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COUNTRY AND INTERCOUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

Consideration and approval of country programmes

THIRD COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR ARGENTINA

Note by the Administrator

Programme period

1982-1986

Illustrative IPF for 1982-1986

\$20 million

I. Nature of the programming exercise

1. The third country programme for Argentina was prepared by the Department of Planning of the Office of the President, in its capacity as the national liaison agency for international technical co-operation. The Department was assisted and advised by the office of the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Argentina, after the programming process had been formally started with the submission by UNDP of the note by the Resident Representative in May 1981. The note contained an analysis of the previous country programme and details of the national programmes. It also contained a series of observations on the resources and objectives of the third programme and the design of its constituent projects.

1/ The notes by the Administrator concerning previous country programmes for Argentina were issued under document symbols DP/GC/ARG/R.1/RECOMMENDATION and DP/GC/ARG/R.2/RECOMMENDATION.

2. The Government had responsibility for identifying technical assistance needs at the national level from contacts with various sectors. Such contacts were established through a document prepared by the Department, which was circulated in November 1980 to all official national and provincial bodies. The document, which had several sections, basically detailed the general and specific criteria which the Government would take into account in selecting projects for the third country programme (1982-1986).

3. The general criteria were: (a) acquisition of knowledge and technology not available within the country in order to promote the training of nationals; (b) execution of activities which will make a real impact on the economy and national welfare in both the public and private sectors; (c) extension of the impact of international technical co-operation to the provincial and regional levels; and (d) due care in the traditional allocation of resources to various sectors.

4. The specific criteria for the formulation and implementation of projects were: (a) that objectives and proposed undertakings should be relevant to national development objectives; (b) that bodies submitting applications should possess the necessary physical infrastructure and national staff to benefit fully from the project and technology employed; and (c) in the case of new phases of projects already included under previous cycles, that clearly identifiable objectives and activities aimed at achieving results of relevance to national objectives should be specified.

5. In accordance with these criteria, the Government selected priority areas, concentrating UNDP assistance in those sectors where it was expected to have a catalytic effect and offer advantages compared to inputs from other sources.

6. The draft of the document agreed on was submitted in October 1981 and transmitted to UNDP headquarters and other organs of the United Nations system. The comments received were transmitted to the Government, the final version being produced in December 1981.

II. Relationship of the country programme to national development objectives

7. Although Argentina has no national development plan, economic policy guidelines apply to all production sectors, with particular emphasis on the agricultural sector in order to promote relatively less developed areas and expand the limits of the sector. Emphasis is placed in the industrial sector on research and the development of new technologies and the use of technologies suited to the country's needs. In the field of natural resources, emphasis is placed, with regard to energy, on promoting the development and exploitation of renewable energy sources and on the surveying and exploitation of hydrocarbons. In the mining sector, the goal is a realistic policy reflecting existing levels of resources so as to increase the output of strategic and essential minerals. Finally, the objective with regard to water resources is to carry out activities which will permit more effective and more rapid use of water and soil resources, while in the services sector attempts are being made to establish an extensive transport and communications infrastructure to promote territorial unity.

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8. Within this general framework, the Argentine Government has adopted the same objectives as it did in the previous programme and has decided to concentrate UNDP assistance in the following areas:

- (a) Increasing the country's technological development capacity;
- (b) Improving transport and communications services;
- (c) Achieving self-sufficiency of national institutions supporting the production sector;
- (d) Improving and planning human resources; and
- (e) Increasing production and improving living conditions in relatively less developed areas.

9. Because of the greater degree of development attained by Argentina and its organs, the assistance requested in this programme is at the highest technological level. For the same reason, the design of the projects does not follow the classic model but reflects to a great extent the objectives established in the programme of new dimensions for technical co-operation.

III. Programme content

10. In order to introduce greater flexibility in the third country programme and to ensure that the assistance provided takes account of progress made by Argentina, the Government has adopted the principle of continuous programming. Thus a multiyear programme has been formulated embracing objectives and activities without committing all the funds available under the illustrative indicative planning figure (IPF) to specific projects.

11. Since the demand for assistance far exceeded the funds available, resources have been allocated on rational and reasonable principles, avoiding dispersion of activities and the spreading of resources too thinly. This allocation has been determined taking into account complementary financing from all sources (IPF, national budget, bilateral aid, etc.) within the framework of the country's national development priorities and the importance attached by the Government to increasing the national capability to adopt, purchase and transfer technology.

12. To this end, the first objective is to develop the application of techniques and new processes in agricultural and industrial production and nuclear development, and in the water resources data processing sector.

13. The second objective is concerned with the implementation of projects designed to increase the effectiveness of the air and river transport systems, expanding the institutions' operational capacity through the training of personnel. It is also hoped to improve the quality of the communications network by introducing advanced message transmission technologies.

14. The third objective concerns assistance to the Government in matching research and development activities with the demands of industry. To this end, particular attention is devoted to strengthening advisory centres for small and medium-sized firms and to the need for continuous updating of technological know-how in the iron and steel industry.

15. The fourth objective consists of activities to plan human resources so as to ensure a high level of employment and productivity and to train high-level professionals. It is also hoped to train people in an interdisciplinary approach to planning and development problems who would be able to devise, adopt, improve and transmit technology for the agricultural and industrial sectors.

16. The last objective concentrates on more effective exploitation of mineral, water and soil resources, taking into account the expansion of the limits of the agricultural sector and regional development.

17. The sectoral allocation of resources is shown in the country programme document.
