Thirty-fifth session  
6 June-1 July 1988, Geneva  
Item 5 of the provisional agenda

PROGRAMME PLANNING

Country and intercountry programmes and projects

REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE ARAB STATES

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</tbody>
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CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paragraphs</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUMMARY</td>
<td>1 - 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. DEVELOPMENT TRENDS, STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES</td>
<td>7 - 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Current economic and social development trends</td>
<td>7 - 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Regional development strategies and priorities</td>
<td>18 - 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE INTERCOUNTRY PROGRAMME</td>
<td>23 - 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Assessment of the third-cycle regional programme (1983-1987)</td>
<td>23 - 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. New programme proposal</td>
<td>44 - 77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Modalities of implementation</td>
<td>78 - 86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Resource availability</td>
<td>87 - 88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. FUTURE TRENDS</td>
<td>89 - 92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex. Financial summary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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SUMMARY

1. This fourth-cycle intercountry programme for the Arab region has been prepared taking into account significant economic and social development trends within the countries of the region in the past decade. The years 1974-1983 saw a major leap forward in the region but the slump in oil revenues over the past three years has adversely influenced the development of the region, not only for the major oil- and gas-exporting countries but also for the countries with little or no oil or gas resources.

2. The role of the intercountry programmes of UNDP is to encourage, support, and, where appropriate, participate in the combined development efforts of Member States in the regions or subregions. The present document reflects the interest and willingness of Governments in the Arab region to collaborate in development projects that are multi-country in nature or that address a common development concern; such multi-country projects would also be more cost-effective than a number of small, separate country projects. It also reflects UNDP's desire to encourage greater participation by all countries and their regional and subregional institutions. Whenever possible, projects will be executed and managed from within the region with the co-operation of the specialized agencies and institutions of the United Nations system. Once the projects have been formulated, UNDP sees its role more as a catalyst, contributing its modest resources to regionally provided facilities, personnel and finance, to enable the projects to become fully operational and then to step back to let them continue under wholly regional funding and management.

3. The Arab region is unique in respect of its regional institutions. The activities of the League of Arab States and the Arab specialized institutions have evolved and diversified over the years to cover practically all aspects of development in the region: economic, social, scientific, technical and cultural. Thus, the programming of regional projects for the Arab States has become somewhat intricate and underscores the need for close co-ordination between the League of Arab States and UNDP.

4. The proposed programme focuses on strengthening food security and expanding technology, with both having a major human resources development component. Human resources development will also be an important component in proposed activities in water, environment, energy, transport, the rural poor, women's role in development and the private sector. Greater use will be made of networking arrangements to gain fullest advantage of the existing skilled professionals and their institutions across the region. Some of the networks will also be linked to centres of excellence in national, regional and international research institutions and universities within and outside the region. Another new approach is the possibility for competent governmental institutions within the region to be responsible, through their respective Governments, for executing selected projects.

5. There are some programmes which were planned and implemented in the third cycle that run through into the fourth cycle. Some of the new projects build on the experience gained from third-cycle projects. Others include lessons learned...
from past regional projects. The greater active participation of Arab Governments, their institutions and their qualified nationals, as well as Arab regional institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector, arises from an overall evaluation of third-cycle performance and the need for increased perception that the specialized resources, personnel and institutional experience available in the region are not being fully utilized. Another lesson gained is the need for close monitoring and review of project activities not only by UNDP and the executing/co-operating agency but also by Governments if planned objectives are to be reached within the life of the project. The third-cycle results also revealed that not all objectives and outputs were adequately linked to the development priorities of the Governments themselves. More realistic objectives, outputs and monitoring schedules for all regional and subregional projects will henceforth be established in consultation with the Governments concerned.

6. In this proposed programme, food security and the acquisition of technology are to receive almost half of the indicative planning figure (IPF) resources. Food security activities will concentrate primarily on food production as well as animal husbandry in rainfed areas. The main tool for increasing food production will be the widespread distribution of improved cultivars to farmers through national research institutions and extension services. Other inputs, including fertilizers, will also have to be available to ensure the early uptake of the cultivars and to achieve early return on the farmers' investments. The transfer of technology will focus on centres of advanced technology in the region. Informatics, which includes telecommunications and computerized information systems, will receive special attention as well as new technologies in research, energy, industry and water systems. Throughout the programme there is an emphasis on human resources development with special attention given to women and the rural poor. The private sector will benefit from several investment-related projects. Several regional institutions including the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States will receive assistance to upgrade their administrative and information systems and expand their capacities to assist Governments in the region. The programme has built-in flexibility through a multipurpose type programme and an unprogrammed reserve which could address common problems that may arise during implementation.

I. DEVELOPMENT TRENDS, STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES

A. Current economic and social development trends

7. In the second half of the 1980s, the economic and social indicators in the Arab States continued to be adversely influenced by rapidly shrinking earnings as oil prices and production fell. The weakening trends in oil markets have further accentuated earlier recessionary forces, a tendency expected to be dominant for the remainder of the decade.

8. Other factors too have had a severe effect on middle- and low-income countries and added to their large and growing external debt as well as the associated structural balance-of-payments disequilibria and perennial difficulties of financial deficits. The economic development of several least developed countries
in the region has been severely retarded by the prevailing recessionary trends. The oil-producing countries themselves have continued their search for alternative ways of generating growth and development that would be self-sustaining. The initial impetus which came from some countries' civil construction and urban development has begun to level off. Drought has severely affected some of the countries, causing setbacks in agricultural production. For a number of countries in the region, the situation has been further aggravated by the necessity of diverting significant portions of their resources to meet situations of national security.

9. In order to tackle these problems, the Governments concerned have introduced stringent measures including reducing public expenditure, trimming wages and salaries, limiting imports and drawing on reserve funds. Following the slow-down of investment, especially in new construction and related activities, many expatriate workers' contracts were not renewed, and they returned to their home countries. Moreover, in the non-oil producing countries, the return of migrant workers and the consequent drop in their remittances compounded the existing problems of unemployment (in the early 1980s, the value of the remittances had ranged from 20 per cent to 600 per cent of the value of export earnings for some Mashreq countries). To the west, three Maghreb countries also had to cope with the return of migrant labourers as unemployment became a real issue in Europe.

10. Some segments of the international services sector, notably shipping, transit trade, tourism and offshore banking, have also been adversely affected. As far as tourism is concerned, about half of the tourists travelling in the region traditionally come from other Arab countries, particularly the Gulf countries. The expanded tourism of the oil-boom years led to increased co-operation with the Gulf countries in terms of investment opportunities not only in tourism but also in the industrial and real-estate fields. The likely impact of a diminution in oil revenues on tourism is thus going to be another factor to contend with for the years to come.

11. Since the early 1980s the Gulf countries, notably Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, have been generously assisting other Arab countries with official development assistance (ODA) and various forms of investments, but with the current shortfall in oil revenues, the Gulf countries might not be expected to maintain these flows at the same levels. The flow of ODA from Arab national development funds and through regional and interregional institutions, such as the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), the OPEC Fund for International Development and the Islamic Development Bank, has been playing a significant role in development projects in the region. More than 250 inter-Arab bilateral and multilateral enterprises were set up in the past decade. In the private sector, a number of joint enterprises, mainly in trade, finance, real estate and construction, were established. These private and public investments in inter-Arab joint ventures have been successful, with more possibilities waiting to be tapped. Mention must also be made of the substantial budgetary assistance given to some Arab countries affected by hostilities in the Middle East.
12. The unprecedented liquidity in the region during the oil-boom years and urgent development needs often led many countries to borrow heavily when the excess petro-dollars were recirculated by Western banks. Unfortunately some of these borrowings were not always based on sound feasibility studies. Partly because of these investments and partly because of poor export earnings in a depressed international economic situation, some countries in the region are now facing enormous annual debt-servicing commitments which they find hard to meet. These countries are negotiating to reschedule the debts with their debtors and seeking the assistance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and donor groups to arrange programmes of adjustment and stabilization which would enable them to cope with day-to-day budgetary and development needs. The social impact of any adjustment policy needs in such countries to be assessed against the fact that as much as a quarter of the population lives below the poverty line.

13. Many countries in the region suffer from a combination of high population growth and limited resources. Population growth rates for the region rose from 2.7 per cent per annum for 1970-1975 to 3.1 per cent per annum for 1980-1985, compared with 2 per cent per annum for the developing world as a whole. The population in the Arab States is expected to grow from 187 million in 1985 to almost 300 million in the year 2000. Unbalanced population distribution in the region, and within each country, unplanned and explosive growth in the cities, poor human resources distribution and underpopulation in a few countries continue to pose problems for the Governments and people of the region. The most pressing among these problems are the food, health, housing and educational needs of growing populations and the burdens on infrastructure of migration and the associated economic and social pressures.

14. Over the centuries, the private sector has played a leading role in the economic development of the region. When large amounts of public funds were available from Governments in the oil-boom years for the construction of offices, airports, town housing projects and public highways, the private sector assumed a more dominant role in national development. It quickly established small industries and expanded trade to support the massive construction programmes and even began to take up greater responsibilities in the oil industry itself. When countries were forced to shrink their public expenditures as oil prices fell, the construction sector lost much of its source of investment capital. The private sector then looked to new avenues for investment in trade and industry, food production, fisheries and tourism, within the various countries and outside with subregional, regional and international counterparts.

15. The aggregate gross national product (GNP) of the region in 1985 was $360 billion, with the average GNP per capita approximately $2,000. This average conceals a wide variation among countries from $270 to $540 in the least developed countries to between $7,500 and $15,000 in some oil- and capital-exporting countries. It also masks the volume of unemployment, particularly among the youth, and the vast numbers who live below the poverty line, especially in the rural areas of the least developed and some middle-income countries.
16. The physical, geographic and climatic environment of all countries in the region are not favourable for food production; only 13 per cent of the total land of the region is arable, the remainder being hot, dry, semi-arid, arid and desert land or cold mountainous terrain. Over the past decade there has been a decline in per capita food production. The region continues to be a net importer of food, especially the major staples. Despite extensive efforts to increase cereal production, it is expected that the shortfall in cereal production in 10 years' time will be about 50 million tons per annum. With this limited food resource base, the countries of the region are paying increasing attention to soil conservation and environmental concerns. Considerable research has been carried out into farming systems and improved seeds for dryland farming in the region, and there is now an urgent need to transfer the results to farmers. The need to improve livestock feeding resources is also becoming more critical, and better management practices have to be introduced in the major livestock-producing countries to conserve rangeland grass and browse and the vital but scarce water supplies. Extensive tree-planting has been undertaken in the region to improve the environment, and to provide browse for livestock as well as fuelwood.

17. During the oil boom, Arab States spent billions of dollars buying the technology they needed. Foreign firms, specialists and "soft technology" were brought in, and substantial resources were invested in machinery and plant. Promising young graduates were sent abroad for training, and there continues to be an emphasis on transferring skills to nationals and on the regional production of plant and machinery; there still are, however, vast gaps in the modern technology needed by science and engineering. Regional co-operation in various ways – exchange programmes in training, contracting through regional institutions, joint ventures, United Nations programmes, etc., is slowly filling some of these. Much remains to be done in biotechnology, including tissue culture and seed improvement, agricultural research, informatics, new and renewable sources of energy (mainly solar) and the ecological practices for recovering eroded and semi-arid lands. Thus the development of human resources is being intensified in the region to strengthen national scientific and technological capacities and to create more employment opportunities, particularly for youth.

B. Regional development strategies and priorities

Regional strategies

18. The Regional Bureau for Arab States and European Programmes has drawn inspiration and guidance from the declarations of several high-level groups in the Arab States. Notable among them, was the eleventh summit meeting of the League of Arab States held at Amman in 1980 which adopted a strategy for joint Arab economic development. This strategy was used for the third-cycle programme and continues to be the main point of reference for economic and social planning in the Arab region. It is complemented by the more recent recommendations of the League of Arab States and by the Action Plan for Economic and Social Co-operation among the Islamic Countries, approved at the Third Islamic Summit Conference held at Mecca-Taif in 1981 and confirmed at the Fifth Islamic Summit Conference held in
Kuwait, in 1987. There is, moreover, the Lagos Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa adopted in 1980, which provided the basis for the Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990, adopted by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in July 1985. The thirteenth meeting of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Conference of Ministers, held at Yaoundé in April 1986, reconfirmed the basic approach advocated by the Lagos Plan of Action. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) has continued to provide additional guidance for the conceptual underpinning of the UNDP regional programme for the Arab States.

Preparation of the fourth-cycle programme

19. A UNDP note to Governments - required under UNDP's programming procedures - was circulated to all Arab States in August 1986. At the same time regional consultants reviewed the economic and social trends in the region so that the programme could be adjusted according to current economic and social indicators in the region. This process of consultation and exchange helped to identify the types of regional projects the fourth-cycle programme could promote and initially support. Nearly 200 proposals emerged, some as completely formulated projects, others as project ideas. All proposals were appraised by UNDP with assistance, as required, from independent technical experts and consultants. The official declarations referred to in paragraph 18 and the priorities and guidelines established by UNDP, discussed in paragraphs 20 to 22 below, as well as the lessons learned from the third-cycle programme experience were important criteria in this screening process. This programming exercise ended with 13 ongoing projects and 32 new projects being included in a draft regional programme.

Priority areas of concentration and guiding principles

20. Food security and advanced technology and the human resources development required for these two fields emerged from the programming exercise as the main priority areas for UNDP assistance in the foreseeable future. Food security, which figured prominently in the orientation of the third cycle, has become even more crucial, and a clearer perspective has been gained of the links between the transfer of technology and human resources development. A related area is the role of the private sector, as described in paragraphs 11 and 14 above.

21. There are other fields of activity which are also of common interest and concern in the region, such as renewable sources of energy, environmental conservation and recovery, transportation, increased role of women, and grass-roots development.

22. The following guiding principles were applied during the programming exercise to strengthen the focus on specific areas of concentration included in the fourth-cycle regional programme:

   (a) There should be greater concentration on a fewer number of priority areas than in earlier cycles, and these areas should be closely linked to country needs;
(b) Human resources development should be an integral part of every project, and the role of women in development should be emphasized;

(c) Co-operation between countries well endowed with surplus capital and those with abundant human and natural resources should be encouraged;

(d) The role of the private sector should be enhanced, particularly in the acquisition of advanced technology and in agricultural production.

II. THE INTERCOUNTRY PROGRAMME

A. Assessment of the third-cycle regional programme (1983-1987)

Profile of the programme

23. It will be recalled that the third-cycle programme was the first to be prepared and managed by the Regional Bureau for Arab States. Because of delays in project selection, formulation and approval which retarded the start of the programme until late 1983, the third-cycle regional programme was extended to the end of 1987 by Governing Council decision 87/4. The third-cycle IPF was $31.8 million, in addition to a carry-over of $11.3 million from the second cycle. An additional $6.5 million was allocated by participating Governments under cost-sharing arrangements.

24. From 1983 to the end of 1986, 72 regional projects had been implemented at a cost of $40.9 million. Of these 72 projects:

(a) Five were for the region's participation in UNDP's interregional activities;

(b) The scope of 19 of them was limited to financing/organizing regional seminars, workshops or technical meetings or preparatory assistance activities, each with a UNDP allocation of under $100,000 - and in most cases under $40,000 - per project;

(c) Forty-eight were projects with UNDP allocations of more than $100,000 each - 12 of them of over $1 million. One out of every eight benefited from cost-sharing on the part of participating Governments or regional institutions.

25. Of the $40.9 million spent from the IPF and cost-sharing allocations, 23.5 per cent went to general development issues, policy and planning, with a similar amount being spent in the agriculture and fisheries sector. Transport and communications received 21 per cent, and natural resources 13 per cent of the total with the balance going to industry, culture, education, science and technology, etc. With respect to expenditure by component, 55 per cent went towards project personnel costs, 18 per cent to training, fellowships and workshops and 11 per cent to equipment, while subcontracts accounted for 12 per cent of the resources.
Economic environment of the programme

26. As noted earlier, the years 1983-1986 were a difficult period for economic development in the Arab world. Economic growth slowed down appreciably, and there was a new awareness of the significance of human resources as well as of the scarcity of natural resources other than petroleum, particularly those related to agriculture.

27. These factors had already been considered in formulating the third-cycle programme, even though the full impact of the emerging recession was felt later. The more austere financial policies in many Arab countries necessarily influenced their regional approaches, which by their very nature often lead to appreciable economies and thus help to enhance the benefits of intercountry activities.

28. Food security emerged as the prime area of concentration, going beyond the traditional scope of agriculture, forestry and fisheries. It was also supported through the activities in the area of natural resources (water) and several umbrella multi-purpose projects, including investment feasibility studies. Several projects in this field also received cost-sharing funds.

29. Human resources development permeated through many sectors, particularly transport (civil aviation and maritime) and communications and general development issues, policy and planning (public administration). Human resources development was strengthened by more frequent use of the skills and know-how of Arab specialists, including those residing outside the region. An indication of the importance given to human resources was the sizeable volume of resources allocated in individual regional project budgets to training (nearly 20 per cent compared to 10 per cent in country projects).

30. The third-cycle programme was found to have contributed to greater subregional and regional co-operation through the strengthening of regional organizations and through training projects and projects in food security and human resources.

Assessment of results and lessons drawn

31. The third-cycle regional programme became operational in mid-1983, and evaluations of selected projects were undertaken in 1984, 1985 and 1986. These demonstrated satisfactory performance, by and large, but there were instances of less than satisfactory achievements.

32. It is now recognized that there are risks involved in designing regional projects with open-ended objectives in order to secure participation of the largest possible number of countries. This has been confirmed by an analysis of the results of evaluations, tripartite reviews and replies to a questionnaire. There appears to be a correlation between the degree of success of any regional project and the nature and extent of involvement of Governments and of the regional as well as national institutions concerned. This is governed, in turn, by the degree of relevance of project outputs. The evaluations and analyses were instructive in determining where objectives and outputs of projects were in line with the needs of Governments and where such compatibility had been lacking.
33. Projects targeted on a few neighbouring countries with clearly identified common problems received much more active support from the participating Governments; examples are the water resources project in the Maghreb countries (RAB/80/011) and the joint UNDP/United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) project to fight desertification in Djibouti, Somalia and the Sudan (RAB/83/014). The Arab Regional Packaging Centre (RAB/80/013) is an example of a region-wide project which could have been more effective had its objectives been more tightly defined and its activities limited to a smaller number of countries. There were, however, some region-wide projects which addressed immediate needs in each of the participating countries and succeeded in generating active interest and support from the Governments involved. Examples of these are the projects for translation and Arabization of telecommunications glossary terms (RAB/81/013); the Middle East and Mediterranean Telecommunications Network (MEDARABTEL) (RAB/83/011); and alternative modes of vocational training (RAB/84/029).

34. Other region-wide projects received strong support because of their linkage to an established regional organization with clearly identified goals and well enunciated needs for assistance. Among these are the two projects on the administrative development plan for the secretariat of the League of Arab States (RAB/84/004), and assistance to the Documentation and Information Centre of the League of Arab States (RAB/79/030). Another project which drew its strength from association with a regional organization over many years was the programme for the identification and preparation of intercountry feasibility studies and investment projects (RAB/74/011) which helped to prepare investment projects in several countries in direct collaboration with AFESD; follow-up investment to the tune of $139 million has resulted, with $58 million coming from AFESD itself.

35. In sharp contrast, projects for fertilizer production (RAB/78/021) and the Institute of Education, Amman (RAB/79/025) failed to achieve their objectives fully because of the inadequate interest and support of the parties concerned during project implementation.

36. The Arab Planning Institute (API) received UNDP assistance between 1977 and 1985. This sustained support provided over a decade of institution-building, and equally strong support by the host Government - Kuwait - have resulted in the establishment of a truly viable and permanent regional institution. Another regional institution-building project (RAB/84/001) has been similarly instrumental in strengthening the Civil Aviation College set up by the Gulf States; UNDP also finances trainees from the Arab least developed countries.

37. One project, the National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP) in Western Asia (RAB/80/009), executed by ESCWA as part of a global programme under the direction of the United Nations Statistical Office, has successfully provided direct advisory assistance to countries, besides organizing region-wide and preparing training course materials. Its success may well be attributed to its having met the need for, and demonstrated the usefulness of, household surveys as a tool for planning and monitoring economic and social trends at the household level.
38. These examples, though not exhaustive, do illustrate how periodic project evaluations provide feedback for future activities. It would indeed be difficult to assess the regional programme as a whole, in terms of effectiveness or otherwise, except in relation to individual projects. An assessment of 47 projects completed or in operation during the third cycle rated 33 as "successful" in terms of relevance and effectiveness of outputs, 10 as "satisfactory" and 4 as "unsatisfactory". Interestingly, more projects were rated "successful" that had a UNDP input of $1 million or above, suggesting, perhaps, that adequate funding commensurate with the tasks to be undertaken must also be considered as a key factor in ensuring project success.

39. The evaluations highlighted again that the success or failure of projects was significantly affected by the timeliness and quality of inputs provided and of the monitoring and backstopping by the United Nations system during project implementation. Delays were noted in the implementation of regional projects - the causes included the long time often taken by participating Governments and the designated United Nations executive agencies to comment on project document drafts, late recruitment of experts, placement of fellows and procurement of equipment and failures in meeting the deadlines for payment of cost-sharing funds by the participating Governments or organizations.

40. Another finding that is expected to have a direct bearing on the performance of the fourth cycle was the increased role that self-help networking arrangements could play. These are arrangements where projects use their resources in a decentralized way to link existing national institutions, through well established arrangements for better communications and co-operation. Common objectives are thus more effectively and economically attained. One project - covering the development of subcontracting in industrial activities (RAB/86/001) - clearly benefits from such networking; another project in packaging (RAB/86/022) clearly would have been improved had a network of focal points been established. The fourth cycle endeavours to promote this concept in order to strengthen existing links and create new networks in selected project areas.

41. The evaluations have also shown that, at both the regional and the country levels, short-term consultants are very often more efficient in the transfer of skills than "traditional" long-term experts. A large roster of available shorter-term consultants is desirable so that chances of obtaining the required quality of expertise when and where needed are improved.

42. It was observed in the course of programme monitoring and evaluation that some Governments and their aid co-ordinators were not fully aware of the role of UNDP's regional programmes or its ongoing programming exercises and implementation procedures. This led to some loss of impact and uneven thrust of project activity amongst the participating countries. UNDP will, therefore, convene periodic meetings on a regional, subregional or project basis of government aid co-ordinators along with staff of the United Nations development system to facilitate consultation and co-ordination. Such meetings should result in a wider spread of activities instead of an apparent concentration in the host country. In this context, an initiative taken by the Maghreb countries in November 1986 to organize an intergovernmental review of regional projects at Tunis (with their
Resident Representatives' participation) merits special mention. The success of this meeting in finalizing the plan of action for the Maghreb co-operation in development project (RAB/87/002) encourages the Bureau to initiate more such meetings among like-minded Governments.

43. Phasing out and terminating projects is never easy. UNDP has on occasion recommended termination of unsatisfactory projects which offered no prospects of achieving even minimum goals. There has, regrettably, been considerable pressure from some Governments and from the United Nations executing agency to maintain the projects. Experience has shown that such situations in the future will have to be realistically assessed on their technical merits, particularly as to whether the project objectives remain realistic in the prevailing circumstances and whether the participating countries can be relied upon to meet the agreed financial and managerial commitments thereto.

B. New programme proposal

Statistical overview

44. The fourth regional programme proposal for 1988-1992 will have available $46,429,000 (an IPF of $40.9 million, plus a third-cycle carry-over of $5,529,000, in addition to $1,580,000 in cost-sharing and other funds). There will be:

(a) Thirteen ongoing projects from the third cycle continuing into the fourth cycle, requiring $4,726,000 or 9.8 per cent of the total resources;

(b) Forty new projects, of which 30 are in an advanced stage of preparation and 10 are under active appraisal. The estimated cost for these new projects is $32,658,000 or 68 per cent of the total programme resources;

(c) A programmed reserve of $6.7 million, or 14 per cent of the total resources;

(d) An unprogrammed reserve of $3,924,000 or 8.2 per cent of the total resources for projects to be identified during the course of the five-year cycle.

45. Cost-sharing commitments for 1988-1992 will be defined on the basis of individual projects during programme implementation. There already are a number of encouraging indications of interest by several Arab countries and regional institutions, such as the League of Arab States, the Islamic Development Bank, the African Development Bank (AfDB), AFESD, the Arab Industrial Development Organization (AIDO) and the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND), as well as from sources outside the region such as the European Economic Community (EEC) and some bilateral donors. It is therefore expected that cost-sharing will continue to be an important supplementary source of funds in the fourth cycle. In addition to cost-sharing arrangements, the Regional Bureau has decided that an allocation for regional least developed country projects could be made from the Special Measures Fund (SMF), up to a maximum of 18 per cent of expected SMF resources during the cycle.

/...
Focus of the programme

46. As stated in paragraph 20, the programme will focus on activities aimed at expanding the capacity for food production and promoting the transfer of advanced technology to the region. Most of the projects will therefore concentrate on the development of the human resources and the technical skills and facilities required. In addition, there will be a number of projects to strengthen regional activities in seven areas which are of special interest to the region: water, energy, environmental concerns, the private sector and Arab NGOs, the increased role of women and the grass-roots rural population in development, and transportation.

Food security

47. Development objective in food security. The long-term development objective of fourth-cycle projects in regional food security is to reduce dependence on food imports, principally the main staples, and the amelioration of the conditions of the poor so that adequate food is available to all. Five projects costing $8 million will concentrate on assisting in the promotion, co-ordination and implementation of programmes in dryland farming. Whenever possible, these programmes will be linked to research institutions that give special attention to the problems of dryland rainfed farming and that have acquired valuable experience and achieved results in crop production and animal husbandry. The projects would also strengthen the capacity of these institutions to undertake new research aimed at the expansion of food production in the region. National programmes, and particularly extension services, will have to ensure the early adoption of the improved packages by farmers so that the full benefit of these developments can accrue with minimum delay.

48. Water and food security. As most of the Arab region is arid or semi-arid, the primary concern in the region has always been water for people, livestock, cropping and other sectors of development, industry, in particular. There must be water throughout the year for the community, either from pumped ground water (boreholes) or from stored rainwater. Cropping needs rainfall at planting and at intervals in the growing stages and, when the rainy season fails to provide enough water, farmers lose their crops when they do not have access to irrigation water. Rangeland growth for animal grazing and browsing in the region also depends on the same body of water from scant and unreliable rainfall. The dependence of food production on low and very variable rains underlines this major problem facing food security in the region. The fourth-cycle programme will constantly address all aspects of water resource management in its projects either by optimizing the use of rainwater or by assisting in studies of groundwater aquifers common to several countries. The optimum utilization of water in agriculture, particularly the on-farm delivery system, i.e. trickle irrigation, mini-sprinklers and plant-soil-water relationships for maximization of yields, will also receive attention.

49. Supplemental irrigation in rainfed farming. In many rainfed farming areas there is a strong interest in supplemental irrigation to improve crop yields. Rainwater run-off from slopes is used to irrigate at planting time but rainwater...
can also be collected from suitable catchments on non-arable land or pasture land nearby and stored in reservoirs and fed by pumps or gravity at appropriate times in the cropping cycle. The introduction of such farming systems calls for further study of the crops' water requirements and water-use efficiency in the growing periods for wheat, barley and forage crops. There is also the need to devise low-cost collection methods and to design appropriate cost-benefit studies to determine the economic feasibility of potential schemes, which should aim at benefiting livestock production as well. A project will be introduced to study such "comprehensive" farming systems, the constraints to their operation and management for the various types of water-collection methods such as collecting catchment runoff, diverting flooded wadi water or using micro-catchments.

50. The management of water resources has a crucial role in food production as discussed above. Through a multipurpose water regional advisory programme, the fourth cycle will encourage the transfer of the skills and experience already in the region in the technologies of spray, drip and mist irrigation which optimize the use of scarce water in protected agriculture. Under the energy technology programme, the use of solar energy to pump water in low-head situations will be promoted. A project (RAB/86/008) will assist the five least developed countries of the region in the training of technicians in water resources management, paying attention to groundwater, surface-water and flood-water management as well as the collection, handling and analysis of water data. The occurrence of an aquifer in north-east Africa has been confirmed, and the available water resources it may supply are large enough to contribute significantly to the socio-economic development of the region. A new phase of the aquifer project is under consideration with the aim of developing the rational utilization of aquifers for use in agriculture and animal husbandry and as drinking water supplies.

51. Increasing food production. Food production in the region - from dryland farming areas and from the limited irrigated lands - can be realistically increased only by raising the yield per hectare for the various crops. There is little new land which can be brought into production and the scope for expanding the irrigated land is limited economically. Yields can be raised, however, by improving farming systems to maximize the output from existing land, water and seeds as well as by assuring the finance necessary for fertilizer, herbicides, pesticides and farm labour, particularly for weeding. Government policies on pricing and marketing have a considerable bearing on what is released to the national food supply after the farmer has met his immediate needs for food and next year's seed as well as what he may store to cover any crop failure in the next year. However the greatest increase in yields will come from improved cultivars and to a lesser extent from multiple cropping systems. With the involvement of national extension services, the development and distribution of improved cultivars will be given prominence.

52. There will be projects to develop improved cultivars within the region utilizing a network based initially on the international centres of excellence for agricultural research that have already produced and distributed to farmers improved cultivars based on germ-plasm enhancement after field testing in national programmes. The possibility of improving these varieties by breeding with some related wild species exists but the traditional techniques are either slow or impossible. Discussions between UNDP and the International Centre for Agricultural
Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) have led to the selection of biotechnologies and the setting of priorities based on a low risk level for the particular technology and the probability of obtaining important outputs within a reasonable range of time. The programme will assist in establishing applied cell and tissue culture technology in the region with the objective of producing and distributing cultivars of barley, pasture seed and forage legumes for dryland farming.

53. **Rainfed farming.** To date, much of the effort to increase cereal production and self-sufficiency has been in wheat and sorghum production with little attention to barley, which is another important crop in the region. The cultivated rainfed areas of west Asia and north Africa may be roughly divided into wheat-based systems – oriented towards crop production for the market – and barley-livestock systems, where barley is grown primarily as feed for small ruminants, sheep and goats. The barley-livestock systems are found in regions of low and highly variable rainfall where animal feeding is always difficult. The animals are also grazed on communal pastures and overgrazing is leading to degradation. Two projects will be implemented: one for the Maghreb countries covering farming systems for sheep, barley, pastures and durum wheat and the other for the Mashreq countries for sheep, barley and pastures. New improved varieties, better management of land and water resources along with extension and training at the grass-roots levels are expected to expand the rural economies and so lead to a better quality of life for the rural people. Rainfed farming in the region will also benefit from India's experience in basic food and oil crops through a regional project in co-operation with the Indian Council for Agricultural Research for the exchange of information, and arranging study tours and training courses.

54. **The cultivation of oil-seed crops** under rainfed farming systems not only provides edible oil but an important cash crop as well for many small farmers. A regional project aimed at releasing improved oil-seed cultivars to these farmers and improving their farming systems so that the rural income generated from oil-seeds is expanded will be directed towards the five least developed countries in the region; studies related to low-cost extraction technology and marketing for such oil-seeds as sesame, sunflower and groundnuts will be included.

55. **Animal production** is being assisted in several projects mainly through improvements in feedstocks, watering points, grazing management and rangeland conservation. Another project to control animal diseases – particularly rinderpest – through a subregional co-ordinated programme in west Asia is already under way within the framework of plan for the global eradication of rinderpest of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. It is being synchronized as much as possible with similar campaigns in Africa and South Asia. After the establishment of systems for disease surveillance nation-wide and quarantine at entry points, vaccination campaigns will be initiated in each participating country in which all cattle, including buffalo, will be vaccinated twice. An ongoing project in range management executed by FAO in co-operation with the World Bank, which will be completed during 1988, is introducing technology for improving the cattle and sheep rangelands through a research and training network and through pilot range development and feasibility studies. A number of range development schemes are being elaborated under this project for follow-up investment.
56. In support of the dryland farming activities which are being emphasized in the programme, a rainfed agricultural information network (RAIN) will be established covering the whole region. The project will catalyse and support the exchange of information on research and development in soil and water management to speed up application at the farm level.

57. A number of Arab countries are important producers and exporters of fresh horticultural products while others are net importers of the same products. A new project will establish a network of market information systems which would stimulate intra-Arab trade in fresh fruits and vegetables and other agricultural products. The project follows along the lines of similar projects in Latin America, the Caribbean and Asia; it would support the Interregional Multi-product Market News Service established in 1980 by the International Trade Centre with financial assistance from UNDP.

58. Increasing supply of protein for agricultural production, and fish can play an important role in meeting the food needs of the region. All countries in the region have extensive fishing activities in their seas, rivers and lakes and, to a lesser extent, in aquaculture ponds. There is still considerable scope for expansion, particularly in sea fisheries and in aquaculture. INFOSAMAK, the fish marketing and technical advisory services project (RAB/86/013) which started under the third-cycle programme, will conclude at the end of 1988. A phase-II project is expected if funds from the participating countries can be generated as cost-sharing. A subregional project to promote fishery co-operatives in the least developed countries started in 1987 and will continue for another two years.

59. Environment and food security. Food production can be maintained at its present level and augmented only if the food production environment of the cultivated land and of rangeland "graze and browse" is preserved. Poor cropping practices, overgrazing and the destruction of trees inevitably lead to rapid environmental damage and significant drops in production. The use of pesticides and herbicides can also have harmful effects on the environment and the ecosystems. The regional programme recognizes these vital concerns and every food security project will incorporate an important element of environmental conservation. Work will be initiated in some projects to recover degraded lands for crop and animal production. The movement of sand dunes over cropping and grazing land is a major concern of most countries in the region and previous regional programmes have supported country efforts at dune fixation through study tours and the exchange of information. The fourth-cycle programme will allow for similar activities to continue but at a reduced level in view of the success of the technology of national sand-dune programmes. The planting of trees suitable to soil and climatic characteristics is another major step in preserving the environment.

60. During the cycle, the regional programme will organize a series of workshops to review food security in the region with the participation of eminent international specialists. Various key aspects of food security will be reviewed and special strategies will be formulated to address them.
61. Human resources at all levels are crucial for the food security programmes, from planners and research staff, to people at the grass-roots who need to improve their traditional farming systems with new and carefully chosen practices and skills and to update the management of their immediate environment. There is also a need to improve the skills of people involved in food storage, marketing and distribution, and seed multiplication. Facilities and opportunities for training will therefore be an integral feature of the programme.

62. Linkages with other development sectors. Projects in food security will be linked with development activities in other sectors including transport, marketing, industry, communications, credit institutions, private sector, co-operatives, water resources, rural development and planning. In addition, the projects will link with any national crop-forecasting schemes and emergency food programmes which may emerge.

Acquisition of technology

63. Every country in the region has identified the acquisition of both appropriate and advanced technology as a priority concern. In the past two decades higher technical and university education has been upgraded and basic technologies have been successfully introduced in the agricultural, construction, communications, industrial and transportation sectors. These steps have created solid foundations in the region for the more advanced technologies now available to enhance the national development. While much is being done with UNDP co-operation under country programmes, there are also opportunities for transferring advanced technology through regional co-operation, especially in the computer and communication fields and in scientific research and development which could be more effective and economical on a regional basis. Transfer of appropriate technology, particularly in the rural and/or remote areas of the least developed countries also needs an innovative approach.

64. The project on cultivars mentioned in paragraph 52 is a good example of how advanced technology could be introduced. From biotechnical facilities at a regional centre, the benefits of the technology can be rapidly disseminated to countries of the region and specialized training can be undertaken. This regional approach will, in effect, be the first step in the introduction of one of the most modern technologies available to agricultural research. Subsequently, some countries may move to establish research in these technologies in their own institutions.

65. Six other projects have as their major objective the strengthening of technical capacity in the region. The total cost of these projects - including the biotechnology project - is estimated to be $8 million.

66. There is one project, the development of advanced telecommunications (RAB/86/028) for the least developed countries of the region. Another, to be cost-shared with AFESD, will establish a computer software centre in the region to produce the software required for advanced computer operations in various management operations of Governments, State corporations and private enterprises.
67. **Energy technology.** Countries without oil or gas or with declining reserves of those fuels continue to seek sources of renewable energy. The region is tropical or near tropical and therefore has good potential for solar energy. The prevailing winds in some countries offer excellent possibilities for wind energy units. There has been considerable development in the design of wind generators in recent years but solar photo-voltaic generators are still rather costly. Solar thermal systems are being increasingly used but there is still room for regional research and development in this field. The programme will support a network recommended by a UNDP-financed seminar on Small-Scale Solar and Wind Technologies for Rural and Remote Areas organized by ESCWA at Amman in 1986; the network will promote solar and wind energy uses in Arab countries.

68. **Energy planning.** Energy investment in countries of the region can represent up to 40 per cent of public fixed investment in highly technical and sophisticated plant. Countries therefore seek to optimize their energy policies and projects and lessen the current high dependency on external consultants and suppliers of plant and equipment. In response, a project has been approved (RAB/87/011) which will strengthen the capacity of participating countries to carry out more sophisticated economic and technical analysis of their energy investment policies, programmes and projects. The project also plans to establish a network for exchanges of research, consultancy, training and information. The purpose is to enable Governments to upgrade systems as advances occur in energy planning methods, the technology of energy production and supply management.

**General development programmes**

69. **Transport sector.** Further assistance to the regional Civil Aviation College is estimated at $890,000 from the fourth-cycle IPF, along with $439,000 from government cost-sharing. This, the final phase, will assist in specialized training courses and complete the upgrading of trainers. In maritime transport, fellowship funds are provided in the fields of shipping, port activities and maritime administration at the World Maritime University (WMU). ESCWA, with UNDP support, is also involved in the activities of the Transport and Communications Decade for Asia and the Pacific.

70. **Integration of women in development.** Women in development (WID) is to be a strategic dimension of this programme as statistics demonstrate the considerable role that women in the region play in economic production, particularly in the rural areas. UNDP is planning to convene in 1988 a "brain-storming" session/workshop on WID by inviting Arab experts to identify WID strategies for the region and advise on action-oriented programmes. A regional project will be formulated on the basis of the outcome of the meeting for the promotion of activities for Arab women, bearing in mind the cultural heritage and social values of the Arab world. It is also UNDP's policy to consider WID aspects in every regional project so that appropriate inputs are programmed to enable positive participation. This will be especially relevant in rural agricultural development projects.
71. **Role of the private sector.** While the public sector continues to account for a good share of the region's economic activities, there is a growing realization in many countries that the private sector should play a greater role than has been the case so far. This is reflected in many development plans covering the next five years, which assign a significant share to the private sector in areas which traditionally were reserved for the public sector and, more importantly, in areas addressing the needs of small-, medium-sized and informal enterprises. Privatization is also being discussed more widely. This is particularly so with respect to service sectors such as tourism and retail trade. It should be realized, however, that privatization does not necessarily mean the conversion of public enterprises to private ownership. In many cases it may be limited to the management of the enterprises with ownership remaining in the public domain. It is evident, however, that the organization of private capital markets is essential for the long-term growth of the sector; accordingly, efforts are being made by Governments and regional institutions to encourage the emergence and organization of private capital markets. Equally significant is the contribution that the private capital sector is expected to make in tackling the problem of youth unemployment, mainly among university graduates, which is common to many countries in the region. Some countries are in the process of formulating or implementing schemes which encourage private initiative and self-employment in small-scale enterprises. UNDP intends to contribute to this process during the fourth cycle by collaborating with several development finance institutions in the region in financing a number of projects aimed at increasing the scope of private sector-oriented activities. These include:

(a) A project with the Inter-Arab Investment Guarantee Corporation (IAIGC) to evaluate the factors affecting the success or failure of Arab private investment projects in Arab countries;

(b) A seminar with IAIGC on international investment negotiations;

(c) A pre-investment project suggested by ESCWA for the establishment of infrastructure for engineering industries which will be cost-shared with AFESD, AIDO, the Islamic Development Bank and the Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC);

(d) An ongoing joint venture with GCC will identify the constraints to intercountry investments by the private sector in the GCC countries, with a view to reducing the constraints and expanding private sector investments in this subregion;

(e) A seminar on the role of public and private sectors in co-operation with the Arab Monetary Fund and ESCWA.

72. There are a number of projects, mostly ongoing from the third cycle, which do not fall under the above categories. Three of them will be completed during 1988-1989: RAB/83/002 - Regional Arab Centre for Labour Administration (RACLA), RAB/84/035 - Introduction of Jojoba, and RAB/84/018 - Control of Bayoud disease of the date palm.

73. The programme also encompasses a set of umbrella-type projects that provide needed flexibility to respond to a variety of situations. These include:
(a) A project covering the region's needs for research, training and consultancies. Experience with a similar project in the third cycle has confirmed it to be an invaluable management tool in the implementation of the overall regional programme;

(b) A project which will facilitate the participation of Arab countries in the global and interregional activities of UNDP, such as "safe motherhood" and a special programme on the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS);

(c) A project which will provide for the participation of Arab and African countries in the activities to be planned jointly with the Regional Bureau for Africa in furtherance of the objectives of African Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (APERD);

(d) An extension of the UNDP/UNEP joint venture through 1988;

(e) A second phase of an ongoing project providing United Nations Volunteer inputs to least developed countries.

Human resources, the common dimension

74. Human resources development is the common dimension of the fourth-cycle programme. Clearly, technical co-operation will not achieve any lasting effects unless there is a genuine transfer of knowledge and skills to designated people in the recipient countries. In April 1986, UNDP convened a global meeting of eminent persons at Tokyo to explore the many aspects of the role of human resources in the development process. There was agreement at this meeting, later endorsed by the Governing Council in decision 86/14, that human resources development is a concept that goes far beyond the conventional skills promotion and training practices: it is a central concern of development policy.

75. A survey of the alternative vocational training modes, needs and facilities in the Arab region as well as more focused studies of training institutions in the Gulf countries will be the subject of ongoing and new regional projects in the fourth cycle. Human resources surveys are indispensable for collecting the required data about human resources potential and needs and such surveys are under way on a regional level in the maritime, civil aviation and telecommunications fields in order to plan properly targeted training programmes in these areas. Similar surveys may be incorporated into projects in other sectors.

76. The fourth-cycle regional programme will be paying particular attention in its projects to human resources development among women so that they can participate more at all levels of the social and economic development of their countries. Similarly the rural poor, the people at the grass-roots of social and economic development, will be the target of rural human resources development through the food security and the preservation of the rural environment projects. This aspect of human resources development would take into account the fact that it is the rural women in many countries who are responsible for most of the crop production while the men are more engaged in herding. Regional training programmes will be devised to provide specialist and professional training for women, while rural
human resources development programmes would be subject to regional study to decide upon how this grass-roots training can be best done.

77. **Human resources development and the acquisition of technology.** It is evident that the countries of the region wish to adopt the necessary measures to increase and optimize the involvement of all their people in their nations' productive activities to ensure equitable financial and social benefits. In a changing technological world this is not easy, and the likely impact on education, employment and income distribution in these countries should be fully understood. Under the regional programme, a workshop on human resources development was held in Kuwait in November 1987 to study the issues involved. Such themes as low labour-population ratio, low percentage of highly skilled labour, low proportion of women in the labour force and underemployment were on the agenda; the workshop had the active support of AFESD, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development and the Arab Planning Institute. Taking into account the findings of the first workshop in human resources development, a second workshop on the transfer of technology and human resources development will be organized in the region. This workshop will study how to maximize the transfer of technology emerging in the region from applied research at a number of national institutions and enterprises. There will be a focus on the productive sectors in the region such as petroleum, engineering, textiles, construction, packaging, pharmaceuticals, steel and new forms of energy.

C. **Modalities of implementation**

78. Several new modalities of implementation will be introduced into the programme. Foremost is the execution of selected projects by participating Governments, subcontractual arrangements with established regional Arab institutions, Arab NGOs or by clearly defined networks of national institutions. This approach is expected to be more responsive to regional needs and to enhance co-operation. The use of United Nations specialized agencies or subcontracted non-Arab NGOs is not, however, ruled out. The concept of regional programme networks forming the framework for project activities will be expanded into the technical field and the flexible multipurpose umbrella projects will continue so that quick responses can be made to regional needs of a small-scale nature (e.g. studies) that emerge as the cycle proceeds.

79. The first criterion for selection of consultants/experts/advisers is their qualifications and experience in the clear belief that the region deserves the best expertise available. For long-term expertise, however, Arabic-speaking experts would be preferred (all other factors being equal) as it is known that there are highly qualified and experienced Arabs in nearly all fields residing in the region and outside; every effort will have to be made by the executing agencies to recruit from among them with, when needed, the co-operation of their employing Governments. As a rule, short-term experts will be preferred to long-term experts for the reasons stated in paragraph 41 above.
80. Technical co-operation among developing countries (TCDC) was established to make effective use of the scarce resources of development, through the sharing of the highly qualified expertise found in certain sectors of other developing countries. Thus, an intergovernmental meeting on TCDC was held in Tunisia in April 1987 and resulted in the discussion of 250 potential TCDC projects for a total cost of $5,862,000. It is hoped that government-sponsored TCDC will become a feature of the fourth cycle, particularly in the priority areas of the programme, and that the recruitment of Arab professionals living outside the region will also be seriously explored to bring them back to the region under the Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) scheme.

81. The use of volunteers from the region under the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme will be encouraged, and UNDP looks forward to the co-operation of Governments in releasing some of their promising young professionals for service as UNVs under national programmes as well as the regional programme. The possibility of subcontracting work to Arab NGOs is being investigated by the Regional Bureau and a roster will be compiled of Arab NGOs interested in such work and made available to all executing agencies.

Linkages and co-ordination

82. Every effort is made to complement and link country programmes with regional and intercountry programmes. Regional projects usually assist a group of countries directly, while others benefit countries indirectly through co-operation with the organizations of the League of Arab States. There are instances where the regional programme has launched country projects and also instances of country projects which were converted into regional projects. Overall, this regional programme is a reflection of country-level priorities. In the area of food security, the projects in rainfed farming are linked to several country projects that are tackling the many problems of increasing food production on semi-arid lands. The regional programme will introduce improved cultivars and new approaches to the management of water and land. It will also establish a regional network "team" system which will add a new dimension to the activities of each research worker and extension officer as they become exposed to all the benefits of regional teamwork.

83. Like previous regional programmes, this fourth-cycle programme features linkages with the regional programmes of Europe and Africa. Earlier co-operation with the European region concentrated more on such projects as MEDARABTEL (RAB/83/011), olive production (RAB/83/017) and aquaculture (RAB/79/015). This programme has special co-operation with Europe in energy planning (RAB/87/011), and there are likely to be a number of links in the acquisition of advanced technology in several new fields. Co-operation with the African programme has featured linkages with programmes promoted by ECA, e.g. the recently completed Multinational Programming and Operational Centre (MULPOC) project (RAB/80/036) and through a UNDP-UNEP joint-venture programme (RAB/83/014) directed towards environmental conservation and recovery. Another project (RAB/86/014), the Nile Basin water resources study, which, together with co-financing from the African region, arranged a seminar and study tour to the Interim Mekong Committee (January 1986) for Ministers from the Nile River Basin countries. The African recovery project (RAB/87/018) continues into the fourth cycle and linkages between the two regions...
will be strengthened. In the communications sector, a proposal for Arab Regional Information Systems to be linked with the Pan-African Documentation and Information System (PADIS) is under consideration. UNDP has also provided preparatory assistance to explore the possibilities for establishing a data-base for hydrocarbon resources in Arab and African countries bordering the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden. Other projects have general linkages with Africa because of common environmental and physical factors, such as activities in the field of groundwater resources and field crop production.

84. The new Regional Programme will give special attention to the five least developed countries of the region, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Somalia, the Sudan and Yemen. Among the new projects focusing exclusively on their special needs in terms of environment and food security are training in water resources (RAB/86/008) and the technical and operational development of fish co-operatives (RAB/86/037) that aims to increase production and improve the socio-economic conditions of the fishermen, and also identify and promote investment opportunities for the development of community fishery centres. Another project aimed at improving oil-seeds crops and production (RAB/87/023) will similarly assist in enhancing the farming systems and the incomes of farmers. The recruitment of United Nations Volunteers in lieu of experts to assist the least developed countries (RAB/84/027) is another important project to which a follow-up phase is also planned (RAB/87/015). A project and networks in the least developed countries of the Red Sea region (RAB/86/028) will also contribute to improving internal and rural telecommunication services. In addition, all of the least developed countries will benefit from an umbrella project that will cover training, fellowships and consultancies (RAB/87/026), as well as from all ongoing and new regional projects to be launched which are directly relevant to their urgent needs.

85. In addition to linkages of regional projects to UNDP country projects and other projects in the region and elsewhere, it must be emphasized that contributions from regional projects must be firmly linked to the national development priorities of the recipient countries and must be properly co-ordinated with other aid programmes. As regional programmes complement country programmes and network arrangements could in some cases strengthen country projects, co-ordination must be ensured at the country level through the government aid co-ordination office and the United Nations Resident Co-ordinator.

86. Mid-term programme evaluation and review. A mid-term evaluation of the fourth-cycle regional programme is planned for 1990, in accordance with chapter 4, "Monitoring, evaluation and reporting", section 10, of the Policies and Procedures Manual. The purpose of this exercise will be an in-depth assessment of the results achieved and the experience gained in implementing the ongoing programme. This review will consider the programme's progress and recommend the necessary corrective actions.
D. Resource availability

87. Programmed reserve. Resources amounting to $6.7 million have been reserved for further support to food security, the acquisition of advanced technology and general human resources development. The activities to be implemented will be selected from proposals after discussions with Governments. It is also intended to consider new project proposals which may arise from the continued programme discussions within the Arab region.

88. Unprogrammed reserve. The sum of $3,924,000 has been earmarked to accommodate new project proposals falling within the established priorities and guidelines. It is anticipated that cost-sharing by Arab States and funding organizations could lead to an increase of this modest unprogrammed reserve.

III. Future Trends

89. The purpose of the present document is to sum up the highlights of the fourth-cycle regional programme for the Arab States on the basis of the priorities that have been identified through a number of consultations that have been conducted since 1985. Based on the experience acquired during the third-cycle programme's implementation and the new economic realities of the region, the Bureau has made every effort to formulate a rational strategy with specific areas of concentration for the next cycle with the objective of encouraging, supporting and, where appropriate, participating in the development efforts of the Arab States.

90. Over the next five years, the fourth-cycle programme will require continuous efforts in terms of planning, monitoring, and evaluation, as well as adjustments and revisions. Substantial efforts have been made to ensure that the Governments of the regions play a more active role in identifying their priority areas within a more coherent and focused programme. It should be kept in mind that no project can be guaranteed success unless all parties concerned, UNDP, the executing agencies and, most of all, the participating Governments, play an active role in controlling the progress of every project activity and in co-operating together. A firm recommendation has been made to bring together the participating countries in a networking effort in order to ensure their full involvement in all development stages of the project activities, which will be geared towards addressing their specific needs in the context of truly regional co-operation. For this purpose, the needs of the various subregions of the Arab world, must be borne in mind which will later lead to the development of more TCDC activities.

91. Only a small number of ongoing projects is to continue under the new programme in order to leave room for the introduction of new ideas and activities vital to the systematic development of the region, mainly in the areas of food security, water resources, science and applied technologies, within a socio-cultural framework appropriate to the needs of the region. In this context, the programme's new projects have been designed in a dynamic and flexible manner so as to be able to make adjustments when and where appropriate. The programmed and unprogrammed reserves have similarly been planned to provide for more flexibility to face...
unexpected or emerging needs, as well as for continuous injection of innovative ideas.

92. In conclusion, UNDP is looking forward to the regional programme's mid-term review planned for 1990 to assess, together with the Governments and executing agencies, the fruit of the efforts and active support required to ensure the success of this most exciting and rewarding venture.
Annex

FINANCIAL SUMMARY
(In thousands of US dollars)

I. ACTUAL RESOURCES TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT FOR PROGRAMMING a/

A. UNDP-administered sources

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<thead>
<tr>
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B. Other sources

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<td>Subtotal, other sources</td>
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II. USE OF RESOURCES

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<td>Programmed reserve</td>
<td>6 700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal, programmed resources</td>
<td>44 084</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unprogrammed reserve</td>
<td>3 925</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL USE OF RESOURCES</td>
<td>48 009</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a/ As at 31 December 1987.