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COUNTRY AND INTERCOUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

Consideration and approval of country programmes

FOURTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR BURMA

Note by the Administrator

Programme period

1982-1985

Illustrative IPF for 1982-1985

\$ 81.60 million

I. Nature of the programming exercise

1. In 1980 the Government of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma agreed with UNDP to prepare the fourth country programme in conjunction with the Fourth Four-Year Plan (FFYP), which covers the period 1 April 1982 - 30 March 1986. Accordingly it was decided that the fourth country programme would cover the calendar years 1982-1985, implying an overlap in 1982 with the third country programme. In October 1980, the third country programme was reviewed and new projects were proposed for commencement in 1982 in order to make full use of increased funds available to Burma under the third programming cycle. The central Government body involved in the programming exercise, the Foreign Economic Relations Department (FERD) of the Planning and Finance Ministry subsequently invited the various sectoral ministries (and through them the departments and corporations) to submit new project proposals for UNDP

^{1/} The notes by the Administrator concerning the previous country programmes for Burma were issued under the document symbols DP/GC/BUR/R.1/RECOMMENDATION-DP/GC/BUR/R.3/RECOMMENDATION.

assistance. Based on these proposals, the country programme took shape in a series of discussions with FERD and UNDP as the direct partners, co-ordinating discussion between the Government and United Nations bodies, respectively.

2. As the Government considered that neither special sectoral studies nor agency programming missions were necessary for the exercise, UNDP was assisted by the United Nations system primarily through its representatives and other personnel in the country. Advisory services were also provided by visiting staff from ILO, UNESCO, ICAO, UNCTAD, and FAO and/or from regional offices of these organizations. UNICEF, which operates a large programme in Burma, was kept informed of the discussions and commented on the programme. The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank were regularly consulted on the entire programme and on individual projects as well. The draft country programme was circulated for comments to all United Nations agencies, the World Bank and AsDB in July 1981. In December of the same year, it was approved by the Cabinet for submission to the UNDP Governing Council.

II. Relation of the country programme to national development objectives

3. The basic policies reflected in both the FFYP and the fourth country programme are derived from Burma's 20-year, long-term plan (1973/74 - 1993/94), the principal objectives of which are as follows: (a) to raise the standard of living of all nationalities of Burma to double the level prevailing in 1973/74; and (b) to transfer the country's development orientation from that of a predominantly agriculture society into an agriculture-based, industrial economy.

4. The Government puts great emphasis on a continued increase of productivity in agriculture in the immediate future. The country has already achieved success in increasing the production of rice as a result of the large-scale introduction of high-yielding varieties and the timely provision of related inputs. The Government also gives high priority to broadening the production base in the primary producing sectors, especially the diversification of exports in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and mining. The personal well-being of the population is being improved by the extension and strengthening of primary health care services. Provision of safe drinking water and sanitation is also a priority, in accordance with the objectives of the International Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade. In education, the Government aspires to improve the quality of the educational system so that it meets the requirements of the country's development process.

5. There has been no attempt to distribute IPF funds over the entire range of FFYP priorities. UNDP inputs have been allocated to development activities on a selective basis to avoid scattering and undue dissipation of resources. At the Government's specific request, the programme is composed mostly of large-scale projects conceived to produce concrete results over the short to medium-term.

III. Content and phasing of the country programme

6. The sectoral breakdown of resources is shown in the financial summary of the country programme document.

7. In the agricultural sector, a considerable share has been allocated to research and training activities to improve agricultural technology for plant production and protection. A number of research and exploration projects have been included in support of expansion in the primary producing sectors of agriculture, forestry, livestock, fisheries and natural resources.

8. Furthermore, the programme is oriented towards projects leading to direct investment. Such projects are included under agriculture, transport and telecommunications, industry, science and technology, natural resources, tourism and trade. The multi-sectoral projects consist almost exclusively of pre-investment studies. A large part of these studies will be included in block allocations (also known as "Umbrella" projects). The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank will act as executing agencies for these projects. This approach has met with considerable success in the past.

9. A sizeable component of the programme is allocated for health projects, mainly for training and institution building based on the primary health care approach. A number of projects related to the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation are also included. Projects which aim at educational improvement and personnel development, particularly in the co-operative sector, are also envisaged.

10. The programme contains a list of reserve projects, which could not be accommodated because of scarcity of funds. It is intended to review the active projects periodically and replace them with reserve projects when appropriate.

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