



**Governing Council  
of the  
United Nations  
Development Programme**

Distr.  
GENERAL

DP/1988/SR.30  
17 October 1988

ENGLISH  
Original: FRENCH

GOVERNING COUNCIL

Thirty-fifth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 30th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva  
on Thursday, 23 June 1988, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. MANGWAZU (Malawi)

CONTENTS

Other funds and programmes (continued):

(e) United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

Programme implementation (continued):

(f) Women in development

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Official Records Editing Section, room E.6108, Palais des Nations, Geneva.

Any corrections to the records of the meetings of this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

OTHER FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES (agenda item 8) (continued)

(e) UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN (UNIFEM) (DP/1988/50 and Add.1 and 2)

1. Mrs. SNYDER (Director, United Nations Development Fund for Women), introducing agenda item 8, drew attention to an error which should be corrected in paragraph 60 of the Administrator's report (DP/1988/50). The words "reporting directly to and assisting experienced UNIFEM officers," should be inserted after the words "for UNIFEM at UNDP offices" in the last sentence. It should be made very clear that, while greatly appreciating the contribution made by those junior professional officers, UNIFEM recognized that they lacked experience and that they should be assigned limited tasks under the supervision of a senior officer.
2. The Fund's secretariat had prepared its work programme in accordance with the priorities set by the General Assembly and those that had been established on the advice of the Fund's Consultative Committee (DP/1988/50, para. 9). Although the Fund had formulated a global work plan based on regional programmes and work plans, at the request of the Consultative Committee (DP/1988/50/Add.1), the Governing Council of UNDP had been asked to defer its in-depth discussion until June 1989. Accordingly, she would merely give a general outline of that plan.
3. The work plan explained, in particular, the UNIFEM approach to programming, as well as inter-agency co-operation, which constituted its normal mode of operation, from the standpoint of technical co-operation among developing countries. That co-operation could be furthered considerably if, in future, UNIFEM were invited to participate in the work of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy as a full member, as had been proposed by the Fund's Consultative Committee.
4. In its work plan, UNIFEM had also followed the advice given by numerous delegations at the special session of UNDP held in February 1988, to the effect that it should prepare immediately to implement the partial funding policy as soon as that had been approved by the Governing Council, which seemed likely to happen during the current session. The adoption of that system was necessary since UNIFEM was currently able to respond to only half of the demands made on it, in spite of the generosity of Governments, which had been particularly apparent in 1987, the year of the Fund's tenth anniversary. On that occasion, some countries, such as Burkina Faso and Angola, had pledged a contribution to the Fund for the first time, while others, such as Finland and Spain, had significantly increased the amount of their contributions.
5. With regard to human resources, the Fund's situation was even more critical. Accordingly, the decision taken by the Governing Council, at its thirty-fourth session, to approve the creation of six high-level posts had been greatly appreciated. Four of those posts had already been filled and the other two were expected to be filled in the near future.

6. She gave several examples of activities undertaken by the Fund at the country level (Tanzania, Malawi), at the subregional level (as illustrated by its participation in the work of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference) and at the regional level (Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean). In all its activities, the Fund was seeking primarily to play a catalytic role; its long-term objective was to help to strengthen development capacity, at the country and regional levels, by ensuring the participation of women in the principal social and economic activities of the communities in which they were living and by promoting the development of human resources. In Africa, for example, the Fund's priorities coincided with those that the African countries themselves had originally defined in the Lagos Plan of Action. Those priorities were perfectly compatible with the objectives of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990. The UNIFEM African Investment Plan set the following priorities: food security, development of energy resources, development of credit support systems and strengthening of management capacities. The aim was to overcome the crisis that the African countries were facing due to their indebtedness and the negative impact of structural adjustments. It had to be recognized that it was women and children who suffered most in times of crisis, although it was women who sustained the economy and who were also the potential agents of profound and lasting change.

7. Although she did not intend to go into details concerning the intensive co-operation between UNIFEM and UNDP, the specialized agencies and the non-governmental organizations during the last 10 years, she indicated that, in the African region, for example, co-operation with ECA and OAU had been long-standing and particularly fruitful. She referred to the joint UNIFEM/World Bank missions and the Fund's selective participation in UNDP round-tables, country programming exercises and NaTCAPs, particularly in the French-speaking countries of Africa.

8. UNIFEM was a development fund, a fact which might sometimes be overlooked by the authors of documents submitted to the Governing Council, and it was operational. It was the only multilateral fund that was fully dedicated to ensuring the participation of women in development co-operation activities in their societies and economies. In that sense, UNIFEM differed considerably from the divisions and units concerned with the participation of women in development at ILO, UNIDO, FAO, UNFPA, UNDP, etc. Although those units were essential, they in no way guaranteed the ability of the United Nations system to respond in a rapid or sustained manner to the needs arising from the fact that women were the focal point of the development process. Accordingly, there was a need for an external specialized agency, such as UNIFEM, to play a catalytic role, particularly within the United Nations system, since the units concerned with the role of women in development still found it very difficult to assert their influence. It was therefore understandable that, under those circumstances, some might be tempted to resort to bilateral donors for the financing of projects to benefit women. In any situation, bureaucracies remained resistant to change and found it difficult to admit that there would be no real development unless women were fully involved in the process.

9. However, she was well aware that the Fund was still faced with many questions concerning ways to make its projects more viable, as well as the magnitude of those projects which, in the past, had frequently fallen short of the optimum scope needed to produce a sustainable effect, and, concerning the

innovative nature that should continue to characterize the activities undertaken. In that regard, UNIFEM had been successful in promoting the establishment of revolving loan funds, for example, and had recently tested a trust fund in India. Nevertheless, the Fund must constantly seek new formulas in collaboration with Governments and non-governmental organizations. The Governing Council of UNDP should take a decision on all those aspects.

10. Mrs. ARUNGU-OLENDE (Observer for Kenya), speaking in her capacity as Chairperson of the Consultative Committee on the United Nations Development Fund for Women, said that, during the last 10 years, the Fund had achieved remarkable results, which had been of particular benefit to women in rural areas and poor urban districts. Given a little more financial assistance, the Fund would undoubtedly succeed in enabling women to emerge from their marginal status in the developing countries by providing them with the means to participate actively in the principal activities of the society to which they belonged.

11. The Fund had therefore proved its usefulness and the effectiveness of its catalytic role in the field. It must now be permitted to play that role within the United Nations system. It was not enough to assume that women were automatically included in socio-economic development programmes; the nature of their participation in the activities to be undertaken must be specified at the pre-investment stage.

12. Through its computerized data bank, the Fund could now make its store of experience available to all interested institutions. To that end, the Consultative Committee on UNIFEM had recommended that the Fund should be admitted to full membership of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy, thereby enabling it to avoid the duplication of work that had already been undertaken by agencies within the United Nations system. The Consultative Committee had also recommended that the Fund should implement high-risk experimental projects, as it had already done, for example, by establishing revolving loan funds to provide poor women with access to credit. The experience that the Fund had gained was also helpful in another field since, by using non-governmental organizations as executing agencies in some of its projects, it had clearly shown the extent to which collaboration with non-governmental organizations could be fruitful, particularly at the grass-roots level.

13. UNIFEM had formulated work programmes that had been approved by the Consultative Committee, particularly three major programmes for Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia and the Pacific: the first, the African Investment Plan, which had been initially based on the Lagos Plan of Action, had subsequently been modified to take account of some of the recommendations made in the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990. The aim of that plan was to solve food problems by improving food and energy policies, as well as credit support systems, and by strengthening management capacities. The second plan, the Participatory Action Plan for Latin America and the Caribbean, focused on the development of peasant economies, the problems inherent in the urban informal employment sector, violence against women and mass-media communication. The third plan, for Asia and the Pacific, had recently been drafted, following the meetings of a "think tank", and had been studied in depth at the twenty-third session of the Consultative Committee.

14. The Consultative Committee hoped that the Fund would be able to rapidly adapt its activities to the new system as soon as the move had been made from a full to a partial funding system, which the Governing Council had already approved in principle. It also hoped that the Administrator of UNDP would follow up on the recommendation that the post of Director of the Fund should be upgraded from D-1 to D-2, particularly since that post was about to fall vacant. Moreover, there was every reason to apply a recommendation that had been made two years previously, and it was appropriate to bring the level of that post into line with those of the directors of all the other United Nations funds. In the case in question, it would be regrettable to make an exception to the detriment of a post held by a woman. Finally, the Consultative Committee hoped that, through the generosity of Governments, national committees, non-governmental organizations and individuals, the Fund would be able to achieve the set target of collecting \$21 million by 1990.
15. In conclusion, she paid a tribute to the Director of the Fund, who would shortly be retiring. The Fund owed a large part of its success to its Director's tireless dedication in helping women to make their voices heard and to play their full role in the development process.
16. Mr. DRAPER (Administrator, United Nations Development Programme) associated himself with the tribute just paid to Mrs. Snyder. He thanked her for the excellent work that she had accomplished during her 10-year directorship of UNIFEM and commended her for her unfailing dedication, energy and determination. On behalf of UNDP, he wished Mrs. Snyder every success for the future.
17. Mrs. SENECA (Canada) said that, for several years, Canada had been an enthusiastic advocate of the role of UNIFEM in the United Nations system. Her country had supported the Fund not only financially, through its voluntary and special contributions, but also politically, morally and technically.
18. The reason for Canada's evident support for UNIFEM lay in the fact that, from the outset, it had believed in the Fund's capabilities and in the cause that it was defending. Over the years, while urging countries to contribute to the Fund, it had constantly encouraged the latter to acquire the requisite human resources and to adopt working methods and strategic plans that were compatible with its lofty aspirations. In the light of a study of document DP/1988/50 and the regular exchanges between Canada and the Fund, she could affirm that UNIFEM had gradually succeeded in making its catalytic role credible, in becoming attractive to donors and in ensuring strict management. All that augured well for the future. The support that the Administrator and the secretariat of UNDP had given to the Fund and the enlightened advice that the Fund had received from the Consultative Committee had been highly instrumental in ensuring that favourable outcome. However, a tribute must also be paid to the staff of UNIFEM and, in particular, to its Director for her dedication, her open-mindedness and the endeavours that she had made to mobilize resources, to endow the Fund with an efficient administrative and financial management system and, above all, to develop a coherent approach to the activities to be undertaken among women, with the support of the Governments concerned and in collaboration with institutions within the United Nations system. Nevertheless, much still remained to be done and her delegation hoped that UNIFEM would strengthen its catalytic role and continue to consider questions of policy, as had recently been recommended by the Consultative Committee.

19. In conclusion, she drew the Council's attention to the very substantial credit balance of UNIFEM at the end of the 1987 financial year. Her delegation was greatly concerned at that fact, which it attributed largely to the current full funding system, which placed severe constraints on UNIFEM and considerably limited its capacity to respond to the constantly increasing requests of countries and communities. Her delegation therefore supported the Administrator's recommendation concerning a partial funding system for UNIFEM. If, as she hoped, that partial funding system was applied, greater attention would have to be paid not only to the programme implementation rate, but also to the quality of projects.

20. Mr. HOPLAND (Norway), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, paid a tribute to Mrs. Snyder for the valuable work that she had accomplished during the first, crucial phase in the history of UNIFEM. She and the entire staff of UNIFEM could be proud of their achievements. For their part, the Nordic countries undertook to continue helping to strengthen the role that the Fund was playing in regard to the integration of women in the development process.

21. The Nordic countries regretted that the Governing Council had been unable to conduct the in-depth study of the UNIFEM work plan for the biennium 1988-1989, since the Consultative Committee had requested the deferment of that study until June 1989. However, they wished to make a few general comments on the role and activities of UNIFEM, on the basis of the experience that they had gained through their close co-operation with the Fund and the Consultative Committee, of which Norway had been a member for the last six years.

22. The Nordic countries supported the expanded mandate that the General Assembly had granted to the Fund and that formed the basis for its activities. However, a Norwegian-financed evaluation carried out in 1987 had brought out a number of constraints and shortcomings in the operational base of UNIFEM, which could have serious policy implications unless they were corrected. One question that required urgent study was the choice of priorities for the use of the Fund's limited resources. The Nordic countries felt that a comprehensive operational analysis of the Fund's agreed objectives and policies should be undertaken, as well as a careful study of its priorities, with a view to formulating long-term and short-term plans of action. The scope of that analysis should be broader than that of the useful, but more limited, analysis that had been submitted to the Governing Council in February (DP/1988/4). It could be conducted when the new management team of UNIFEM was ready to undertake that major task, under the guidance of the Consultative Committee.

23. In accordance with its mandate, UNIFEM had endeavoured to convince numerous organizations concerned with development to attach due importance to questions relating to the role of women in development. It was only natural that the Fund should play that advocacy role even more actively in the case of UNDP, with which it had a particularly close relationship. It was largely due to the Fund that UNDP had established a Division for Women in Development in 1986. That should enable UNIFEM to rechannel resources to other sectors and other institutions in which special units to promote the participation of women in development had not yet been established.

24. The Nordic countries held the view that one of the principal tasks of UNIFEM should be to play a pioneering role by undertaking high-risk activities, which would make it possible to devise better ways of reaching women and encouraging other organizations to follow suit. The Fund should play that role not only within the United Nations system but also in regard to women's groups, Governments and technical ministries, etc. It was clearly within the scope of the expanded mandate of UNIFEM, which highlighted the Fund's catalytic, innovative and experimental function.

25. The highly ambitious UNIFEM work programme raised the question of staffing, in so far as it was planned to meet requirements in that respect by making increased use of junior professional officers and United Nations volunteers. While recognizing that it could be very useful and cost-effective to employ that type of personnel for some specific functions, the Nordic countries felt that those persons frequently lacked the experience needed for the proper handling of complex and delicate issues. By virtue of its innovative and experimental nature, UNIFEM undertook activities that frequently involved high risks, and the element of risk would naturally increase if the personnel lacked the requisite qualifications. That should be borne in mind when UNIFEM established its staffing requirements. Accordingly, it was difficult to recommend that UNIFEM should base its activities mainly, or even to a large extent, on that category of personnel. Moreover, in view of the heavy work-load at UNIFEM headquarters and at UNDP field offices, the Nordic countries did not believe that adequate guidance could be given to junior professional officers and United Nations volunteers if their number was substantially increased.

26. Still on the subject of staffing, he drew attention to the Norwegian evaluation report, which stressed the need to increase the professional skills of UNIFEM personnel. The Fund's recruitment policy should continue to be guided by the recommendations of that report and account should also be taken of the agreement that UNIFEM had concluded with UNDP concerning their future operational relationship, which had led to a strengthening of UNDP field support for UNIFEM activities.

27. Mr. HUGHES (New Zealand) said that the UNIFEM input into development issues was vital and deserved widespread support. For its part, New Zealand was pleased to have been able to double its 1987-1988 contribution to the Fund and welcomed the predicted increase in the resources available to UNIFEM in 1988.

28. He supported the adoption of a partial funding system. He hoped that that would have a positive impact on programme delivery and welcomed the Fund's aim of increasing its assistance to the developing countries in that way. He was convinced that the control mechanisms would effectively safeguard the Fund in the event of a decrease in contributions.

29. He had been particularly interested to note the emphasis that had been placed on mainstreaming, which he regarded as essential to ensure that the interests of women were systematically taken into account in development planning. In New Zealand, it had been proposed that an officer specializing in the participation of women in development should be appointed in the division responsible for administering the ODA programme in order to ensure that issues relating to that participation were borne in mind when decisions were taken concerning the country's ODA projects and programmes.

30. He hoped that UNIFEM would continue to develop its collaboration with United Nations organizations and interested Governments and non-governmental organizations. He also welcomed the fact that the UNIFEM work plan focused on the sustainability of its projects during the current and future bienniums. He expressed interest in the forthcoming UNIFEM regional plan for Asia and the Pacific and welcomed the substantial increase in the funding allocated to that region.

31. Mrs. LEE (Observer for Australia) said that her Government recognized the importance of the question of the role of women in development not only on grounds of equity but, in particular, because of the crucial role that women played in sectors such as agriculture, health, population and education. She approved the UNIFEM strategy, which concurred with the declared aims of the Australian Government in regard to the promotion of the role of women in development. She also expressed support for the innovative projects of direct benefit to women, as well as the mainstreaming goal of women's involvement in the formulation of policies and programmes. The UNIFEM input at round-tables and during country programming exercises at the pre-investment stage could have a particularly significant impact.

32. She welcomed the fact that, in accordance with the recommendation made in Norway's excellent review, more effective administrative mechanisms had been established and guidelines concerning the operational relationship between UNIFEM and UNDP had been drawn up. In view of the importance that she attached to the close co-operation and complementarity between the Fund and the Division for Women in Development, she hoped to receive fuller information on that relationship than had been provided in documents DP/1988/50 and DP/1988/15.

33. She welcomed the initiative that UNIFEM had taken in formulating a plan of action for Asia and the Pacific since, a few years previously, her country had requested an increase in the Fund's activities in that region. Australia would be contributing to the UNIFEM project identification mission that would shortly be undertaken in the Pacific. With regard to the priorities that had been set in the plan of action, she approved the emphasis that had been placed on agriculture in view of its predominant role in the development of the region, although she was not convinced of the advisability of designating the environment as a special category. Although the environment was very important for women in many respects, it was too vague a concept to be used as a category for mainstreaming. It would be preferable to refer to fields of activity of more direct concern to women, such as health, housing and education. Concerning UNIFEM activities in Asia and the Pacific, she wished to know what percentage of its resources the Fund was allocating to the region of Asia and the Pacific, as compared with Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.

34. With regard to the availability of human resources in the field, Australia had already noted that UNIFEM frequently entrusted complex and delicate tasks to inexperienced and inadequately trained officers. Although she had been reassured by Mrs. Snyder's amendment to paragraph 60 of document DP/1988/50, she stressed the fact that, while appreciating the generous assistance that the donor countries had provided in the form of 10 junior professional officers working for UNIFEM at UNDP field offices, her delegation felt that the Fund would need numerous experienced senior officers in order to achieve its objectives.



35. In conclusion, she expressed satisfaction with the new series of UNIFEM Occasional Papers on substantive matters and approved the proposal to postpone discussion of the Fund's work plan until June 1989. She reaffirmed her Government's support for the partial funding system, which would enable UNIFEM to formulate projects that were more closely tailored to country needs.

36. Mr. DAH (Burkina Faso) said that the African countries, on behalf of which he was speaking, recognized the importance of UNIFEM and its priority objective of acting as a catalyst with a view to ensuring the participation of women in mainstream development activities. Promotion of the role of women was included in the plans of all the African countries, which were aware that women must participate in and benefit from development in the same way as all other members of society. Their contribution was indispensable to harmonious development.

37. The extent of co-operation between UNIFEM, OAU and each individual African State was an indication of the willingness of those States to integrate women in the socio-economic development process. It was for that reason that the African Governments were supporting all UNIFEM activities. They also approved the recommendation concerning partial funding.

38. In conclusion, the African countries wished to express their gratitude to Mrs. Snyder for her endeavours on behalf of the women of the third world and assured her successor of their full collaboration.

39. Mr. AGUARONE (Netherlands), referring to document DP/1988/50, said that he approved the description of the functioning and general activities of UNIFEM. He would have liked to have more details concerning the manner in which the Fund's major priorities were being applied in practice in specific projects and wished to know, for example, how paragraph 3 of the report was being applied in day-to-day project implementation. In general, his delegation would like to obtain more information on the 280 current activities and also on the work of the Consultative Committee, in view of the importance of that work.

40. With regard to the duration of the UNIFEM mandate, the Netherlands hoped that the question of whether it should be maintained would be re-examined periodically. If the Fund accomplished its task successfully, all the competent United Nations organizations would gradually develop the habit of taking issues of concern to women into consideration in their projects which, in the long term, would reduce the need for the contribution made by UNIFEM. Periodic evaluations of the relationship between UNIFEM and the Division for Women in Development would also be desirable.

41. Finally, with regard to the Fund's finances, he recalled that his delegation had supported the proposal concerning partial funding at the special session in February. In that regard, he re-emphasized that it was very important to forecast income in a realistic and prudent manner. He therefore reaffirmed that, in his opinion, the amount of anticipated resources shown in the document under consideration was over-optimistic. With regard to the reclassification of the post of Director of UNIFEM from D-1 to D-2, the Netherlands supported the ACABQ recommendation that that question should be dealt with in 1989 within the context of the consideration of the budget for the biennium 1990-1991.

42. Mrs. SUGGS (United States of America) said that, since 1976, the United States had been one of the principal contributors to the Fund in its various forms, since her country's total donations exceeded \$8 million. Although its current annual contributions had declined, the United States thought that women should be fully involved in the development process, as both participants and beneficiaries, and welcomed the extremely useful endeavours of UNIFEM in that respect.

43. Her delegation supported the steps that had been taken to date to improve the performance of UNIFEM and would continue to follow with interest the impact of the organizational and programming modifications on the Fund's management capability and strict financial control. Like the spokesman for the Nordic countries, she thought that the discussion of the UNIFEM work plan for 1988-1989 should have been included on the agenda of the Governing Council and looked forward to receiving that plan, which should serve as a basis for the discussion of priorities. It was essential to establish priorities in view of the Fund's limited resources.

44. She supported the suggestion of the Nordic countries concerning the formulation of a long-term and short-term plan of action and also shared the opinion that those countries had expressed concerning staffing requirements. Finally, she had noted with interest the special studies on UNIFEM that the Consultative Committee had requested (DP/1988/50, para. 73) and hoped that, in future, the Fund's reports would at least contain summaries of the findings of those studies.

45. Mr. WILKE (Federal Republic of Germany) reaffirmed his Government's support for the activities of UNIFEM, and particularly for the efforts that had been made to ensure that issues of concern to women were taken into consideration in all development activities and at all project stages. He thought that the Fund's sectoral priorities had been well chosen and properly adapted to needs. However, he believed that the interplay between UNIFEM and Governments in sectors such as economic and social planning should fall within the context of the UNDP country programming process. Moreover, he expressed the view that, in general, UNIFEM projects were not formulated in a sufficiently precise manner and priorities had not been defined with the requisite clarity. There were too many dispersed minor activities, which placed a heavy burden on the Fund's limited administrative capabilities.

46. Mrs. SNYDER (Director, United Nations Development Fund for Women), speaking in reply to the comments and questions of delegations, said that the management-related issues would be studied in greater detail by the Budget and Finance Committee, to which some of the steps taken to ensure the viability and financial integrity of the Fund would be submitted. On the conclusion of her term of office, she had no misgivings in that respect, since the system that had been established seemed to have proved its worth.

47. The system of assigning junior professional officers to the Fund's projects made it possible not only to assist senior officers in their task but also to provide an opportunity for junior professional officers to receive on-the-job training and gain experience. The 10 junior professional officers whose services had been offered to the Fund would be working under the direct supervision of senior officers, three being assigned to Latin America, four to Africa, two to the region of Asia and the Pacific and one or two to headquarters.

48. On behalf of the Nordic countries, the Norwegian delegation had expressed regret that the Fund's work plan had not been discussed during the current session. That plan would be considered by the Consultative Committee on the Fund at its session in September and delegations would be able to obtain a copy of it. The Norwegian consultants commissioned to evaluate the Fund had drawn attention to a number of problems that had been examined one by one in the report on the United Nations Development Fund for Women (DP/1988/4) which had been considered by the Governing Council at its special session in February 1988. Steps had been taken to overcome some of those problems, as she had indicated in her introductory statement. She thought that it would be possible to solve many of the problems facing the Fund once its staff had been complemented by the arrival of the senior officers.

49. The spokesman for the Nordic countries had said that the establishment of the Division for Women in Development at UNDP had enabled the Fund to intensify its co-operation with other organizations. That was exactly what had happened; the Fund was currently engaged in joint operational activities with the World Bank and a series of study missions had been undertaken with a view to ensuring that an element concerning the role of women in development appeared in the World Bank's credit support programmes for the least developed countries. Moreover, in the field of food technology, the Fund had financed a UNIDO study on traditional food technologies. The Fund was also working with non-governmental organizations, as well as intergovernmental organizations such as the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference, ECOWAS in West Africa and others in the Caribbean region. That collaboration was gradually being consolidated and developed in the light of the steps that had already been taken.

50. It had been said that the Fund should play a pioneering role by undertaking high-risk activities. In fact, it had already done so, for example, by establishing a loan fund in India. The Fund was also playing a pioneering role in Burkina Faso in an entirely different field. It had been noted that, in low-income communities, women spent from 2,000 to 5,000 hours every year on tasks such as carrying water, firewood and produce for sale. In an attempt to alleviate their task, the Fund, in collaboration with the Government of Burkina Faso, had conducted an experiment consisting in the use of new systems for the haulage of water, as well as trying out intermediate technologies, which seemed to be operating very well.

51. With regard to priorities, she emphasized that UNIFEM policies were examined systematically by the Consultative Committee. Furthermore, the latter had made a careful study of each of the regional programmes which, being based on clearly defined priorities, provided the Fund with very explicit guidance for its activities and investments.

52. Finally, the Nordic countries had referred to the question of staffing. As she had already pointed out, the Fund was not totally dependent on junior professional officers since, in future, it would have senior officers permanently at its disposal. At the moment, the crucial question related to the monitoring of projects at the country level. The Fund thought that it had found a solution in the possibility of availing itself of the services of senior officials living in retirement in their home countries and who were willing, at moderate cost to the Fund, to work for UNIFEM at UNDP offices. Their collaboration was appreciated in the field of Government liaison.

53. Australia, like New Zealand, was providing the Fund with financial assistance and was following its activities closely. It had therefore drawn attention to paragraph 10 of document DP/1988/50, concerning the draft plan of action for Asia and the Pacific. The comments that Australia had previously made had been taken into account in that draft and the same would apply to its latest comments concerning the environment. The percentage of the Fund's resources allocated to the region of Asia and the Pacific had remained low pending the formulation of that plan of action. However, a very significant increase would be noted following the programming missions that had been organized. A large proportion of the partial funding should be allocated to the region of Asia and the Pacific, particularly the Pacific.

54. Burkina Faso had commended the Fund on the catalytic role that it was playing in the African region. She had personally noted the very keen interest that the African Governments were taking in the contribution of women to economic and social life. She was pleased to learn that the African countries were in favour of partial funding and that, in general, they supported the Fund's activities. A special meeting of donors on the question of the role of women in development, which would be organized with the assistance of the Fund, would be held in Burkina Faso in the near future.

55. The representative of the Netherlands had inquired about the manner in which policies were being put into practice in projects and, in that connection, had referred to paragraph 3 of the report. The Fund might consider giving explanations on that subject in a document in the Occasional Papers series. The Fund had 280 projects and its Consultative Committee received annual reports on each project that was being implemented. Those reports contained numerous headings: name of country, title of project, category, executing agents, input from the Fund, other sources of funding, number of participants, objectives, expected results, actual results, problems and steps taken, and catalytic and innovative aspects. Moreover, the Fund prepared an in-depth annual report on one or more specific projects. Details concerning the projects would be submitted to the Consultative Committee at its session in September.

56. Forecasts of resources had been described as over-optimistic and a question had been asked as to how the Fund had calculated the figures of \$14 million for 1983 and \$21 million for 1990. Those figures were derived partly from the resources secured through the establishment of the partial funding system and also from co-funding arrangements that were expected to be concluded. In her view, the Fund's forecasts were not over-optimistic and, at all events, the needs would justify a strengthening of UNIFEM.

57. In reply to the delegations of the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States of America, she said that all the Fund's projects were normally examined within a country programming context, although the Fund also took the national development plan into consideration. To formulate its projects within the country programming context, the Fund worked in co-operation with the regional bureaux and, in the field offices, UNIFEM officers worked in collaboration with the resident representative. It had been claimed that there were too many small-scale activities. The average value of a UNIFEM project was currently \$100,000. There were 280 projects, some of which were merely programming missions. The Fund would endeavour to submit a breakdown of the projects by magnitude at the next session of the Governing Council.

58. Finally, with regard to the dissemination of the experience gained by the Fund, she thought that her successor would continue to publish documents in the Occasional Papers series. With regard to the question of the duration of the UNIFEM mandate, she pointed out that the prospective strategies of action for the advancement of women that had been formulated at Nairobi extended to the year 2000, which might provide an indication in that respect.

59. The PRESIDENT expressed the sincere gratitude and best wishes of the Governing Council to Mrs. Snyder, the retiring Director of UNIFEM, and suggested that the Council should request the Drafting Group to prepare a draft decision on agenda item 8.

60. It was so decided.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (agenda item 4) (continued):

(f) WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT (DP/1988/15 and Corr.1 and Add.1)

61. Mrs. EIDE (Director, Division for Women in Development, Bureau for Programme, Policy and Evaluation) said that the task of the Division for Women in Development was to ensure that women played a larger role, as participants and beneficiaries, in all UNDP-funded programmes and projects. UNDP had obviously been giving attention to that issue for many years, as could be seen from the innumerable projects in which women were contributing to development activities and goals. It had become commonplace to say that women contributed to the economies of households, communities and nations; all too frequently, they were the sole providers for their families. Accordingly, for development projects to succeed, women must be assigned their due role.

62. In fact, many concepts and approaches applied by UNDP and others had been developed by UNIFEM. Accordingly, the Fund's pioneering role must be maintained and the lessons learnt from its experience should be disseminated as widely as possible. For its part, the Division for Women in Development would continue its collaboration with UNIFEM with a view to achieving complementarity and avoiding duplication.

63. The UNDP programmes and projects clearly showed that women were currently participating in all types of activities at all levels, as air traffic controllers and pilots, directing major medical, agricultural and industrial research institutions or studying means to provide food and employment for future generations. The preconceptions that had originally been formulated concerning women were being dispelled. Accordingly, while respecting tradition, it was important to avoid stereotyped concepts and to remain open to whatever proved feasible. The primary objective of development was to create new opportunities which should also be available to women. Another fact that should not be forgotten was the knowledge, skills and experience that women had demonstrated in their current wide range of activities and which should not remain unexploited. Although development was undoubtedly a long-term process, it would take for ever to improve the situation of women if a little impatience were never shown. Emphasis should therefore be laid on positive action and attentiveness to the activities, needs and potential of women. National policies should also be taken into account and a dialogue should be established with the Government concerned before embarking on any action.

64. Much remained to be done, as could be seen from the percentage of women holding fellowships or participating in study tours and seminars; the average rate of female participation in those activities in all countries was 16 per cent. However, when broken down by country, the rate ranged from 0 to 50 per cent. The Bureau for Programme, Policy and Evaluation therefore invited applications from female candidates whenever it offered such opportunities.

65. Referring to the report (DP/1988/15 and Corr.1 and Add.1), which described the activities of the Division for Women in Development and gave examples illustrating the manner in which UNDP was implementing its policy of promoting the role of women in development, she drew the Council's attention to a typographic error in document DP/1988/15/Add.1: the second line of paragraph 11 should read "in one West African country" and not "East African". As could be seen from the report, the Division was now fully integrated in the activities of UNDP.

66. During the first year of its existence, the Division had established a workable consensus on approaches, policy and procedures. It had trained staff and invited other United Nations organizations, as well as Government counterparts, to participate in some training activities. The training programme would be expanded with a view to increasing its geographical coverage and promoting collaboration with other institutions. Subregional seminars had been organized with the help of regional institutions.

67. During its second year of operation, the Division planned to engage more extensively in the assessment of specific projects and in development planning in general. It would meet the demand for sector-specific advice on projects by preparing "advisory notes" and studies of a sample of country programmes would serve as inputs to the ongoing development dialogue, as well as future country programming exercises.

68. She stressed that the Division was only an internal support mechanism. In the final analysis, it was the field offices which, through their commitment, initiatives and co-operation with Governments, specialized agencies and local people, would determine the real impact of the renewed emphasis that UNDP was placing on the role of women in development. Having concentrated initially on activities at headquarters, the Division was now focusing its endeavours on interaction at the field level. Twenty-three field offices had taken part in the organization of staff training seminars, 50 resident representatives had attended meetings and many more had come to headquarters for consultations. That had obviously encouraged the field offices to take new initiatives, as had the visits by the Administrator, who had strongly advocated the promotion of the role of women in development.

69. The issue of women in development was highly visible in all UNDP activities. The fact that 25 per cent of its professional posts were held by women, of whom 11 were serving as resident representatives and 20 as deputy resident representatives, had played a major role in that respect, although the commitment of the regular staff, including male members and not only specialists, to the cause of women in development had also been a decisive factor.

70. Under the new project document format, the role of women in development must be taken into consideration in the formulation of all projects and should be visible in project activities, outputs and budgets. The Division for Women in Development was encouraging that policy through a women-in-development project review form, which was being distributed to all field offices. Although special projects for women might sometimes be required, other projects must also respond to women's needs and provide them with new opportunities so that, in future, women would be involved, in the same way as men, in the development process, in the sense of being able not only to participate actively, but also, and above all, to benefit.

71. Mrs. MARKOUS (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that UNDP had established its Division for Women in Development in order to reaffirm the importance that should be attached to the role of women in development when formulating and monitoring projects and programmes. Women should participate in and benefit from development and their role should not be disregarded, since they constituted 50 per cent of the world population, as well as two thirds of the active population, and they produced half of all foodstuffs. Effective use should therefore be made of their capabilities.

72. Strategies to promote the role of women in development had been formulated, for example, at the Nairobi Conference, as well as the fortieth session of the General Assembly, and the Division was applying their principal objectives in the fields of employment, health and education. Governments were also applying those strategies in collaboration with the United Nations and its specialized agencies. In that regard, her delegation believed that projects which focused on the role of women in development should be formulated primarily for the developing countries, in order to help them to achieve the defined objectives.

73. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had entered the era of female emancipation, in which women could participate in the country's economic and social development. The public authorities had taken steps to promote the employment of women and to facilitate their access to health care and family-planning services. To improve the situation of women in rural areas, the Libyan authorities, acting through rural development centres, had established innovative training projects in the fields of agriculture, marketing, health, handicrafts and co-operatives. Social centres were also helping to stimulate the awareness of women by providing them with instruction in various crafts, as well as family planning.

74. Her delegation had taken note of document DP/1988/15 and supported the idea of examining UNDP programmes and projects with a view to analysing the role and activities of women and proposing possible modifications to ensure that the role of women was taken into account in programming and planning. Her country believed that there could be no progress in that field unless the work was carried out in co-operation with all the United Nations agencies and governmental organizations providing material and technical assistance. In conclusion, she hoped for closer co-operation between her country and UNDP in regard to the role of women in development.

75. Mrs. CHAI Xiaolin (China) said that, in the course of one year, the Division for Women in Development had made numerous suggestions and had taken several steps to enhance the future activities of UNDP in that field. She had

taken note of the basic goals that UNDP was pursuing in that respect (DP/1988/15, para. 35) and welcomed the fact that activities relating to women would be conducted in a country-specific fashion. However, she noted that, although UNDP was proposing to carry out a systematic examination of its programmes and projects (para. 36) to determine the importance that was attached to the role of women in development, it was also planning to review them and to approve new projects (para. 43) in the light of that criterion, wherever appropriate, on the basis of the new review forms (para. 48). She expressed reservations concerning that procedure. Although each recipient country undeniably attached importance to the participation of women in development, co-operation projects should be based on the priority fields for economic development, as defined by the country concerned. Even if the participation of women were required in principle, in practice it would not carry the same weight in all projects. Consequently, the number of women involved in development activities, as participants as well as beneficiaries, could not be an absolute factor, nor could it be the sole criterion for the approval of the proposed projects. The role assigned to women in projects should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. She hoped that UNDP would show flexibility in that regard.

76. She also noted that the Division had not yet determined the practical ways in which UNDP assistance could be channelled towards women. She drew attention to the special problems faced by women in isolated and underprivileged regions in which the principal need was for development funding, since technical assistance could be provided locally.

77. She noted that, through its catalytic role and the valuable support that it was providing, UNIFEM had done much to ensure that issues of concern to women were taken into consideration in national development plans and technical co-operation programmes. Within the context of its participation in projects, the Fund had taken a number of steps to help women to increase their income and improve their social status. She hoped that the Fund would increase its assistance to women in isolated and underprivileged regions and that it would be able to reduce the excessively long delays in securing the approval of projects.

78. Mrs. NIELSEN (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that most of the recommendations made by the Governing Council in its decision 87/15 had already been applied or were due to be applied in the near future. She noted that the Division for Women in Development would henceforth be systematically involved at all stages of the formulation and implementation of country programmes and stressed the importance of that step, as well as the importance of the co-ordination of policies and the sharing of experience with a view to speeding up the implementation of all activities. In that respect, she called upon UNDP to inform the Council of the results of the study of some country programmes from the standpoint of the participation of women in development, to which reference had been made in paragraph 41 of the Administrator's report.

79. She found it reassuring that the Director of the Division was a member of the Action Committee and, as such, could influence the decision-making process. However, all UNDP staff, whether at headquarters or in the field, still had a responsibility to apply the policies and strategies relating to the role of women in development. That raised the question of staff training since, unless each staff member knew how the question of the role of women in



development fitted into his own sphere of action, the strategies and policies that were being pursued would produce only very meagre results. In that respect, she hoped that the report submitted in 1989 would specify the number of persons who had actually attended staff training courses and provide additional information on the self-administered training package referred to in paragraph 53.

80. The Nordic countries were greatly concerned at the manner in which the role of women in the formal and informal economic sectors was being dealt with in macro-economic planning, national development strategies and structural adjustment policies. It should not be forgotten that small-scale enterprises managed by women were often economically important and, in agricultural societies, the role of women as producers frequently constituted a nationally significant contribution. Accordingly, UNDP studies on structural adjustment policies should take those factors into account. She also expressed the hope that, in 1989, UNDP would be able to inform the Governing Council of its input to the medium-term plan for women and development for the period 1990-1995. Finally, she stressed the importance of harmonious and effective co-operation between the Division and UNIFEM.

81. Mr. ALOM (Observer for Bangladesh) welcomed the excellent results obtained by the Division for Women in Development and also the speed with which UNDP intended to carry out its task in that field, taking national priorities into account. The female labour force participation rate remained very low due to the level of global economic development and the lack of clearly defined policies. By virtue of the global nature of its mandate and its priorities, UNDP should play a major role in rectifying that situation and special funds should be allocated to activities relating to the participation of women in development.

82. He recalled that, in resolution 42/178, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to prepare biennially an update of mandates governing the integration of women in economic development adopted by the General Assembly, a list of the titles of all subprogrammes and programme elements relating to that question and a compilation of decisions taken by United Nations intergovernmental bodies. He felt that it was very important to have such information in order to ensure that the activities of the United Nations system in that field were complementary.

83. Mr. PARK (Republic of Korea) recognized the importance of taking the role of women in development into consideration in the early stages of the formulation of UNDP country programmes. He also felt that there was a need to take that factor into account when assessing the results achieved in assistance projects. He expressed the hope that UNDP would be able to recruit a larger number of qualified women from the developing countries, in order to encourage the participation of women in national development, and that it would assign more female experts to country and intercountry programmes.

84. Mrs. SENECA (Canada) welcomed the evident progress that had been made since the previous year in regard to the definition and implementation of a policy, methodologies and positive steps to ensure that the role of women in the development process was taken into account in programmes and projects. The active participation of the Division for Women in Development on the Action Committee proved that, far from confining itself to a definition of activities to benefit women, UNDP intended to apply a real policy. She wished

to know the results of the study referred to in paragraph 41 of the report, which should lead to an analytical framework for projects from the standpoint of the participation of women in development. She felt that, for the purposes of that analysis, account should be taken of the fact that women had a clearly defined socio-cultural status in the communities for which most of the implemented projects were intended.

85. Moreover, the dialogue with Governments should be intensified, since it was essential that they should understand the importance of the integration of women and endeavour to take that into consideration when formulating country programmes, particularly when UNDP did not intervene within the context of structural adjustments. In that regard, consideration should be given not only to the impact of those adjustments on the material situation of women, but also to their contribution to economic development.

86. In view of the essential role that they were called upon to play in the application of policies, she wished to know whether the resident representatives would be participating in the UNDP staff training programme and requested details concerning their functional relationships with the instructors assigned to the field offices.

87. Her delegation believed that the Division for Women in Development should initially focus its activities on the improvement of UNDP programmes and projects, although that should not prevent it from collaborating with other international organizations with a view to co-ordination and an exchange of information. She wished to know what role UNDP intended to assign to the Division in the light of the recommendations of the inter-agency meeting on women that had recently been held at Vienna.

88. Mr. AGUARONE (Netherlands) said that it was still too early to be able to assess the activities of the Division for Women in Development, although he encouraged it to continue the positive endeavours that it had undertaken. However, he noted that, in the field offices, the functions of instructor were still being entrusted too frequently to junior professional officers, as a result of which he feared that the efforts to promote the role of women in development were not as vigorous as they should be.

89. Mr. MATSVAYI (Zimbabwe) commended the endeavours that had been made to ensure that women played their due role in development activities and he welcomed the universal recognition that had at last been given to the importance of their role in that field. However, he felt that development programmes and, consequently, assistance projects should focus not only on women but also on the association of men and women in a joint effort, since that was a prerequisite for their success, as proved by the fact that the family planning campaign conducted in Zimbabwe and which had initially focused exclusively on women had produced good results only when men had been included in the target group. Full consideration should also be given to the socio-cultural values of communities and the entire population should be involved in decisions concerning the activities to be undertaken in order to ensure their viability. The Administrator's report (DP/1988/15, para. 44) seemed to recognize those principles, although it placed great emphasis on the importance to be attached to questions of concern to women in the formulation

and approval of country programmes. UNDP should not forget that the responsibility for the establishment of national development objectives lay with Governments and it would be inadmissible to refuse them assistance if they decided not to grant priority to activities designed to benefit women. He supported the view expressed by the representative of China, who had affirmed that the element relating to the participation of women could not carry the same weight in all projects.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

