

## **A. PROJECT BACKGROUND.**

### **A.1. The setting.**

[Similar to that in the terms of reference for the mid-term evaluation mission]

### **A.2. The project.**

[Similar to that in the terms of reference for the mid-term evaluation mission]

### **A.3. Objectives.**

The objectives of the project as set up in the terms of reference for the evaluation mission are:

- 3.1. Overall Development Objective: The project's main objective is to help African countries which request the assistance of UNDP in carrying out long-term perspective studies.
- 3.2. Long-Term Objective: To stimulate the revitalization of African economies by strengthening African nations' capacity to plan for the future and have a broad vision of national priorities.
- 3.3. Original immediate objectives: At the inception of the project the following four objectives were defined in the project document:
  - 3.3.1. Serve as a catalyst and support national capacity mobilized to conduct the national long-term perspective and policy studies;
  - 3.3.2. Assist countries to create conditions needed to operationalize their National Long-Term Perspective Studies (NLTPS);
  - 3.3.3. Establish a network of national experts and African research institutions specializing in long-term perspective studies and development policies;
  - 3.3.4. Ensure coordination between various NLTPS exercises and other national and regional studies.

#### **3.4. Revised Immediate Objectives.**

In April 1993, it was decided that some of the activities under "immediate objective 3.3.2" above should be accomplished in tandem with "immediate objective 3.3.1" above. Further "immediate objective 3.3.3" above was considered by the regional NLTPS team in Abidjan as an output and not an objective as such.

Consequently, the immediate objectives of the project were reformulated as follows:

- 3.4.1. Serve as catalyst and support national capacity mobilized to conduct the national long-term perspective and policy studies.

- 3.4.2. Support African countries in creating conditions leading to the operationalization of their NLTPS.
- 3.4.3. Help to develop African expertise in futures studies, policy analysis and strategic planning and management.
- 3.4.4. Ensure coordination among NLTPS and between national and subregional exercises.

Notice that the main difference between the original immediate objectives and the revised immediate objectives rests in the original immediate objective 3.3.3. The establishment of a network on long-term perspective studies has been substituted by assistance to develop African expertise in futures studies, policy analysis and strategic planning and management. That is, helping to develop the elements which could later become the nodes of an African network of long-term perspective studies.

## **B. PURPOSE OF THE MISSION.**

As stated in its terms of reference, the evaluation mission was undertaken to:

- B.1.** Review the progress made by the project so far;
- B.2.** Examine the activities underway, at both the regional and national levels;
- B.3.** Recommend possible changes in order to improve the project's capacity to achieve its objectives; and
- B.4.** Make recommendations on country coverage.

## **C. SPECIFIC EVALUATION TASKS.**

Further, the terms of reference of the evaluation mission state the following specific evaluation tasks:

### **1. NLTPS Design:**

- 1.1. Review the design of the project, especially its **objectives**, and **expected outputs**. In view of the changing African and international environment, the mission will ascertain whether the original design as modified by the project's regional team is still valid.
- 1.2. Review the **methods, tools, approach** and **global implementation strategy** so far developed by the regional team and recommend appropriate changes as the case may be.

## 2. NLTPS Management.

- 2.1. Review the **regional team's internal structure and effectiveness** in carrying out the project's objectives.
- 2.2. Review and make recommendations on the **regional team's work plan and work distribution**.
- 2.3. Assess the regional team's **efforts to build an NLTPS network** within and outside the African continent.

## 3. NLTPS Implementation and Results.

- 3.1. Assess **how the exercise is being implemented in practice**, visiting selected African countries (see D below). Review the actual performance of the national projects and provide **an account on the status of implementation, achievements made so far**, and problems encountered, and make **concrete recommendations as to how to address these problems**.
- 3.2. Examine the **country coverage strategy** and make specific **recommendations on how many countries to cover**. **In the event that a contraction is recommended**, the mission will **specify how this is to be managed**.

## 4. Resource Mobilization.

- 4.1. Examine the suggestion for setting up a **Trust Fund** to finance the regional and national projects.

The terms of reference point out that the mission will make recommendations on all matters covered above, including any lessons learned from experience, as well as on related issues which may arise in the course of its investigation.

## D. COMPOSITION AND ITINERARY OF THE MISSION.

The Evaluation Team consisted of a team leader (Antonio Alonso-Concheiro) and two experts (Jacques Moudiki and Amon Nikoi), all designated by UNDP. The following countries were selected by UNDP for field visits to determine the progress made so far and the results obtained by their respective NLTPS: Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Swaziland and Zambia. Assignments were distributed as follows among the mission members: Nikoi Amon, Swaziland and Zambia; Jacques Moudiki, Côte d'Ivoire and Gabon. Responsibility for evaluating the design, progress, results, program and workload of the regional team rested on the mission leader, with help from the mission experts on specific issues.

The mission began on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1994, with a briefing of the mission leader by Mr. Bene L. M'Poko (UNDP) at his office in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, followed by a second

briefing meeting of J. Moudiki and A. Alonso-Concheiro by Jose Brito, the regional project team leader. Due to administrative difficulties, Nikoi Amon did not arrive in Abidjan until May 4<sup>th</sup>. From May 2<sup>nd</sup> to May 5<sup>th</sup> the mission team had meetings with the regional team members and leader to obtain as much information as possible on both the progress, results and program of the regional team, and the progress and status of the NLTPSs of different countries, with particular emphasis on those that were to be visited. Logistic issues of the mission were also clarified and arrangements made for as many meetings as possible with different personalities involved with the project and national studies, plus UNDP resident representatives of countries where field visits were programmed. The mission leader reviewed the extensive dossier on the development of the project and the different documents so far produced by the regional team and external consultants regarding the tools of prospective studies and the methodology of the project (this dossier, kindly prepared by the regional team leader, was extremely useful for the mission), and prepared a guideline on information to be gathered during the field visits and discussed it with the mission members and the regional team members serving as liaison with the countries to be visited. Field visits were carried out from May 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> (May 12<sup>th</sup> in the case of Nikoi Amon, who had two countries to visit). From May 10<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>, J. Moudiki and A. Alonso-Concheiro evaluated Côte d'Ivoire's NLTPS. May 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> were devoted to discussions among the mission members on the main findings of the mission and recommendations to be made, as well as writing the preliminary draft report. A debriefing meeting with the regional team and a second debriefing meeting with Normand Lauzon were held during May 16<sup>th</sup>. A debriefing meeting by the mission leader was held in New York on May 18<sup>th</sup> with Mbaya Kankwenda (RPPAD, Regional Bureau for Africa), Soule Funna (UNDP's task manager for the NLTPS project), other members of the Regional Bureau for Africa and a representative of the World Bank.

## **E. FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION MISSION.**

### **E.1. General remarks.**

Some general introductory remarks seem necessary in order to provide a framework under which the project should be evaluated. The mission team believes it would be useful to also have these remarks in mind when considering the findings and recommendations.

- (a) The project is of a complex nature. It involves many interactions at different levels and times of its execution program, with different degrees of control by the regional team coordinating the exercise. Progress of the project depends not only on the technical and management capabilities of the regional team, but also on negotiations and on the context and specific conditions of the countries involved, over which the regional team has little or no control. Accommodation to evolving circumstances and flexibility are thus necessary for the regional team.

- (b) The field of prospective studies itself is relatively new and it is not a mature and well established field of knowledge, with a complete fixed and standard set of universally recognized practices and procedures. There is, however, agreement among practitioners on certain basic principles and guidelines and a lot of experience on a great number of tools and methods.
- (c) Prospective studies have value and should be judged not only for their final products (descriptions of desirable, possible and/or probable futures, images of future states and paths of evolution, analysis of key decisions and their potential long term future impact, anticipation of potential opportunities and challenges, etc) but equally, and perhaps more importantly, as processes. They need a multidisciplinary, holistic, systematic, rigorous and inventive approach, in an open process regulated by a critical balance between "rationality" and "imagination", which is not frequent in other decision making aids.
- (d) The NLTPS project rests intentionally, by design, as part of a capacity building programme, on human resources which, prior to this exercise, had no expertise nor experience in prospective studies. That is, the teams, both regional and national, are expected to learn how to do futures studies, while at the same time producing quality results (rigorous, technically sound, credible, useful, etc).
- (e) Although internationally there is a large body of experience in prospective studies and even a (more limited) experience in national prospective studies, there exists no previous exercise of the size and nature of the NLTPS project. This means that there are no previous experiences on which to rely upon to solve some of the problems that could be encountered during the project.

## **E.2. NLTPS design.**

### **E.2.a. Background.**

Most African countries gained their political and administrative independence during the last three decades. The achievement of rapid socioeconomic development was obviously among the main objectives of all post-independence governments. Optimism derived from their new status was high and during the first few years, within a relatively benign international environment, most did indeed make remarkable progress in improving the standard of living of their inhabitants, in spite of their many limitations (internal instability, high population growth rates, accelerated urbanization, weak economies highly dependent on agricultural products and on foreign aid and expertise, scarce qualified human resources, weak institutional capabilities, etc). However, since the mid-seventies the situation has deteriorated. The general socioeconomic conditions not only have shown little progress, but in some cases and certain indicators, they clearly show signs of moving backwards. It is true that global, international conditions have not been helpful and that other regions of the world (eg, Latin America) have also suffered. But even in relative terms, Africa