level meetings will be held between the resident representative's office and the staff of the Bureau of Technical Co-operation of the Ministry of Science and Technology. The purpose of these meetings will be: assessment of the overall resource situation; review of the status of pipeline and ongoing projects; identification of factors impeding the orderly approval and implementation of projects included in the country programme, and decisions for corrective actions; co-ordination of UNDP-assisted projects with those financed by other United Nations, bilateral and multilateral organizations; and consideration of other relevant programme management matters.

IV. RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

10. The Administrator recommends that the Governing Council approve the country programme for the Republic of Korea.

