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SUPPORT

PROGRAMME PLANNING

COUNTRY, INTERCOUNTRY AND REGIONAL PROGRAMMES

IMPLEMENTATION OF SELECTED COUNTRY PROGRAMMES

Arab States and Europe region, 1989

Report of the Administrator

SUMMARY

The present report, prepared in accordance with Governing Council decision 81/15 of 27 June 1981, highlights significant developments in programme implementation in the Regional Bureau for Arab States and Europe (RBASE) during 1989.

Information is presented regarding major developments and the status of the programme in 1989; the nature of the programme with breakdown by sector and spending types; the mid-term reviews of country programmes and regional programmes; reviews of selected projects; and special themes in the programme of technical co-operation (the environment, women in development, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the private sector).

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The year 1989 was one in which dramatic developments in Eastern Europe, emergency situations in some countries within the Arab region, and increasing heed to the environment drew the particular attention of the Regional Bureau for Arab States and Europe (RBASE).
2. Of the 30 countries covered by RBASE, 6 are in Eastern Europe. The unprecedented social and political changes affecting most of these countries in 1989 had reached a crescendo by the end of the year, leading RBASE to develop a strategy for future action by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the area. This strategy is based on the mobilization of new additional resources in Eastern Europe, without diversion of resources intended for use in other countries or regions. It contemplates the development, in consultation with the new Governments which have recently come to power, of technical co-operation proposals concerned with human resource development and institution-building in areas critical to the transition from centrally planned to open market economies. In pursuing this strategy, UNDP offers the comparative advantage of its long record of relations with the Eastern European countries involving networking structures already in place, as well as its traditional political neutrality and central funding role.
3. The increasing concern of the Bureau for environmental issues was evidenced in March 1989 by the organization in Malta of the first UNDP regional workshop on the environment conducted exclusively for resident representatives. It was designed to heighten their awareness of environmental issues in the formulation and conduct of the programmes in their host countries. One result was the issuance of the "Malta Declaration on the Environment and Sustainable Development", which stressed the need to consider qualitative as well as quantitative aspects of development, and spelled out the elements which need to be considered in formulating and pursuing development strategies that safeguard the environment. The initiative of RBASE in organizing this workshop, which was but one part of a series of national workshops and other activities, was indicative of its strong leadership and concern in this area. Other aspects of RBASE activities relating to the environment are discussed in section VII of this report.
4. The gathering of all the resident representatives from the region in Malta also presented the opportunity for the discussion of important policy and operational matters, as well as for a management training workshop conducted by the Division of Personnel of UNDP. This was one of the first in a series of systematic management training exercises for resident representatives initiated by the Administrator throughout UNDP. As such, it was welcomed by RBASE, which was already in the forefront of efforts to introduce improved personnel management techniques in the organization.
5. Operating conditions in certain parts of the region have presented special challenges to UNDP during 1989, and pride can be taken in the effective role played by our resident representatives and field office staffs in assisting the Sudan and Somalia in coping with emergency situations in those countries. The readiness of

UNDP to take an active and sometimes crucial role in times of difficulty was also evident in its rapid response to the urgent appeal for help with a sudden, unprecedented outbreak of a livestock parasite infestation in North Africa which held the potential for widespread ecological catastrophe over large parts of the African continent.

II. GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE REGION

6. In the current programme cycle, 1989 represented a middle year. It is natural, therefore, that the focus in RBASE shifted in the course of the year away from the start-up of programmes and projects towards the delivery, monitoring and review of technical co-operation activities, especially by means of the new procedures for the mid-term review of country programmes.

7. There was substantial improvement in delivery in RBASE in 1989, with a rise in indicative planning figure (IPF) expenditures estimated at 21 per cent, compared to 1988. Approval of RBASE projects by the Action Committee rose to a value of over \$77 million in 1989, an increase of 27.5 per cent over 1988.

8. This growth in approvals was accompanied by a trend towards an increase in the size of individual projects in the region, as demonstrated by the fact that the average budget for projects submitted to the Action Committee by RBASE rose from approximately \$1.124 million in 1988 to \$1.612 million in 1989.

9. The countries of the region benefited from the across-the-board increases in IPFs in 1989, with the result that the total resources available for programming in the fourth cycle in RBASE rose from \$337 million to \$349 million. The level of commitments against the IPF at the end of 1989 stood at \$328.5, or 94 per cent of available resources for the cycle. Of this, \$108.7 million represented actual expenditures for 1987 and 1988 - \$44.2 million and \$64.5 million, respectively. The balance of \$219.8 represented commitments signed for the balance of the cycle.

10. Without doubt the delivery rate for the region as a whole continued to be dampened in 1989 by the special situations in Lebanon and the Sudan. A reversal in the circumstances that prevailed last year in Lebanon slowed progress in the revitalization of that country programme. In the Sudan, emergency conditions prevailed throughout 1989, slowing the launching of a number of large projects. On the other hand, the latter half of the year saw the approval of some \$10.5 million in new budgets for projects critical to the launching of the integrated area development strategy which is the central feature of the Sudan country programme approved by the Governing Council on 1 July 1988 (decision 88/33). A higher and more satisfactory overall delivery rate for the region can therefore be anticipated for 1990 and onward.

11. The improved delivery in the region in 1989 was accompanied by increased integration between the leadership provided by resident representatives in the field and the support provided to them by headquarters. The frank and constructive discussions which characterized the internal operational meeting between the resident representatives and the senior management of the Bureau in Malta proved to be an important milestone in the development of this spirit of co-operation.

12. The Malta discussions also reinforced the initiative launched by RBASE in 1988 of encouraging the formation of subregional groupings among its resident representatives. These groupings correspond to the subregional ties and interests of the countries themselves, as exemplified by the grouping of North African countries referred to as the Maghreb. The periodic meetings of the resident representatives from these groupings have proved helpful on many fronts, not the least of which is the improved linkage between the activities sponsored by the regional programmes for the Arab States and for Europe and the activities sponsored by national IPFs. They have also offered RBASE a mechanism through which its activities can be more finely tuned to the disparate needs of countries in a region characterized by great diversity.

13. Further features of RBASE operations in 1989 were the increased integration of regional institutions in UNDP activities, increased reliance on national capacities in project implementation, and heightened dialogue on important development issues.

14. An example of the first feature was the arrangement with the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD) for the joint financing of regional and country projects. This resulted in 1989 in the launching of a jointly financed regional project to develop Arab centres for computer software development, another regional project to increase barley productivity in the Arab countries of the eastern Mediterranean littoral, and a jointly financed national water resource project in Jordan.

15. National implementation of UNDP projects in turn was increasingly important in such countries as Egypt and Tunisia, with Jordan and Morocco following close behind.

16. Many countries of the region likewise turned to UNDP in 1989 for active dialogue on important development issues, in the context of the mid-term country programme review exercises and through the use of the Management Development Programme (MDP) of UNDP for consideration of needed reforms in the management of the public sector. Mention should also be made of the meeting organized by RBASE of the Ministers of Planning from eight Arab African countries in Tunis in May 1989 for the review of progress on the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 (PAAERD). This meeting laid the basis for an improved permanent dialogue between the ministers and UNDP, and provided guidance to the Bureau on the future role of UNDP in assisting the Arab countries on the African continent.

17. The year 1989 saw no major trends away from previous patterns in the distribution of resources by sector within the region. While the concern throughout the developing world with issues related to structural adjustment and debt management was reflected in RBASE by a rise in the percentage of resources allocated to general development issues, policy and planning from 14.2 per cent in 1988 to 18 per cent in 1989, the allocation to other major sectors remained within normal ranges of variation in 1989 in comparison to the previous two years. The breakdown by percentage among the most important additional sectors in 1989 was as follows: agriculture, fisheries and forestry, 18.4 per cent; industry, 13.7 per cent; natural resources (including water), 11.7 per cent; transport and communications, 10.7 per cent; and science and technology, 10.1 per cent.

18. An analysis of the allocation of resources within the region by project budget component, however, does indicate some trends developing regarding the use of UNDP resources for personnel, training and equipment. As will be seen from the table below, a longer-term downward trend in the allocations for project personnel in the region remained intact in 1989, with that component accounting for less than 45 per cent of project budgets compared to over 55 per cent in 1987. This trend is consistent with the decline in the use of long-term experts in UNDP projects elsewhere, and in turn reflects the growing sophistication in the needs of many of the middle-income and other countries of the region. The parallel rise in the allocations for equipment, from 19.1 per cent in 1987 to 25 per cent in 1989, is likewise a reflection of the growing sophistication of needs in the region, while remaining well within reasonable norms. The modest upturn in allocations for training, from 12.3 per cent in 1987 to 15.6 per cent in 1989, is a natural corollary to the downturn in long-term experts, and as such is also consistent with the broader trends for the organization as a whole.

Table

Percentage of RBASE expenditures/budgets* by major component,
1987, 1988 and 1989 (IPF and cost-sharing)

Component	1987	1988	1989
	(Percentage)		
Personnel	55.5	47.8	44.7
Subcontracts	9.3	7.1	10.5
Training	12.3	12.9	15.6
Equipment	19.1	29.1	25.
Miscellaneous	3.5	3.1	4.
Other	<u>.3</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>.2</u>
TOTAL	100	100	100
Cost-sharing as share of total	30.8	20.4	23.6

* Based on expenditure figures for 1987 and 1988, and on budget figures for 1989; data as of 17 January 1990.

III. REVIEW OF COUNTRY PROGRAMMES

19. As the third year in the programme cycle, 1989 saw the first round of mid-term country programme reviews undertaken in accordance with the new procedures introduced by UNDP in response to the request of the Governing Council at its thirty-fifth session (decision 88/17 of 1 July 1988). A number of reports on the mid-term reviews of specific country programmes, as well as other papers on the mid-term review process, have been submitted to the Council. In the case of RBASE, summary reports on the mid-term reviews in Saudi Arabia (DP/1989/73/Add.8) and Algeria (DP/1990/12/Add.1), as well as on the review of the Regional Programme for Europe (DP/1990/12/Add.7), have thus far been submitted. The summary report on the mid-term review for Egypt will be submitted to the Council at its thirty-seventh session (DP/1990/38/Add.4). In addition, through December 1989, copies of the full reports for the mid-term reviews in the following countries from the region were made available to members of the Council through the Division of External Relations of UNDP: Albania, Algeria, Bulgaria, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Hungary, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia. The report of the review of the Regional Programme for Europe was likewise made available. Reports on the reviews for the remaining countries from the region will be made available to the Council as the reviews are conducted and the reports reach headquarters in the course of 1990.

20. Although 22 out of the 30 countries covered by RBASE have IPFs below \$10 million, it has been the policy of the Bureau that mid-term reviews nevertheless be undertaken of these programmes, even though such reviews are not strictly required. It has also been the policy of the Bureau that the reviews be conducted to the extent possible by the Governments themselves, with the support of UNDP. This has in fact been the practice, with the result that the requirements of the guidelines regarding the format of the reviews and the resulting reports have in some cases been modified to models deemed appropriate to local circumstances by the Governments concerned. It soon became apparent, for instance, that the application of the full requirements for such reviews and their reports could not reasonably be expected of those Governments whose cost-sharing contributions were larger than their IPFs, or where there were no resident representatives.

21. Analysis of the reports of the mid-term reviews thus far conducted in RBASE indicates that the results were consistent with conclusions drawn about the reviews for UNDP as a whole. While in no case did the reviews of any of the country programmes in the region result in changes in the course of a programme of sufficient magnitude to merit resubmitting it to the Governing Council, they have facilitated various changes in emphasis within country programmes where necessary and appropriate. For instance, the review in Algeria provided the opportunity for the Government to emphasize certain thematic concerns relating to economic reforms introduced after the approval of the country programme, which it wished to have taken into account in the further formulation of projects with the remaining resources of the country programme. Likewise the review in Bulgaria allowed the Government to direct the limited remaining resources of its country programme towards environmental concerns which had not been given as high a priority previously. At the regional programme level, the review of the Regional Programme for Europe similarly resulted in increased emphasis on energy and environmental concerns, while remaining within the overall priorities established at the outset for the programme.

22. The reviews in the region also by and large reflected a reconfirmation of the value of the country programme as an effective technical assistance and pre-investment instrument to support the development efforts of the host countries. It remained, however, an instrument which in most countries fell short of its potential as a meaningful framework for mobilizing non-IPF resources from within or outside of the United Nations system.

23. The reviews which have thus far taken place in the region did not reveal any striking instance of the realignment of a country programme as a result of an intervening structural adjustment programme or other major macro-economic management framework put into place since the country programme was approved. This was not surprising, given the relative lack of such programmes among the countries of the region thus far reviewed, and the fact that the reviews in the Eastern European countries preceded the recent political and economic changes in that area.

24. Several of the reviews resulted in agreement on follow-up actions. For example, in Djibouti it was agreed to pursue a review of macro-economic issues and the need to strengthen the Government's administrative capacities through the Management Development Programme of UNDP, subject to the continued funding of that programme. In Democratic Yemen, a more systematic periodic review of the status of the country programme and issues regarding its implementation was established between the Government and the UNDP office. The review in Tunisia resulted in agreement to conduct a prospective study of the profile of Tunisia's technical assistance and pre-investment needs, as well as in-depth evaluations of the country programme and the experience with and prospects for national execution in the country. In turn, the review of the Regional Programme for Europe recommended that networking be generalized as the modality for implementing the programme, as it was believed to be a more effective and less costly way of mobilizing national capacities within self-sustaining regional structures.

25. Another follow-up action was the development by the Bureau, based on the experience gained with the mid-term reviews, of a framework for use by resident representatives in developing the draft UNDP advisory notes for the fifth cycle country programme exercises.

26. Overall, the mid-term review process in RBASE in 1989, while time-consuming and a considerable additional burden for a Bureau with limited human resources covering a very diverse range of countries, was found to be a positive addition to the tools for the management of the country programmes. It has been a learning experience, and the quality of the review process can be expected to improve with time. As final responsibility for the reviews must continue to be primarily that of the Governments, it is important that the procedural and format requirements for the reviews remain sufficiently flexible to allow adaptation to local realities.

IV. REVIEW OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR ARAB STATES

27. As the current Regional Programme for Arab States was approved only at the thirty-fifth session of the Governing Council (decision 88/33 of 1 July 1988), 1989

represented the first full year of its implementation. Efforts have therefore been concentrated on the formulation and start-up of new projects, with strong emphasis on the use of UNDP resources to create networks for the transmission of technical know-how between centres of excellence in the Arab countries and between them and European institutions. Emphasis was also given to the integration of regional institutions into the activities of the Regional Programme. In addition to the co-financing of projects with AFESD discussed above (see para. 14), this took form in the use of such Arab intergovernmental organizations as the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, the Arab Monetary Fund, and the Inter-Arab Investment Guarantee Corporation for the execution of important new projects.

28. At the same time preparatory work began in 1989 for the formal mid-term review of the Regional Programme for Arab States planned for November 1990. In this context, thorough and regular consultations were carried out in 1989 with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), among other United Nations organizations. In addition, a sectoral study was undertaken in the field of trade, reflecting its growing importance for Arab countries as a possible priority for the regional programme. Likewise, as a follow-up to the recommendations of the regional environmental workshop in Malta, an evaluation of the projects in the Regional Programme relating to the environment was also carried out during 1989, the results of which will be an important input for the mid-term review.

V. REVIEW OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR EUROPE

29. The Regional Programme for Europe was approved by the Governing Council on 20 February 1987 (decision 87/4). Thus 1989 represented its second full year of operation, and it was, in accordance with UNDP procedures, submitted to a formal mid-term review.

30. This review took place in Geneva in two stages: first, five sectoral task forces met in March 1989 to review all the projects in the programme. Their findings and recommendations then became important inputs to an intergovernmental consultative meeting held in July, attended by representatives of all 10 European IPF countries as well as by representatives of several non-IPF European countries, executing agencies and other international organizations.

31. The review found that implementation of the programme and its constituent projects was proceeding satisfactorily. The areas of environment, energy, and management advice and training were found to continue to be of high priority for the programme, with the participating countries urging the further concentration of the remaining resources in these areas. Another major finding of the review was that networking as a method for project implementation contributed significantly to building collective self-reliance at the regional level. The review therefore recommended an evaluation of networking as a means of promoting a principal role for the participating countries in implementing regional projects.

VI. REVIEW OF SELECTED COUNTRY AND REGIONAL PROJECTS

32. In 1989, 15 projects were the subject of in-depth external evaluations, and 187 tripartite reviews took place in RBASE. A brief account is provided below of country projects representative of major themes of RBASE assistance in its different subregions: post-harvest losses in least developed countries (LDCs); employment generation in middle-income countries; and technology in countries of Eastern Europe.

Establishment of a Post-Harvest Centre (PDY/86/003)

33. Agricultural production plays an important role in the economy of Democratic Yemen, employing nearly 40 per cent of the population. Perhaps even more so than the other LDCs of the region, Democratic Yemen faces a myriad of constraints to increased agricultural production, most notably its mountainous terrain, cyclical flooding followed by drought, and very limited areas of good soil. As only large-scale capital-intensive investment could increase the country's acreage of arable land, the Government has decided to increase agricultural output through a strategy of improved distribution, handling and storage of agricultural products.

34. During 1981-1986, losses of domestically produced and imported foods were estimated to be as high as 20 per cent for grains and 30 per cent for fruits and vegetables per year. In order to minimize such losses, UNDP is providing \$712,000 in technical assistance as a complement to a \$635,000 capital assistance grant provided by the Arab Gulf Programme for the United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND) for the construction of a centre for the reduction of post-harvest losses. With the assistance of the project, which is executed by FAO, technical advice provided by the Centre over the past three years has helped reduce fruit and vegetable losses by almost 23 per cent, while virtually eliminating large-scale losses in grains. The project is noteworthy for its effective transfer of management responsibility to national staff.

35. Although the project was found to be well designed, an external evaluation and tripartite review conducted at the end of 1989 found that the budget had to be increased by 67 per cent from its initial allocation, indicating that greater attention must be paid at the formulation stage of projects to ensuring that the inputs are commensurate with the intended outputs and objectives, and that they are realistically costed.

Employment Promotion and Labour Force Policy (JOR/86/005)

36. Since 1982, the economic slow-down in the neighbouring oil-producing countries has led to substantial weakening in domestic and external demand for Jordanian skills and labour. At the same time, the increase in the Jordanian labour force has continued unabated as a result of high population growth rates and increased enrolment, particularly of women, in the formal sector. Hence, the manpower problem in Jordan is rapidly shifting from one of selective shortages that triggered a substantial inflow of non-Jordanian labour in the past to one of generating employment for a rapidly increasing work force, and particularly youth and the relatively uneducated poor.

37. To plan and implement comprehensive policies and programmes for the development and utilization of human resources, Jordan has established a Department of Employment and Human Resources Planning within the Ministry of Planning. A UNDP-funded project launched in 1988 is assisting the Department to develop and strengthen its capacities in critical areas, such as labour market data compilation and analysis, human resources development and employment promotion.

38. The project has already contributed to improving the coverage, regularity and availability of information on the labour force and employment opportunities. It is also helping to improve co-ordination between the administrative and substantive institutions concerned and to mobilize national capacities and expertise in the areas of data processing and policy-making. However, this project constitutes but one step in the overall process of national capacity-building. Accordingly, in the light of the country's current development trends, and taking into account the experience gained through the implementation of this project, it is expected that human resources development and employment promotion will constitute a major area of concentration in the next country programme for Jordan.

Industrial Energy Conservation Network (RER/83/003)

39. Increasing the conservation of energy is a major concern for both economic and environmental reasons for virtually all the countries of Europe. Through a network of regional institutions, each working on different aspects of energy conservation techniques, this UNDP-sponsored regional project has made an important contribution towards energy conservation in industry among the European IPF countries. In addition to helping to organize energy audit capacities in participating countries, the project also addresses environmental concerns and issues of waste and material recovery. The project is a good example of networking and receives a major contribution from a non-IPF country, Czechoslovakia, which provides the network lead centre.

40. The important energy savings which have resulted in European IPF countries have stimulated expressions of interest by Arab countries to participate in some of the project's activities, leading to a special Euro-Arab seminar being organized in 1990.

VII. SPECIAL THEMES IN THE PROGRAMME OF THE REGIONAL BUREAU FOR ARAB STATES AND EUROPE (RBASE)

Environment

41. Concern with the environment rapidly became the top thematic priority for RBASE in 1989 and will remain so into 1990. In addition to the workshop on the environment organized by RBASE in Malta discussed above (see para. 3), national environment workshops were held in 10 countries of the region in 1989, a number of which resulted in specific environmental action plans.

42. In Democratic Yemen the UNDP-sponsored workshop led to the revitalization of the National Council for Environment Protection, while in Tunisia the workshop

facilitated a number of follow-up initiatives culminating in UNDP being requested to co-sponsor a donor round table on the environment in the second half of 1990.

43. RBASE also sponsored a Euro-Arab workshop in Yugoslavia on the use of solar energy, resulting in the establishment of a network for exchange of information on photovoltaics. A number of other meetings have also been sponsored through RBASE projects on a variety of environmental topics, including the impact and control of toxic chemicals, protection of water resources, gas and fuel treatment for stationary emission sources in Europe, and seminars on biogas, renewable energy, and water resource management in the Arab States.

44. On the regional programme level, 30 per cent of all Arab regional projects and 40 per cent of European regional projects directly addressed environmental concerns in 1989. This emphasis will increase in 1990 as the Regional Programme for Arab States, in co-operation with the World Bank, the European Investment Bank and the European Economic Community (EEC), steps up its financing of the Mediterranean Environmental Technical Assistance Programme (METAP). This project will increase in a practical and meaningful way Euro-Arab linkages by assisting countries of the Mediterranean basin to accelerate the pace and deepen the impact of their environmental activities in such priority areas as water resource management, marine pollution, coastal zone management, and solid and hazardous waste management. This momentum will further increase in 1990 with the holding of an expert group meeting on the environment by RBASE, which will help to determine the priorities of the region both as a direct input into the mid-term review of the Regional Programme for Arab States and as a guide for future environmental programming initiatives in the next cycle.

45. In order to assist both country and regional programmes better to integrate the environment into ongoing activities and the preparations for the fifth cycle, RBASE took steps in 1989 to establish an environment projects data base of all ongoing and pipeline projects, as well as an environmental consultants' data base. Once finalized in mid-1990, the two data bases will assist programme preparations for the next cycle through information sharing on environment projects and consultants within the region.

Women in Development (WID)

46. As early as May 1989, UNDP/RBASE responded to the important economic and political changes which were beginning to develop in Eastern Europe by sponsoring a women in development seminar in Warsaw, hosted by the Government of Poland and co-sponsored by the Division for the Advancement of Women, United Nations Office at Vienna. Stemming from UNDP's commitment to networking within and across regions, participants came from Western Europe and the Arab region to share the debate with women from Eastern Europe about the impact of political and economic changes on women's work and family commitments.

47. Based on the recommendations of the RBASE Expert Group on Women in Development in the Arab Region which met in 1988, arrangements were made for a regional conference on Arab women's socio-economic roles, scheduled to be held in May 1990. Further to the expert group meeting, RBASE examined, with the United Nations

Population Fund (UNFPA) and AGFUND, the prospects for establishing a Research and Training Centre for Women, the Family and Development, which would be the first of its kind in the region. The three agencies and the International Planned Parenthood Foundation (IPPF) have now committed funds in principle to the project and hope in 1990 to locate a suitable site and director. Through such a centre RBASE would concentrate its energies and funds on developing a network of women's and family institutions and groups in individual countries, as well as on training women in business skills. To further women's economic opportunities, RBASE collaborated with the World Bank in a study on enhancing female employment in five Arab countries and Turkey.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

48. In October 1989, RBASE co-sponsored with AGFUND, UNFPA and IPPF the first pan-Arab conference on NGOs. Some 350 people - many of them women - working in self-help and development organizations gathered in Cairo to discuss obstacles to the growth of the voluntary sector. Topics included the history of NGOs in four Arab subregions, the financing and formulation of development projects, experiences of NGOs in emergency situations, and lessons from the experience of NGOs in Africa, Asia and North America. The conference also reviewed favourably and recommended the establishment of a permanent network to link the NGOs active in development in the Arab region.

Role of the private sector in development

49. While workshops and other activities to promote dialogue between the public and private sectors continued to be organized by field offices in the region at the country level, a significant intercountry initiative was likewise launched in the region in 1989, culminating in the organization by RBASE of a workshop on "Enhancement of the Role of the Private Sector in Development" in Amman, Jordan, in September 1989. The workshop was preceded by considerable preparations, with UNDP consultants visiting the six participating countries (Cyprus, Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, Turkey and Yemen) well in advance, and preparing for each of them a country-specific paper highlighting the issues critical to enhancing the role of the private sector in that country. The workshop was attended by over 40 representatives of the business and finance communities, and the Governments, of each of the countries, as well as by the UNDP resident representatives and consultants. It proved to be a highly appreciated forum for the cross-fertilization of experience among countries on enhancing the role of the private sector in development. A second such workshop is accordingly planned to take place in Hungary in July 1990.
