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PROGRAMME PLANNING
Country and intercountry programmes and projects
FOURTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR THE NIGER*

Programme period
July 1988-December 1991

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actual resources programmed</th>
<th>$</th>
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<tr>
<td>IPF for 1987-1991</td>
<td>33 958 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balance from third cycle</td>
<td>1 784 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minus commitments for 1987 and</td>
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<tr>
<td>for the first six months of 1988</td>
<td>(8 650 000)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other resources programmed</td>
<td>51 460 000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>78 552 000</td>
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* Detailed listings of projects and other related data prepared as part of the country programming exercise are available on request. These listings include: (a) ongoing projects; (b) proposed projects; (c) distribution of resources by objective; (d) planned activities of operational funds and programmes under the authority of the Administrator; (e) distribution of new country programme by sector.
I. DEVELOPMENT TRENDS, STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES

A. Current economic trends

1. The Niger is a land-locked Sahelian country with a population of more than 6.7 million concentrated on the arable strip along the southern part of the territory. It belongs to the group of least developed countries (LDCs), with a per capita gross national product (GNP) of $250. The economy is dominated by the rural subsistence sector and by the exploitation of uranium, which since the 1970s has been the principal source of foreign exchange and Government revenue.

2. Except during periods of drought, the Niger has traditionally been self-sufficient in food production and an exporter of livestock. After a drought-induced recession in the early 1970s, the second half of the decade was marked by a high growth rate. Growing world demand resulted in a significant increase in both the country's uranium production and government revenues. Real GNP then had an average annual growth rate of 7.5 per cent. The uranium boom brought about fundamental changes in the country's economy: the modern sector began to play an increasingly important role, and the public sector expanded substantially; meanwhile, there was a decline in the dominance of the rural sector, which has just begun to become integrated into the modern sector. Economic growth halted abruptly in 1981. Real GNP stagnated in 1981 and 1982, before a 3 per cent decrease in 1983 and a 16 per cent decrease in 1984. A downturn in the world demand for uranium, which led to a 22 per cent reduction in uranium production in the Niger between 1981 and 1983, is in part responsible for this economic decline. Rural production also slackened because of a pattern of low rainfall from 1982 to 1984, which resulted in a catastrophic drought.

3. The slow-down of economic activity was coupled with the emergence of fiscal and external deficits, each accounting, on average, for 9 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) between 1981 and 1983. That reflected both the heavy dependence of the economy on income from the modern sector and international trade, and the continuing high rate of government spending. Pending a recovery in the price of uranium, the Government continued to implement its ambitious investment programme, depending more heavily on external commercial borrowing. With two thirds of the deficits funded in that manner, the country accumulated a sizeable external debt - amounting to 52 per cent of GDP in 1983 - of which 77 per cent was public or publicly guaranteed debt. The ratio between debt-service and exports rose from 22 per cent in 1980 to 33 per cent in 1983, while the ratio between debt-service and revenues rose from 11 to 33 per cent.

4. In order to reduce these financial imbalances, in 1983 the Government introduced the Interim Consolidation Programme, intended to curb demand (salary freeze, decrease in investment expenditure), along with controls on external borrowing. These stabilization measures were implemented with the assistance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) through four successive agreements confirming ongoing support, the last agreement being approved in November 1986. In order to ease temporarily the debt-service burden, rescheduling agreements were concluded yearly between 1983 and 1986 with the Paris Club, and in 1984 and 1986 with the...
London Club. In addition, the Government initiated a structural adjustment programme supported by loans from the International Development Association (IDA) and the IMF Structural Adjustment Facility.

5. The stabilization and adjustment efforts undertaken by the Government contributed to an improvement in economic performance. The current-account deficit decreased from 9.7 per cent of GDP in 1982 to 2.2 per cent in 1986; during that same period, the budget deficit dropped from 7.1 per cent of GDP to 4.1 per cent. Nevertheless, the external debt reached the equivalent of nearly $1 billion in 1986, with the ratio between debt-service and exports amounting to 38.7 per cent and the ratio between debt-service and government revenues amounting to 37 per cent. Grain production flourished in 1985-1986 owing to abundant rainfall, although the crop did suffer parasite attacks. In 1987, the late start of the rainy season and the low rainfall led to a significant food deficit, according to initial government estimates. Therefore, the Government plans to concentrate on off-season farming and on measures aimed at sound and economical management of supplies. The real GDP growth rate, estimated at 7.1 per cent for 1985 and at 6.9 per cent for 1986, represents a healthy improvement in comparison with the decrease of 19 per cent between 1982 and 1984. Any future improvement will take longer to occur, given the limitations of the productive base. GDP growth is estimated at 2.3 per cent per annum for the period 1987-1990, which is significantly better than the zero rate that was standard during the decade preceding the uranium boom. With the medium- and long-term benefits of the adjustment process, it is hoped that, beginning in the 1990s, the GDP annual growth rate will exceed the population growth rate (3.1 per cent).

6. Since 1976 development strategies have essentially concentrated on the following goals: attaining food self-sufficiency, exploiting underground resources, lessening geographic isolation from other countries and increasing accessibility within the country, and promoting human resources, on the basis of public participation in development through the establishment of a Development Corporation. In order to attain these objectives, the Government has adopted a series of programmes. Two of these merit special mention: the Structural Adjustment Programme 1986-1988, and the Economic and Social Development Plan 1987-1991.

7. The Structural Adjustment Programme is intended to improve the public-finance situation and the balance of payments through governmental policy reforms. These reforms are aimed at: (a) improving resource management in the public sector in both public enterprises and public administration; (b) correcting policies which distort and restrain the activities of the private sector; (c) strengthening the economic resource base, especially in the agricultural sector. The Programme as a whole is currently in an advanced phase of implementation, although certain aspects remain linked to the completion of ongoing studies. There are plans for a second phase of the Programme, which would extend the adjustment measures to other economic areas. The Programme will not be complete without the implementation of follow-up programmes such as the Sectoral Adjustment Programme for Public
Enterprises launched in 1987 with the assistance of the World Bank, the Significant Recovery Programme, which is intended to create a sound modern sector, and the Assistance Programme for Private Initiative and Job Creation, which has just been approved and through which the State is seeking to entrust to the private sector activities best suited to that sector in order to concentrate on certain strategic areas.

8. The main thrust of the Economic and Social Development Plan is the promotion of agriculture as a driving force behind the economy, the planning and development of other sectors, and the movement towards a progressive integration into the market economy, while ensuring the emergence of institutions capable of sustaining long-term development and while guaranteeing that economic growth will surpass population growth. As in the Structural Adjustment Programme, the improvement of the balance of payments and public finances is an important priority. However, the Plan also defines governmental objectives in the social domain, as follows: population control; human resources training (particularly important as 48 per cent of the population is under 15 years of age); the integration of women in the development process; and the improvement of health conditions. In the agricultural domain, priority is given to desertification control, food self-sufficiency, and water supply. Accompanying the Plan is a financing plan which presents the various possible scenarios concerning the requirements and procedures for financing and debt-rescheduling. The fact that the Government chose to make this a separate document, rather than a simple annex to the Plan, clearly demonstrates the importance accorded to this aspect of development and the thoroughness with which it was considered.

9. Implementation of the Plan will require a total of approximately $1.9 billion. External financing needs for the public sector are estimated at an average of $350 million per annum for the next five years. During a round-table meeting of donors held in June 1987, partners of the Niger agreed to the priorities and the major aspects of the Plan, and expressed their intention to meet the country's external financing needs.

C. Technical co-operation priorities

10. The ongoing results of these various programmes have brought to the fore new needs related to the implementation of structural reforms, the application or definition of new policies and the search for answers to long-term problems. Analyses of various interventions, in terms of the various sources of assistance, reveal that the Niger is a country whose technical assistance needs are still very great: the 1986 report on external assistance shows that $305 million were allocated to the Niger, $180 million for technical assistance and $125 million for capital assistance.

11. Selectivity in investment choices, the quality of management and the quality of organization of resources and services will be crucial factors for the future of the country. Within the framework of the continuing round-table process, in 1988 there will be three sectoral consultations concerning rural development, the private sector and the transport sector. The definition of the policies and
strategies to be implemented and the identification of the specific needs for external assistance will be on the basis of studies conducted.

12. Since 1985, UNDP has been implementing National Technical Co-operation and Assessment Programmes (NaTCAPs), intended to supply the Governments concerned with practical assistance in planning, managing, co-ordinating and improving the effectiveness of technical co-operation, bearing in mind the optimal utilization and the development of local human resources, and the institutional capacities of the countries concerned. It should be pointed out that the Governments are closely involved throughout the process, as the technical assistance needs are considered and assessed. Such an exercise could be planned for the Niger for the end of 1988; the conclusions and recommendations would serve as points of reference during the preparation of the next round-table meeting scheduled for 1989.

D. Aid co-ordination arrangements

13. The interest shown by the donor community in the growing co-ordination of inputs and of activities has encouraged the Government in its efforts to promote greater co-ordination of co-operative activities for development. This co-ordination, which is already well advanced within the framework of external assistance to the Niger, is evident at three levels. At the first level, there is a general mobilization of efforts to support the major macro-economic objectives, with the round-table process playing a key role in this area. Co-ordination also takes place at the sectoral level, and involves, on the one hand, the three previously mentioned consultations, with UNDP organizational support, and on the other hand, meetings bringing together all the participants in a given sector at the end of a mission of consultation, for example. Finally, at the project level, which often involves the participation of several donors (in, for example, acridian control, population censuses, the Kolo training institutes and the agro-hydro-meteorological programme (AGRHYMET)) mechanisms have been established to ensure the optimal utilization of available resources and to prevent overlapping. In addition to these three levels, mention should be made of emergency activities, for which a system of effective co-ordination has been established between the Government and the international community, as in the case of the great drought of 1984-1985.

14. The UNDP Resident Representative, in his capacity as resident co-ordinator of operational activities of the United Nations development system, contributes to the mobilization of resources coming from other funds or organizations of the United Nations system, such resources taking different forms depending on the nature of these institutions. In the case of funds implementing specific programmes, such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) or the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), programme execution is based on close co-operation in the common areas of intervention. In the case of the World Food Programme (WFP), the requested interventions come into play primarily in the follow-up to programme objectives, i.e., in those sectors where technical assistance would pave the way for projects based on food aid. Lastly, in the case of specialized agencies capable of mobilizing their own resources through trust funds, UNDP encourages them to seek jointly the necessary additional financing.
15. In addition to resources mobilized by the United Nations system, there are those available from various multilateral and bilateral sources of assistance. In this context, and in the framework of the follow-up to the round-table process, UNDP supports the Government's efforts to mobilize resources by increasing the awareness of potential donors and examining the modalities of their co-operation. It should be noted that close collaboration on various programmes and projects already exists between UNDP and other donors, including the World Bank, the European Development Fund (EDF), Belgium, Canada, the United States of America, France, Italy, Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany and Switzerland.

II. THE COUNTRY PROGRAMME

A. Assessment of current country programme

16. The third country programme (1983-1986) should have been completed by 31 December 1986. However, in agreement with the parties concerned, it was extended until 30 June 1988 so that the fourth country programme could be formulated in the light of the published Economic and Social Development Plan and consultations among donors at round-table meetings. This 18-month extension is being financed from fourth-cycle resources and the residual balance of the third. An assessment of the third programme, made in the second quarter of 1986, was organized jointly by the Swiss Government as a member of the UNDP Governing Council, UNDP itself and the Government of the Niger. Some aspects of this assessment are considered below, as a preliminary to the preparation of the fourth programme.

17. Funding of $24,594,000 was available to the Niger for third-cycle programming. Technical assistance personnel accounted for approximately 70 per cent of expenditures, training fellowships for 9.5 per cent, material and equipment for 8.4 per cent, and miscellaneous items for 5.9 per cent. The financial profile of the third-cycle programme may be presented as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Third-cycle indicative planning figure (1982-1986), minus reserves} & \quad 24\,750\,000 \\
\text{Borrowing for second programme (1977-1981)} & \quad (156\,000) \\
\text{-Funds available for the third cycle} & \quad 24\,594\,000
\end{align*}
\]

As at 31 December 1986, expenditures for the 1982-1986 cycle totalled $22,810,000, or 93 per cent of the funds available.

18. The third programme focused on five topics:

(a) Food self-sufficiency;

(b) Water management;

(c) Development of the Sahelian region;
19. The assessment of the third programme brought out its strengths and relative weaknesses, and provided a basis for elaborating the fourth programme. Activities under the third programme as a whole yielded positive results, and helped to strengthen the nation's structural, management and training capacities. The projects blended relatively well with the objectives of the Five-Year Plan 1979-1983, whose general orientations and approach they adopted.

20. Generally speaking, the major problems and constraints encountered in executing the projects were linked to the inadequacy or the mobility of counterparts and to the fact that the projects did not entirely correspond to the programme outlined at the beginning of the cycle. This leads to the conclusion that the projects, while satisfactory on the whole, did not have the wide-ranging impact that had been hoped for at the start of the programme and, above all, were not altogether successful in producing results that would last beyond the time that UNDP support was available.

21. More specifically, the evaluation mission noted that the objectives of most of the project documents, which served as frames of reference, had been too ambitious, and that the approach to the various activities had not been defined in sufficient detail. The mission also noted that the country's unfavourable economic situation in recent years, combined with the other factors, mentioned above, which adversely affected project delivery, made it difficult for the national authorities to take over the projects when UNDP support ended.

B. New programme proposal

22. The Economic and Social Development Plan provides for economic recovery by restimulating demand. In concrete terms, this objective should be translated, first of all, into increased purchasing power for the masses in rural areas and in the agricultural sector. To that end, greater attempts will have to be made to stimulate the rural economy by developing resources, by increasing and diversifying production, and by promoting trade and business.

23. The expected increase in public investments cannot take place without vast improvements in the agencies that prepare for investments and in the arrangement to receive them, especially in the public services. In this same vein, consideration should be given to the new role assigned to the State under the measures recently taken by the Government. Even if the State is to be relieved of many functions which can be better handled by the private sector, the Government will still have a decisive role in: (a) the definition of the institutional framework; (b) the design and implementation of necessary incentive policies; (c) public investments and their management.

24. The fourth programme is therefore structured around the following four long-term development themes/objectives:
(a) Increasing rural productivity;
(b) Promoting and setting a new course for business;
(c) Strengthening economic management;
(d) Improving awareness of the demographic situation and raising living standards.

The reasons for choosing each of these themes and the projects under them are enumerated below.

25. Apart from the establishment of this programme, consideration was also given to some of the recommendations of the team which evaluated the third programme. The objectives are to:

(a) Place the programming exercise in a macro-economic context and use in-depth sectoral analyses to establish a dynamic programme adaptable over time to changes that could not be foreseen when it was elaborated;

(b) Pay more attention to the programme's policy and general orientation when elaborating projects, in the interest of maintaining its overall coherence;

(c) Aim, even more than in the past, to strengthen national capacities so that the Government can gradually attain genuine technical self-reliance. Efforts must be focused on the Niger's officials more than on temporary technical assistance personnel, in order to increase national capacities for both design and execution;

(d) Ensure that at the time the programme and projects are discussed, each partner is aware of its responsibilities and the inputs which it has committed with a view to effective implementation;

(e) Establish permanent machinery for the exchange of ideas so that partners can consult, virtually every day, on their joint programme;

(f) Assist the Government in establishing more formal machinery to co-ordinate the various sources of assistance.

In line with one of the major considerations of the Economic and Social Development Plan, UNDP is committed to ensuring greater integration and involvement of women in the various project-supported economic and social activities. Close collaboration with non-governmental organizations will also be sought, especially where UNDP assistance is used to support grass-roots development initiatives.

**Increasing rural productivity**

26. In the Plan, the rural economy is viewed as a primary stimulus of growth in the years to come, and demand is expected to be the key to economic recovery. However, there can be no real upturn or increase in demand unless the peasant...
farmer's income goes up. For this to occur, not only must production increase, but products must also become marketable. Gradual integration into the market economy will therefore depend, among other things, on the introduction and development of the means of communication and transport. Hence, the extension and development of infrastructure pre-conditions for improved marketing. However, desertification is jeopardizing the production base: ground-water aquifers are sinking, soil degradation is occurring and plant cover is disappearing. Therefore, these production bases must be preserved and developed more fully in order to increase productive capacity.

27. The following three programme objectives, which are closely interrelated, will be pursued, with the aim of increasing productivity and rural production:

(a) Protecting and developing natural resources;

(b) Extending and improving physical infrastructure;

(c) Increasing and diversifying livestock and agricultural production.

28. The other donors have quite extensive programmes in the rural and natural resources sectors, representing 33 per cent and 11 per cent, respectively, of the total value of the technical assistance they provide (1986 external assistance report). The integrated rural development programmes are given priority and include the Keita Valley project, funded by Italy and executed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), as well as the more modestly funded micro-projects of many non-governmental organizations, and of bilateral and multilateral donors (Switzerland, France, EDF). These projects are based on broad, multifaceted rural development activities and the mobilization of local initiatives. In-depth studies are also being conducted both to define a methodology for activities in rural areas (World Bank and the Fund for Aid and Co-operation (FAC)) and to identify commercial outlets for livestock and agricultural products (United States Agency for International Development (USAID)). The International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), whose aim is to increase food production in the least developed countries, has its Sahelian Centre near Niamey.

Protecting and developing natural resources

29. Safeguarding and developing the Niger's natural assets, and satisfying the water, food and energy needs of the majority of the population hinge on the urgent establishment of a rational environmental-management system - a system which would involve the rural communities and include conservation and development activities.

30. With regard to water, between 40 and 50 per cent of the drinking-water points needed must still be installed. However, ground-water levels are sinking as a result of the long period of drought (aggravated at times by relative over-consumption in certain places). Off-season farming is being encouraged in order to promote food security, and this increases water requirements proportionately. Several multilateral and bilateral programmes - either under way or planned - are designed to satisfy requirements and meet the water-supply targets...
of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade. However, the many different types of equipment and the problems in obtaining spare parts make it difficult for the beneficiaries to take over the programmes.

31. Overgrazing, deforestation, and the fact that the practice of letting land lie fallow is dying out, combined with water and wind erosion, have contributed to the process of desertification, resulting in soil loss and lower soil fertility. Such problems, and especially the constraints on agricultural production, are aggravated by ecological imbalances such as parasite attacks.

32. Another proposal related to this objective is the elaboration of a programme to develop surface-water resources through the collection of rain water and runoff, involving the development of temporary pools and shoals (the topic of an EDF study) and the construction or development of earth dams. Through such activities, it should become possible to protect surface water, replenish aquifers near the waterworks, reduce soil erosion by rivers, ensure a lasting water supply for people and livestock, and promote irrigated crops and flood-recession crops, with a resulting increase in livestock and agricultural production. UNDP, in collaboration with the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO), will assist in defining policies in this area and in mobilizing the required investments.

Ongoing projects

Ground-water planning, development and management (NER/86/001) ($2.7 million)

33. This project should be of help in defining policies and strengthening decentralized institutional capacity, as a basis for rational, autonomous management of these resources and cost-effective investments. In addition, three sources of technical co-operation are providing complementary forms of institutional support to the Waterworks Departments of the Ministry of Animal Resources and Waterworks: the Netherlands, Switzerland and France. Generally speaking, multinational and bilateral assistance programmes focus on the drilling of wells and boreholes (Saudi Arabia, Canada, EDF, Italy, Japan, Kuwait Fund, USAID, etc.). In addition to this group of major projects, there are all the projects implemented or sponsored by non-governmental organizations.

Development of semi-arid lands and natural forests (UNSO/NER/87/X04) ($7,875,000)

34. The main goal of this project is soil conservation through various activities such as the management of semi-arid lands (a UNSO project to be financed by the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) and implemented by the Co-operative for American Relief Everywhere (CARE)), sand-dune stabilization and the correction of koris.

Multipurpose forest development and reforestation (NER/85/009) ($2.3 million)

35. This project will strengthen human resources, methods and strategies in the forestry service, in conjunction with other activities such as the forestry project sponsored by IDA, FAC and the Central Fund for Economic Co-operation (CCCE).
"Forestry and Land Use Planning" project, financed by USAID, and "Control of sand accumulation at Zinder", and the FAO project funded by DANIDA, to begin in 1988. Project NER/85/009 will make it possible to revise the regulations and legislation in force, with a view to effectively supporting and encouraging desertification control.

Pilot project for agricultural and forestry development in Dosso Department (UNSO/NER/87/X02) ($1,586,000; Swedish co-financing)

Action to combat sand accumulation in palm plantations (UNSO/NER/81/X02) ($75,000)

The Niamey green belt (UNSO/NER/83/X01) ($50,000; Norwegian co-financing)

Rural development and desertification control in Niiffa (UNSO/NER/86/X02)

36. This group of projects aims to set up integrated agricultural-forestry-pastoral programmes, especially for the companion planting of tree species and cereals. The programmes will also promote fodder production and the restoration of soil fertility as part of desertification control efforts.

Control of grasshoppers and locusts (NER/87/005) ($90,500)

37. This project seeks to set up an effective system for workable and rational control of grasshoppers and locusts in order to ensure food security and a functioning economy in the rural areas. The project is a joint activity financed by a number of donors besides UNDP, namely, the Agency for Technical Co-operation of the Federal Republic of Germany (GTC), Algeria, Canada, EDF, FAO, France, Italy, Switzerland and USAID.

New projects

Maintenance of wells (NER/87/021) ($650,000)

Production-related activities in the N’Guigmi region ($2 million)

38. These projects seek to consolidate what has been achieved in community development and in transferring responsibility for maintaining and operating waterworks to the users. As a follow-up to the completed project - "Exploitation of ground-water in rural areas" (NER/83/002) - close co-operation will be required between UNICEF, UNDP and the Government to organize community groups and decide on regulations to be issued and development activities to be undertaken, such as small-scale irrigation. The other project, sponsored by the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), should facilitate specifically the construction and maintenance of wells.

Desertification control (NER/88/001) ($600,000)

The Tahoua green belt (UNSO/NER/82/X02) ($400,000)

Expansion of the Niamey green belt (UNSO/NER/85/X01) ($300,000)

39. The aim here is to reinforce the capacity to plan and co-ordinate the implementation of desertification control programmes. UNSO will study, in joint formulation missions with the donors, the possibility of securing co-financing to
implement the "green anchors" strategy and help co-ordinate it, and also to formulate other complementary strategies. Given the similar conditions prevailing in other countries of the region, the involvement of the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) will place its experience at the disposal of the projects and make it possible to take advantage of the opportunities for technical co-operation among developing countries (TCDC).

Small-scale irrigation (NER/88/004) ($750,000)

40. The project will support the IFAD programme for small-scale irrigation and soil conservation.

Linkages

41. In the field of water supply, regional project RAF/86/038 will support activities connected with the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade. With regard to the development of human resources, in addition to the advanced vocational training already provided under project NER/86/001, training for drilling engineers and technicians will be provided under the regional project "Training of drilling technicians and engineers" (RAF/86/039), at both the National College of Civil Engineering at Yamoussoukro in Côte d'Ivoire and at the Aïr Mining College at Agadez in the Niger.

42. Regionally, the World Bank is about to start a study, co-financed by UNDP and the Norwegian Government, (RAF/87/090) on traditional and improved techniques for harnessing runoff for plant cultivation in sub-Saharan Africa. The results will serve as the basis for defining new UNDP projects or modifying ongoing projects. Also on a regional scale, the Hydro-Niger project (phase II) (RAF/87/082) will continue the development of a hydrological forecasting system for the River Niger, a matter of enormous importance for the management of irrigated lands, for crops grown on land subject to seasonal flooding and for small-scale traditional fishing. The other regional projects that are of interest to the Niger are: "Parasite-control systems for subsistence farming" (RAF/87/037); "Women as consumers of water" (RAF/87/043); "Training for the integrated pastoral development of the Sahel" (RAF/87/050); and "Development of woodlands in arid zones and protection against sand accumulation" (RAF/87/096).

Expanding and improving the physical infrastructure

43. The integration of the rural economy is still not a reality. Despite the expansion of telecommunications and of roads and transport facilities, the network of roads open year-round covers only a few major corridors of the national territorial highways, making it difficult to bring rural products to markets that are situated far from the areas of production. The same logical difficulties also hamper the delivery of inputs. The lack of storage facilities makes for considerable spoilage of food products.
On-going projects

Secondary roads. Brigade I (NER/86/502) ($6,319,000)

44. Under this project, UNSO, with contributions from Norway and the African Development Bank, will continue to work towards reducing the isolation of rural communities by constructing secondary roads.

New projects

Special labour-intensive public works programme (NER/87/007) ($612,000)

45. This project will continue the preliminary work started under the pilot project (NER/85/003) and shall extend it to the construction of rural roads and tracks, water supply systems, storage facilities, and so on, which tend to be labour-intensive, thus reducing rural underemployment.

Secondary roads. Brigade II (NER/86/503) ($4,500,000)

46. This project will complete the activities being carried out under project NER/86/502 (see para. 44), which seek to open up rural communities to the outside world.

Linkages

47. Regionally, a study on the African transport system will be undertaken by the World Bank and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) under project RAF/86/024. Another project (RAF/86/042) concerns management of the transport network through logistics and involves in particular the Niger Council of Transport Users. Under the special labour-intensive public works programme, there will be close collaboration with those involved in the regional project "Promotion of labour-intensive construction projects in the Sahelian countries" (RAF/87/033).

Increasing and diversifying livestock and agricultural production

48. One of the cardinal points of the Economic and Social Development Plan is the diversification and increase of livestock and agricultural production, the aim being to promote national economic recovery by making the rural sector more dynamic. The diversification of agriculture should result in higher income for peasant farmers, access to new markets both inside and outside the country, and the enhancement of resources and investments. In the context of the Niger, where the markets are limited, the development of small-scale activities and appropriate technologies intended for rural and village areas can meet the concern to promote economic vitality in rural areas and provide the needed support for services for purely agricultural activities.

49. It remains to identify what must be done to put these policies into effect. That is precisely the aim of the studies under way (in particular, by the Government with the World Bank and FAC, and by USAID) and of the sectoral follow-up review to the scheduled 1988 round-table conference. It would be premature under the circumstances to specify at this stage all the activities that UNDP could support.
Ongoing projects

Integrated rural development in the N'Guigmi region (NER/86/003) ($711,350)

Rural development in the N'Guigmi region (NER/85/CO1) ($1,125,000)

50. The first-mentioned project, which began in 1986 and will last through 1991, will make it possible to adapt the various principles underlying UNDP rural development activities and to apply them in the field. There will also be a complementary UNCDF contribution for this project (NER/85/CO1).

Agrometeorological and hydrological data and information contributing to the development of agricultural production in the Niger (phase II) (NER/87/002) ($1,040,500)

51. This project will ensure the dissemination of agrometeorological information allowing for better crop planning and improved management of seed stocks by farmers. The project is the national component of the regional project for the Agrometeorology and Applied Hydrology Training and Study Centre (AGRHYMET) (RAF/86/064), with headquarters in Niamey, the aim of which is to strengthen the agrometeorological and hydrological networks in the Sahel. Besides contributing directly to a better understanding of climatic factors, another advantage of the project is that it provides for some co-operation between developing countries.

Agricultural mechanization (UNSO/NER/83/X03) ($125,000)

52. UNSO will continue this agricultural mechanization project, which involves the mass production of equipment adapted to farmers' needs, and especially to agro-pastoral production.

Agricultural mechanization ($3,176,000)

53. UNSO is being asked to continue its assistance in the agricultural sector through a new project which would pick up where ongoing activities leave off (see para. 52).

Merger of the Practical Institute for Rural Development and the Stock-Breeding Management School

54. It will be necessary to review the ultimate objectives of the training provided at both the Institute and the School, and to examine its actual usefulness in relation to the needs in agriculture and the private sector. This is, in fact, the subject of a joint study by the Government, UNDP and the International Development Association (IDA). UNDP will use this study to define the form and content of the support it can continue giving to training in the area of rural development.
New projects

In-depth sectoral studies ($500,000)

Out-of-season crops (NER/88/005) ($700,000)

55. The first-mentioned project, identified after the sectoral consultation, will use these sectoral studies to expand production capabilities and promote programmes introducing new activities such as the cultivation of out-of-season crops (under the second-mentioned project) or the development of fishery resources.

Integrated development of Bilma (phase II) ($3 million)

Integrated development of Mayahi ($4 million)

56. These two new UNCDF projects aim to improve the production and marketing of dates and salt (Bilma) and the optimal development of the natural environment.

Rural handicrafts (NER/87/010) ($400,000)

57. In close co-operation with the Government and the other donors, UNDP will play a catalytic role in formulating a national handicrafts policy, following the methods developed by the International Labour Office (ILO).

Production of bird vaccines ($550,000)

58. UNCDF plans to finance the establishment of a production unit within the Central Stock-Breeding Laboratory under a new project which will be a continuation of project NER/82/C01.

Linkages

59. Through its "Food for Work" programme, WFP is working closely with many bilateral and multilateral projects on rural development and environmental protection. The programme is also supporting the integrated development project for the Keita Valley, which is aimed at improving voluntary participation in development activities. At the same time, WFP is providing budgetary and food support for training centres and is helping build up village cereal reserves. Italy is also financing an agrometeorology project carried out by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in order to increase knowledge of the effect of climate on agriculture.

60. Several activities in the field of rural crafts are planned under two other projects, one financed by CCCE and EDF, and the other by USAID and CARE. In the urban areas the Government's efforts are backed up by the contribution of the World Bank to production and service crafts. In rural areas, the Government has already undertaken, with the help of USAID and several non-governmental organizations, a programme for promoting and supporting rural crafts in the departments of Niamey, Dosso and Tahoua. This effort, carried out with technical assistance from ILO, is making satisfactory progress and the authorities hope to extend it to other...
departments (USAID/OPEN/IL0 NER/86/01A). At the regional level, complementarity will be pursued with projects "African Network for Agricultural Machinery and Tools" (RAF/87/032) and "Increasing the food productivity of rural women through improved transfer of agricultural technology" (RAF/87/044).

61. The Government and UNDP have decided to allocate $12,739,000 to rural development, which is equivalent to 47 per cent of resources available under the indicative planning figure (IPF), thus demonstrating the prime importance attached to this subject. Of that amount, projects totalling just under $4.5 million have already been approved and $7,262,000 will be needed for the new projects, leaving $1 million for a programmed reserve.

Promoting and setting a new course for business

62. At a time when the State is disengaging itself from certain areas of the economy after having played a leading role, government policy in the production sector is aimed at trying to encourage the private sector to become the driving force of the economy. Bearing in mind that the private sector in Niger is fairly weak, handicapped by numerous constraints linked both to economic conditions peculiar to the country and to certain aspects of the institutional and regulatory environment, UNDP's strategy for supporting the private sector is essentially three-pronged:

(a) Improving the environment for private initiative and investment;
(b) Adapting the structures for supporting and promoting businesses; and
(c) Promoting the development of industries linked to agriculture and livestock production.

Improving the environment for private initiative and investment

63. Given the aim of increasing the role of the private sector, the environment for business in the Niger should be improved through the establishment of appropriate legal, administrative, fiscal and institutional conditions and action to impart greater dynamism to the means of influencing economic activity.

Ongoing projects

Assistance to the support programme for private ventures and job-creation (NER/87/022) ($1.2 million)

64. This programme, which was adopted in June 1987, is supported by numerous donors, including the World Bank, France and USAID. Under the project, UNDP provides technical assistance for the programme. In addition, through its short-term advisory services programme, UNDP is able to provide businesses with the services of expert consultants.
New project

Support for the promotion or revamping of private enterprise ($2 million)

65. UNCDF has expressed a desire to support the private sector through this project, which would be part of its new programme. UNCDF assistance, which could take the form of a fund or credit line, would be focused on projects involving a unit for producing salt licks for livestock; COCONIGER (fruit and vegetable cannery in Maradi); SICONIGER (ground-nut plant); the drying of fruits and vegetables, and the livestock sector.

66. The action already begun under the Significant Recovery Programme will continue through the reform of industrial policies and that of the incentive system carried out in 1987 and 1988 with the help of the World Bank within the framework of the Structural Adjustment Programme and the Economic and Social Development Plan. In this connection, IDA has made credits available for the readjustment of the production sector, particularly for reforms of public and semi-public enterprises, privatization and the revamping of businesses, reform of the investment code and a study on incentives to industry for external trade. The World Bank and CCCE are also granting technical assistance to improve the bank-loan system.

67. In a more general way, the project of the African Development Bank entitled "African projects development facility" (RAF/85/022), which is co-financed by UNDP, provides a service for promoting and developing private investment in Africa. The regional projects "Strengthening the role of women in the informal sector" (RAF/87/042) and "Credit-support system for women's activities in the production sector" (RAF/87/063) could also provide backstopping for the national programme, particularly with regard to the integration of women into the development process.

Adapting the structures for supporting and promoting business ventures

68. This second activity, which focuses on institution-building, is aimed at establishing machinery for promoting business ventures capable of undertaking and continuing of new activities. However, improvements in institutional framework under the Structural Adjustment Programme, the Significant Recovery Programme and the Assistance Programme will not be possible without a fundamental overhaul of some of the support structures for participants in the economy, in particular the Office for the Promotion of Niger Businesses, and the Chamber of Commerce, in order to give them greater flexibility, professionalism and credibility.

Ongoing projects

New priorities in assistance to the Office for the Promotion of Niger Businesses (NER/85/007) ($605,950)

69. The existing institutions should become more independent, loosely connected with the private sector, free from the constraints of the civil service and capable of building up expertise geared to local requirements for advisory services. UNDP technical assistance to the Office (NER/85/007), which started in 1986, will be
reviewed and fine-tuned in order to adapt it to the new trend of support for the private sector, having regard to the decision which the Niger authorities may take regarding the transformation or replacement of the Office, in the light of the joint World Bank/UNDP study carried out in late 1987/early 1988 concerning a radical restructuring of the Office.

**Strengthening of the National Management Training Centre (NER/87/001) ($700,000)**

70. The Centre is an agency of the Chamber of Commerce. As a follow-up to project NER/84/001, UNDP will continue to give assistance to businesses for the identification of management problems and the design of appropriate financial management tools, and for the implementation of the Assistance Programme.

**Assistance to the National Centre for External Trade (CNCE) (NER/87/008) ($147,000)**

71. Under this project, UNDP will help to promote, within the Centre, a more dynamic export policy and appropriate measures to provide the necessary support for private enterprise.

**Linkages**

72. **African Centre for Advanced Management Studies.** At regional level, these projects will be supported by the following regional projects: "Strengthening institutions for advanced management training" (RAF/85/014); "African Society of Management Services" (RAF/86/002); CESAG (RAF/87/029); "Policies on trade, supplies and prices for agricultural and food industry inputs" (RAF/86/049) and by two projects more specifically concerning transport: "Management of the transport network through logistics" (RAF/86/042); and "Maritime policy in land-locked countries" (RAF/87/135); and through the Trade Expansion Programme (INT/86/033) implemented by the World Bank. The project "Strengthening the performance of public enterprises for agricultural and foodstuffs marketing" (RAF/87/002) is already providing assistance to the Niger and complements the programme. Other activities may be identified at a later stage in connection with three regional projects which are under preparation, focused on special activities with the non-governmental organizations for the development of commercial enterprises and training for small-scale entrepreneurs in towns and villages.

**Promoting the development of industries linked to agriculture and livestock production**

73. In dealing with the situation in the Niger, attention should be focused on the processing activities associated with agriculture and stock-breeding, and a support programme should be developed for them. It should take into account the sectoral and sub-sectoral analyses of agricultural production contained in the study carried out with the assistance of the World Bank, as well as studies of commercial sectors and market research. The programme should be steadily focused on identifying projects for developing small- and medium-sized enterprises, and village industries.
On-going project

Development of industries linked to livestock production (NER/87/009) ($190,000)

74. Under this project, UNDP will help to define and implement ways and means to develop industries associated with livestock production, which are among Niger's basic assets and whose development would help to support the development of livestock production and expand the country's industrial plant. The project will maintain contacts with projects financed by other donors, particularly with regard to assistance for integrated livestock production covered by project USAID/683/0242.

Linkages

75. Parallel to these projects, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is carrying out agro-industrial activities at village level, financed from its own resources, aimed at processing off-season crops and improving the traditional methods, used by rural women to extract salt.

76. The amount allocated for promoting business ventures is $5,746,000, or 21 per cent of the resources available under the IPF. Of this amount, $1,603,000 represents firm commitments to ongoing projects, while $2,940,000 is planned for the new activities identified, leaving $1,500,000 for the implementation of new project proposals.

Improving economic management

77. The third theme of the programme stems directly from the intention announced in the Economic and Social Development Plan to refocus and strengthen certain of the State's key functions in the management of the economy. As economic functions are redistributed, the role of producer or direct participant in the economy will be shifted away from the Government and towards the private sector. In order to improve economic management, the new programme will emphasize four objectives:

(a) To develop the Government's capacity for planning and monitoring;

(b) To help the Government create machinery for matching external assistance to the country's requirements;

(c) To streamline the public administration; and

(d) To strengthen national technical skills.

78. Actions in these fields will generally be co-ordinated with structural adjustment measures. Since it is not yet known what social and economic impact these measures may have, the World Bank and UNDP have agreed to conduct a regional study (RAF/86/037) in order to identify any adverse social consequences of structural adjustment. This programme will take into account during its implementation the conclusions and recommendations of that study.
Developing capacity for planning and monitoring

79. Implementation and monitoring the Economic and Social Development Plan and of the various programmes will require a marked improvement in current planning capacities.

Ongoing project

Economic planning and forecasting (NER/85/O02) ($1,125,000)

80. The project is aimed at building up a national structure for economic analysis, forecasting and planning with the ultimate aim of achieving a national capacity for designing and developing tools and techniques for comprehensive planning.

New project

Regional planning (NER/87/017) ($300,000)

81. This project will help to strengthen regional planning through the assignment of United Nations volunteers to assist regional authorities.

Linkages

82. Implementation of the activities under project NER/85/002 will be co-ordinated with the Structural Adjustment Programme. Project personnel will be involved in the reviews and analyses to be carried out by the World Bank and IMF.

Creating machinery for matching external aid to the country’s requirements

83. This programme objective is a response to the need to ensure a better match between external assistance and development needs. The main objective for the round-table process and follow-up activities would be to develop methodologies and tools for monitoring external aid flows and their use and, to the extent possible, for providing a model of external financing likely to become available in order to match it to the country’s requirements.

New project

Assistance for the co-ordination of external aid (NER/87/019) ($800,000)

84. The assistance supplied by UNDP under this project will also facilitate preparations for sectoral consultation meetings and the next round-table conference, scheduled for 1989.

Linkages

85. These activities will benefit from close co-operation with the UNDP/World Bank project "Monitoring of development programmes and aid flows in sub-Saharan Africa" (RAF/86/058) and a new regional project. "External Debt Management" (RAF/87/069).
Rationalization of public administration

86. In Niger's situation, where even after its partial disengagement, the State will remain a significant force in the economy, the quality of management of public resources and the quality of administrative and legal measures are aspects of development policies which are at least as important as investment. It is therefore essential that the public services should improve their productivity at these levels.

Ongoing project

Support to the Office of Organization and Methods (NER/87/017) ($270,000)

87. The strengthening of the organization and methods of the civil service is being assisted through this project which is co-financed within the framework of the Special Action Programme for Administration and Management in Africa (SAPAM).

New projects

National plan for computerization (NER/88/007) ($500,000)

88. This project will assist the Government in rationalizing the use of computers within government departments and agencies through the implementation of a national computer plan.

Management of human resources ($400,000)

89. This project, which is designed to strengthen the management of human resources of the civil service, will comply with the national guidelines and policy on the subject, which will be defined in the light of the study on civil service reform with the assistance of ILO (as part of the structural adjustment programme), bearing in mind the role of the Office of Organization and Methods.

Linkages

90. The regional project "Development of human resources and training in the area of computers" (RAF/87/126) will strengthen the African computer institute, which will then be able to support the efforts of the programme.

Upgrading of national technical skills

91. The Government attaches great importance to the development of human resources not only to promote self-improvement for every individual but also to ensure that the training provided is geared to the requirements of the national economy. Particular stress will be placed on the in-service training of professionals through refresher courses locally or abroad so as to enable them to better perform the new roles which are being assigned to them.
Ongoing projects

Multi-disciplinary fellowships (NER/82/017) ($350,000)

Support for higher education (NER/84/003) ($139,300)

Technical support for the administration (NER/87/016) ($380,000)

92. In addition to the training included under almost all the assistance projects, the three specific projects listed above, which cover various sectors, will support the Government's efforts to strengthen national technical skills. The latter two projects use the services of the United Nations Volunteers at the University of Niamey and in the national administration.

Linkages

93. Special attention will be paid to promoting the participation of women in training programmes, and strengthening institutional capacities to support the integration of women in the development process. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and UNDP will provide support in this respect. The activities of the regional project "Strengthening of the national services of non-governmental organizations" (RAF/86/061) may provide additional support for grass-roots development activities. The training activity will be supplemented at the regional level by the project "Institute for Economic Development and Planning" (RAF/87/066).

94. The amount programmed for management of the economy is $4,814,000 or 18 per cent of the available resources of the IPF. Of this amount, $2,014,000 represents firm commitments to ongoing projects, while $2.8 million is envisaged for the new activities identified.

Improving awareness of the demographic situation and raising living standards

95. One of the major problems underscored in the economic and social development plan is the challenge posed by population growth, which has reached 3.1 per cent for the country as a whole and exceeds 10 per cent in urban areas. This involves not only tackling the problems of birth-spacing and lowering the rate of maternal and child mortality, but also making parents aware of the individual and collective responsibilities involved in bringing a new child into the world; it is also necessary to increase the availability of food products and improve infrastructures for health, housing, education and training, and employment. The programme in this respect will have the following three objectives:

(a) To define and implement a population policy and promote family planning;

(b) To improve health services in rural areas and the participation of women in social development; and

(c) To formulate and implement a policy of urbanization providing access to decent housing for low-income individuals.
Defining and implementing a population policy and promoting family planning

96. The challenge posed by this objective is compounded by the absence of a development policy incorporating a realistic and coherent population policy based on population variables.

Ongoing projects

Population census (NER/86/007) ($98,750)

Census (NER/86/PO1) ($402,000)

97. A general census of the population is planned for 1988. UNDP and UNFPA are providing assistance for the census, in close co-operation with other donors such as FAC, USAID, UNICEF and World Bank. The census should provide the Government with not only a precise indication of the size of the population, but also information on its structure, socio-economic characteristics and geographical distribution.

Population studies unit (NER/83/PO1) ($16,000)

98. During the previous cycle, a population studies unit was established within the Ministry of Planning; UNFPA will continue to support this unit with a view to formulating a comprehensive policy on the subject and incorporating it in the general development policy.

Linkages

99. An increased awareness of population problems will be achieved by incorporating education on population in school syllabuses and carrying out studies on procreation and its cultural and psychological aspects so as to determine the subjects to be covered in school syllabuses and also teaching methodology, particularly in the framework of the UNFPA project "Education about population" (NER/83/PO2).

Improving health services in rural areas and the participation of women in social development

100. In the field of health, the Government is faced with by a double imbalance: on the one hand, very poor coverage in rural areas compared to the services available in urban areas and, on the other, too much emphasis on treatment rather than prevention, even though the latter yields greater benefits for the economy.

Ongoing project

Strengthening of the national family health programme (NER/77/PO1) ($834,000)

101. Through this project, UNFPA will ensure the provision of MCH/FP services to regions with inadequate coverage, while promoting the participation of women in the formulation and implementation of the projects of which they are the primary beneficiaries.
New project

Population, women and development (NER/88/P03) ($130,000)

102. This new UNFPA project will provide support to the Niger Women's Association.

Linkages

103. Mention should also be made of the UNICEF/World Health Organization (WHO) project "Support for nutrition" (NUT/001/GNST/84). In addition the objective of the WFP programme in the field of health is to improve, on the one hand, the nutritional status of vulnerable groups of population and on the other, the health of hospitalized patients.

Formulating and implementing a policy of urbanization providing access to decent housing for low-income individuals

104. In relation to housing, the Government is facing rapid urbanization, which causes a chronic shortage of adequate housing available to low-income families in the capital and the settlement of a growing proportion of the population in unsatisfactory conditions, without access to water, electricity or sanitation. In rural areas, too, housing is inadequate, and the Government therefore plans to promote research on local construction materials and train workmen to promote their use.

Ongoing projects

Improvement of standards of living and housing in urban areas (NER/87/813) ($714,700)

Improvement of living conditions and housing (NER/85/C06) ($3,810,000)

105. The new programme includes a pilot activity: the implementation of a project for the rehabilitation of a low-income district and the development of new plots. UNDP and UNCDF are financing these projects in close collaboration with WFP. They include a credit scheme so that even people with low incomes can take advantage of the system. These projects should make it possible to establish a methodology which can then be applied in other districts of the capital or other towns in the Niger which are also experiencing rapid growth.

Linkages

106. The activities of the project could possibly be based on the regional project "Development of construction materials" (RAF/87/016) under which a study will be conducted on the socio-economic and cultural aspects of such projects.

107. The Government and UNDP have decided to allocate to this item $2,284,000 or 8 per cent of the resources available under the IPF. Commitments for ongoing projects amount to $814,000, and new projects identified to $750,000, leaving $720,000 for the implementation of new project proposals.
C. Unprogrammed reserve

108. An amount of $1.5 million has been set aside as an unprogrammed reserve so as to be able to respond rapidly to any unforeseen requirements in respect of which the Government might request assistance from UNDP.
Annex

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

I. ACTUAL RESOURCES TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT FOR PROGRAMMING

A. UNDP-administered sources

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Third cycle IPF balance</td>
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<td>Fourth cycle IPF</td>
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<td>Commitments for 1987 and the first six months of 1988</td>
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<td>Subtotal IPF</td>
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<td>UNCDF</td>
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<td>UNFPA</td>
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<td>UNIFEM</td>
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<td>UNDP special trust funds:</td>
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<td>SAPAM</td>
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<td>Subtotal, UNDP non-IPF funds</td>
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B. Other sources

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<td>Funds from other United Nations agencies or organizations firmly committed as a result of the country programme exercise:</td>
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<td>WFP</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
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<td>Parallel financing from non-United Nations sources:</td>
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<td>Subtotal, other sources</td>
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TOTAL ACTUAL RESOURCES TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT FOR PROGRAMMING: $78,552,000

II. USE OF RESOURCES

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<td>Programmed reserve</td>
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<td>Unprogrammed reserve</td>
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TOTAL RESOURCES: $78,552,000