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S U P P O R T

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

Focal Point for Short-Term Advisory Services

Note by the Administrator

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to Governing Council decision 85/13 and informs the Council of the progress in the establishment of the Focal Point for Short-Term Advisory Services.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Governing Council, at its thirty-second session, authorized the Administrator in decision 85/13 to confer on a Focal Point within the headquarters of the United Nations Development Programme, for a trial period of 24 months, commencing on 1 July 1985, the task of enhancing the flow of skills to enterprises and institutions of developing countries as requested by them through their Governments, through short-term missions of highly qualified advisers drawn from sources in developed and developing countries that have been relatively untapped by multilateral technical co-operation. Such advisers are expected to perform precisely defined tasks which may include training. The Council requested the Administrator to provide at its thirty-third session a progress report on such short-term advisory services.

I. PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

2. The Administrator has assigned the responsibility for Short-Term Advisory Services (STAS) operations to the Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Special Activities. STAS has been set up to operate in a highly economic fashion, utilizing the resources of UNDP's field office network and the extensive skills banks of its co-operating organizations. Staffing for the programme comprises a senior consultant (part-time), an associate programme officer and a general service staff member. STAS is assisted at Geneva by a senior staff member from the Division of Global and Interregional Projects, who serves on a part-time basis without remuneration.

3. UNDP resident representatives work in concert with national focal points, specifically designated by Governments, to introduce the STAS concept to interested enterprises and institutions and to process STAS requests. Resident representatives assist in the preparation and processing of requests and will provide necessary backstopping for advisers, both prior to and during their assignments (i.e. obtaining clearances from the host Government, assisting with visas and other local arrangements).

4. STAS has, up to 28 February 1986, concluded arrangements with 13 co-operating organizations (i.e. federations of trade and industry, professional associations, non-governmental organizations, etc.) representing hundreds of small, medium and large enterprises and institutes. These co-operating organizations assist in the identification and recruitment of qualified advisers from their respective memberships, without charge to STAS.

5. The STAS focal point serves as a clearing-house matching requests from developing countries with qualified advisers from co-operating organizations. The focal point screens requests for conformity with the STAS mandate, clarity, task definition, assignment duration (maximum 12 weeks) and contribution to development. Requests meeting these criteria are forwarded to the co-operating organization(s) best situated to provide qualified candidates for the assignment. Curricula vitae of suitable nominees are transmitted to the requesting parties through the resident representatives. Responsibility

for working out assignment details (i.e. date of arrival, final terms of reference for the assignment) is thereafter left to the requesting party and the adviser.

6. In addition, the focal point is engaged in promoting the programme in the donor community and the developing countries. Missions are undertaken for this purpose, and a brochure has been prepared in English, French and Spanish for dissemination to Governments and interested private sector organizations.

7. As of 28 February 1986, requests for 23 posts had been received from four countries. For 4 of these posts, 7 nominations had been made which were under review in developing countries, and a search was under way for suitable candidates for the remaining 19 posts. The requests include such areas as computers, library science, hydroelectric engineering, environmental engineering, electronics, transportation, fish processing and fertilizers.

8. STAS is co-operating with the Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) programme in identifying ways in which these programmes can assist each other, given their similarities. Co-operation to date has focused on an exchange of mutually useful names and institutions and the development of computer software packages which will enable each to tap into the data banks of the other. STAS is also working closely with the similar Senior Technical Adviser Recruitment (STAR) programme which has been operating in China.

9. STAS participates in the reduced cost travel programme offered by the Intergovernmental Committee on Migration (ICM). STAS beneficiaries could realize savings of up to 50 per cent on advisers' normal air travel fares through this programme.

10. The Administrator will provide an oral report to the Council updating information given here, particularly that in paragraph 7.

II. FINANCIAL MATTERS

11. In accordance with Governing Council decision 85/13, paragraph 2(h), the administrative costs of STAS are met from the Special Programme Resources: \$112,500 for 1985 and \$225,000 for 1986 based on an annual rate of \$125,000 for salaries and \$100,000 for other expenses. Financing to cover expenses for the first half of 1987 will be sought from the fourth programming cycle Special Programme Resources and needs a further allocation by the Council at its current session. The future of STAS will depend upon the Council's decision at the end of the experimental period on 30 June 1987. For this purpose, the Administrator will submit a full report to the Council at its thirty-fourth session.

12. Expenditures recorded through 31 December 1985 totalled \$55,973. Of this amount, \$8,823 was utilized to meet administrative costs, including rent, furniture, equipment and promotional activities. The balance of \$47,150 was spent on salaries and travel.

III. CONCLUSIONS

13. The organizational arrangements for STAS operations are now in place. As the programme's potential becomes further known, the Administrator expects an increased number of requests from the developing countries. At the same time, it is expected that still more co-operating organizations will co-operate with STAS and that individual professionals might also come forward. The Administrator expects that by this time in 1987, STAS will be fully operational.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

14. The Council may wish to take note of the progress report presented by the Administrator concerning the Focal Point for Short-Term Advisory Services and approve financing of the administrative costs of the programme from 1 January to 30 June 1987 in the amount of \$112,500, i.e. at the same annual rate as approved for 1985 and 1986, on the understanding that any savings realized during the 24-month period will revert to the Special Programme Resources. The Council will await the Administrator's report to the Council at its thirty-fourth session in order to decide on the future of the programme.
