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PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNING COUNCIL  
AT PREVIOUS SESSIONS

Review of the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole

Report by the Administrator

SUMMARY

In accordance with a request of the Governing Council at its organizational meeting in February 1989, the Administrator has prepared this report to facilitate the Council's review of its decision 85/17 and part II of decision 87/20 on the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole.

## I. BACKGROUND

1. In part II of its decision 87/20 of 19 June 1987, the Governing Council decided to review the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole during its thirty-sixth session (1989).
2. In decision 89/3 of 24 February 1989, the Governing Council took note of the note by the secretariat contained in document DP/1989/3 on the timing and process for the review of the mandate of the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole. The Council, in that context, requested the Administrator to proceed with the preparatory arrangements for the review of the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole as outlined in the note, inviting him to submit a report to the Governing Council at its thirty-sixth session (1989) containing a factual record of the work of the Working Group under its current mandate, including information on the agenda, documentation, attendance and major follow-up carried out with respect to the sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth sessions of the Working Group. The Administrator, in the report, will also provide a general assessment of the work of the Working Group, but will not be called upon to present any proposals as to the future of the Working Group. The Council, in its decision, stated its understanding that the consultations mentioned in paragraph 8 of the document would be carried out by the President and the Bureau of the Governing Council, and that the Administrator would assist in the conduct of such consultations when required. The present report is prepared in accordance with that decision.
3. In its decision 1988/165 (f), the Economic and Social Council requested that the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme, when reviewing the functioning of the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole, take duly into account the comments made by Governments to the Special Commission of the Economic and Social Council on the In-Depth Study of the United Nations Intergovernmental Structure and Functions in the Economic and Social Fields, as reflected in the report of the Governing Council to the Special Commission. These comments are contained in paragraphs 17-27 in the annex to decision 87/50 of 19 June 1987 of the Governing Council.
4. The General Assembly, at its forty-third session, adopted decision 43/445 on the Committee of the Whole and its Working Group.
5. The current mandate of the Committee of the Whole is scheduled to be reviewed in 1990 in accordance with part I of Governing Council decision 87/20.

## II. LEGISLATION GOVERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE WORKING GROUP OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

6. The Working Group of the Committee of the Whole was established by Governing Council decision 85/17 of 29 June 1985, on an experimental basis and within existing resources. The Working Group was set up to facilitate and help expedite consideration of matters arising from the mandate of the Committee of the Whole,

particularly in respect of programming matters other than country and intercountry programmes.

7. Subsequently, in its decision 86/1 of 18 February 1986, the Governing Council decided on arrangements for the Working Group, including the allocation of its 26 seats to the regional groups. The Governing Council thereafter, in its decision 86/23 of 27 June 1986, decided to review at its thirty-fourth session (1987) the mandate of the Working Group and that of the Committee of the Whole.

8. Following the review, the Governing Council decided, in part II of its decision 87/20 of 19 June 1987, to continue, on an experimental basis, the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole with its current status and mandate, and to review its functioning in 1989 in the light of the outcome of the General Assembly review of the structure and the functioning of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations.

### III. MEMBERSHIP OF THE WORKING GROUP

9. By its decision 89/2 of 24 February 1989, the Governing Council elected the following countries members of the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole on the understanding that the actual tenure of the elected members will depend on the outcome of the review of the Working Group: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, China, Cuba, Ecuador, Fiji, Finland, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, India, Italy, Kenya, Liberia, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom, United States, Yugoslavia and Zaire.

### IV. THE FUNCTIONING OF THE WORKING GROUP

#### A. Agenda

10. Under its initial mandate, the Working Group held five sessions: on 24-25 February, 24-26 March and 15-17 September 1986 and on 11-13 February and 13-14 April 1987. The review of the functioning of the Working Group during that period took place on the basis of a note by the Administrator contained in document DP/1987/64, which was considered by the Governing Council during its thirty-fourth session (1987).

11. Since the review in 1987, the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole has held four sessions on the following dates: 14-16 September 1987, 22-24 February and 31 August-2 September 1988 and 14-17 February 1989. The following items were assigned to the Working Group for the four sessions:

14-16 September 1987:

- (a) Role of UNDP field offices in programme and project activities; presentation by Resident Representatives: co-operation with other United Nations agencies in the field;

(b) The role of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in the project cycle with specific reference to the report of the Governing Council regarding experience in project implementation.

22-24 February 1988:

- (a) Presentation of case studies;
- (b) The role of UNDP in the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development;
- (c) National Technical Co-operation Assessment and Programmes;
- (d) UNDP procedures, guidelines and plans for mid-term programme reviews.

1 August-2 September 1988:

- (a) Review of the global, interregional and regional programmes;
- (b) Project design, formulation and approval.

14-17 February 1989:

- (a) The Management Development Programme;
- (b) The future role of UNDP;
- (c) Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries;
- (d) Impact and sustainability of UNDP projects.

In addition, the sessions of the Working Group have routinely discussed follow-up to matters previously dealt with in the Working Group.

#### B. Documentation

12. For most of the issues discussed, documentation for the sessions of the Working Group has been provided by the UNDP secretariat in the form of informal working papers; for others, the Working Group was provided with official documents of the Council prepared in accordance with its agenda on topics assigned to the Working Group in keeping with the mandate of the Committee of the Whole.

C. Attendance

13. All sessions of the Working Group have been well attended by Member States, observers and representatives of the specialized agencies and other United Nations organizations. In accordance with the authorization contained in part II of Governing Council decision 87/20, the Administrator has established a trust fund, financed through extrabudgetary resources, to facilitate the participation of one representative from the capital of each least developed country (LDC) member of the Working Group. In general, the dialogue in the Working Group has been extensive and has benefited from the informal setting of the Working Group.

14. Representatives of the specialized agencies and other United Nations organizations have been invited to sessions of the Working Group and have received the appropriate documentation when issues of concern to them were on the agenda. Agency participation in the recent sessions of the Working Group has enriched the consideration of the items assigned to the Working Group.

D. Follow-up

15. In accordance with Governing Council decision 86/1 of 18 February 1986, the Chairman of the Working Group does, on his own responsibility, give an oral report in the form of a statement to the Committee of the Whole on the proceedings of the Working Group. At the request of delegates, these statements have subsequently been circulated to interested Member States. No formal records are kept of the proceedings of the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole. The UNDP secretariat does, however, take detailed notes of the discussions and ensures that the necessary follow-up action is taken with regard to points raised and proposals put forward in the Working Group, if, subsequently, they lead to decisions of the Governing Council.

E. Assessment

16. In the view of the Administrator, the assessment of the functioning of the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole belongs primarily to the Governing Council. The Administrator does, however, wish to observe that the informal setting of the Working Group has proved itself very well suited to discussions of an essentially technical nature, and that the proceedings of the Working Group have facilitated subsequent discussions in the Committee of the Whole and the Governing Council itself. It is, therefore, the view of the Administrator that the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole is a useful mechanism that allows for thorough consideration of issues assigned to it.

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