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COUNTRY AND INTERCOUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

Consideration and approval of country programmes

THIRD COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR NIGER

Note by the Administrator

Programme period

1983-1986

Illustrative IPF for 1982-1986

\$45 million

I. Nature of the programming exercise

1. The third country programme for Niger for the 1982-1986 planning cycle coincides with the last two years of the Government's five-year Plan (1979-1983). Since the submission of the country programme has been deferred to February 1983, 1982 has been considered, at the request of the Government, as an extension of the second country programme. The third country programme thus covers the years 1983-1986.
2. The preparation of the third country programme began in January 1981 with a meeting of UNDP resident representatives serving in the Sahelian countries, which was held at Dakar and chaired by the Assistant Administrator and Director of the

* The notes by the Administrator concerning previous programmes for the Niger were issued as document DP/GC/NER/R.1/RECOMMENDATION and DP/GC/NER/R.2/RECOMMENDATION.

Regional Bureau for Africa; representatives of all organizations of the United Nations system participated in the meeting. Throughout 1981, various programming missions sent by the specialized agencies of the United Nations system at the Government's request evaluated priority sectors and made recommendations concerning activities to be undertaken during the third programming cycle. In 1982, the note by the resident representative in Niger outlined the guiding principles which had been followed in the programming exercise. An assessment of the experience gained by the Government and UNDP during the period 1977-1981 was annexed to that note.

3. The various evaluation missions worked closely with the technical ministries and the final selection of proposed programmes and projects was made at a meeting between the Minister of Planning, the Government official responsible for the programming of the UNDP illustrative indicative planning figure (IPF), and the resident representative.

II. Relation of the country programme to national development objectives

4. The Government's five-year plan (1979-1983) is the successor of the three-year programme (1976-1978) which served as the basis for the second country programme. Two projects under way during the second cycle (1977-1981), "Assistance in national planning" (NER/77/004), and "Assistance in regional development and planning" (phase II) (NER/75/007), had a major impact on the preparation of the five-year plan, which served as the basic document for the third country programme (1983-1986). Moreover, since the Government has decided to consider the period 1984-1985 as a time for review and stock-taking in preparation for the new five-year development plan, which will begin in 1986, the programme approved for UNDP financing in 1983-1986 is sufficiently flexible to allow for such adjustments as may become necessary during the three years of the third programming cycle to be made.

5. In January 1981, at the above-mentioned meeting of UNDP resident representatives serving in the Sahelian countries, five broad areas were selected for UNDP action in those countries. They are: food self-sufficiency, water development, physical planning of the Sahelian region, diversification of the Sahelian economies, and human resources development. As planned, UNDP assistance is directed towards sectors which the Government considers to be priorities within the five areas, taking into account assistance provided by other sources of financing, both bilateral and multilateral.

III. Content and phasing of the country programme

6. The programme proposed for UNDP financing includes a number of activities under way during the second programming cycle the continuation of which is sought so that they can be brought to a successful conclusion, projects launched in 1982 as part of the extension of the second programme and, lastly, projects which are to start only in 1983-1986.

7. Programmable resources in the amount of \$US 29,544,000 for 1983-1986 were obtained by subtracting from the illustrative IPF of \$45 million an amount of \$9 million (20 per cent) for the required reserve, \$6.3 million for the maximum authorized budget for the year 1982 and \$156,000 to cover borrowing during the second cycle. Of those resources, an unprogrammed reserve (12 per cent of available resources) was set aside to meet such special needs as may arise before the end of the programming cycle.
8. The breakdown of programmed resources by sector, according to the classification of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC), is as follows: agriculture, forestry and fisheries (40 per cent); natural resources (22 per cent); industry (12 per cent); human settlements (7 per cent); general development (6 per cent); employment (4.3 per cent); science and technology (3.2 per cent); education (2.5 per cent); transport and communications (2.5 per cent); international trade and development financing (0.5 per cent). Alternately, a breakdown by the broad programme areas selected at the Dakar meeting yields the following: food self-sufficiency (40 per cent); water development (17 per cent); physical planning of the Sahelian region (10 per cent); diversification of the Sahelian economies (23 per cent); human resources (4 per cent); development administration (6 per cent).
9. With regard to food self-sufficiency, UNDP assistance is channeled for the most part to projects aimed at building up support structures. Thus, assistance is planned for the Institut pratique de développement rural (IPDR), the development of the agricultural statistics unit, assistance in soil mapping, studies on supply networks and the management of agricultural credit, training in seed technology, research on irrigated rice-growing, assistance to the stock-raising school and laboratory, water projects on pasture lands and the development of fisheries.
10. In the context of the diversification of the Sahelian economies, UNDP action is focused on the development of industry, energy, air transport, trade, tourism and the hotel trade. In the industry sector, assistance will be provided to the Office for the Promotion of Niger Business Ventures (OPEN), and for brick making, the construction of a foundry and forge for production and demonstration purposes and the industrial development of metal ores. In the energy sector, UNDP assistance has been requested for two projects. One relates to industrial energy requirements and the other entails assistance to the Office of the High Commissioner for the Kandadji Dam. Because Niger is a land-locked country, special efforts are needed in the field of air transport, and limited assistance is proposed for the development of civil aviation in order to resolve a number of specific problems. Assistance in the trade sector is a continuation of assistance in the development of trade relations. UNDP will also provide assistance to semi-public companies and agencies in Niger and a project will provide assistance for the training of personnel for the hotel and tourism industries.
11. With regard to water development, two projects are proposed to assist the Ministry of Water Supply in water management and the utilization of ground water, and there is a project for the strengthening of agrometeorology services (AGRHYMET).
12. As regards physical planning of the Sahelian region, projects are planned involving wildlife preservation in the departments of Niamey and Dosso and assistance to the central habitat service in upgrading urban settlements.

13. With regard to human resources development, the activities planned relate basically to education and training. In the field of education, UNDP assistance will be provided for educational reform and the comprehensive introduction of curricula tailored to the country's needs. Another project will involve assistance in the implementation of a training programme to meet the Government's needs, with the training possibly being carried out within the framework of the regional projects of UNDP.

14. Lastly, in the field of development administration, action is focused on two projects. One, relating to planning, involves assistance in economic forecasting, programming and training. The other relates to the civil service and involves assistance in civil service regulations and personnel administration and training, and the revamping and reform of the civil service.

IV. Special development problems and needs

15. The Government's efforts to promote economic development depend greatly on earnings from the country's chief export, uranium. The decline in earnings and the rising prices of imported goods, in particular petroleum and capital goods, have resulted in higher production costs and an increase in the cost of carrying out the Government's priority projects.

16. Another obstacle is a shortage of personnel required for sustained assistance in the fields of training and education. Forty-four per cent of the population of Niger is under 15 years of age and nearly 56 per cent is under 20 years of age. As a result of runaway population growth, at a rate of 2.7 per cent, an additional 40,000 tons of cereals must be produced each year.

17. Niger, which is among the least developed countries, is also one of the land-locked countries of the Sahel. The Government has requested UNDP assistance for the organization of a pleaging conference in 1983 to raise the funds needed to finance the country's development programme.
