UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

ACC

Administrative Committee on Coordination

REPORT OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON PROGRAMME AND
OPERATIONAL QUESTIONS ON ITS EIGHTH SESSION

(Geneva, 11-15 March 1996)

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INTRODUCTION

1.   The Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) held its eighth session at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 11 to 15 March 1996. The agenda for the session is contained in annex III to the present report. The list of participants is contained in annex IV.

I.   MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE
      COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION

A.   Nomination of the Chairperson

2.   CCPOQ is pleased to recommend to the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) the appointment of Mrs. M. Chinery-Hesse, Deputy Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), as CCPOQ Chairperson for the two-year period 1996-1998.

B.   Follow-up to the triennial comprehensive policy review
      of operational activities for development

3.   In view of the importance of ensuring strong support and consistent messages by all executive heads on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/120, particularly its provisions for the functioning of the resident coordinator system, CCPOQ proposes to ACC the adoption of a common advocacy statement on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/120, as contained in annex I.

C.   Post-conflict situations

4.   CCPOQ agreed to the finalization of the report on United Nations system capabilities in post-conflict reconstruction and to its distribution to United Nations system headquarters and field offices. It furthermore noted the potential value of the report in consultations with Member States, notably for resource mobilization. Work on the development of an integrated framework and strategy paper for post-conflict recovery and on related operational guidelines is being pursued.

D.   Poverty eradication

5.   CCPOQ noted with interest the report and recommendations of its brainstorming workshop on poverty eradication (Turin, 21-23 February 1996), and agreed to transmit them to the ACC inter-agency task forces on the follow-up to the global conferences for consideration, with particular reference to the proposals for country-level joint action, establishment of a working definition of poverty, learning from best practices, development of impact assessment and monitoring of poverty eradication programmes.

E. ACC standard classification of programmes

6.   CCPOQ concluded that further work on a revised ACC classification was required, particularly in order to reflect reporting needs arising from the full cycle of global conferences, and proposed to undertake such work during the current biennium for application in 1998-1999.

F. Functioning of CCPOQ

7.   In the context of the review of the functioning of the Committee (paras. 60-65), it was decided to bring to the attention of ACC the potential of CCPOQ for ensuring a systematic and coordinated follow-up to the work of the ACC inter-agency task forces.

G. Proposed agenda, date and venue for the next session of the Committee

8.   CCPOQ recommends to ACC that its next regular session be held in New York in September 1996 (exact dates to be decided later), with the following agenda:

1.   Programme coordination issues:

(a)   Follow-up to the substantive session of 1996 of the Economic and Social Council (drug control, collaboration with Bretton Woods institutions etc.);

(b)   Role of United Nations system in post-conflict situations;

(c)   Coordination with ACC inter-agency task forces in follow-up to global conferences.

2.   Operational activities for development: follow-up to General Assembly resolution 50/120 (including reports by the Working Group on the Resident Coordinator System, the Advisory Panel on Operational Activities Training, and the Task Force on Financing Modalities for Operational Activities).

3.   Reports of subcommittees.

4.   Other matters:

(a)   Collaboration with non-governmental organizations and civil society;

(b)   JIU reports;

(c)   CCPOQ administrative issues.

II. WORK OF CCPOQ

A. Actions taken and decisions adopted

1. International Year of the Family

9.   CCPOQ reviewed the report of the Fifth Ad Hoc Inter-agency Meeting on the International Year of the Family (Vienna, 22 and 23 May 1995), and endorsed its recommendations 1 and 6 concerning the designation of agency focal points and collaboration with non-governmental organizations. It took note that the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat will address recommendations 2-5 in the context of its United Nations focal point responsibilities for family matters.

2. JIU reports

10.   CCPOQ adopted on behalf of ACC the draft comments on the JIU report on United Nations system common premises and services (JIU/REP/94/8), with the provision that the views of the eighty-fourth session of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Financial and Budgetary Questions) (CCAQ(FB)) be incorporated.

11.   CCPOQ adopted on behalf of ACC the draft Comments on the JIU Report on United Nations system support for science and technology in Asia and the Pacific (JIU/REP/95/7), subject to the comments made during the discussion.

3. Subcommittee on Nutrition

12.   CCPOQ agreed to clear by correspondence the recommendation of the Subcommittee on Nutrition for appointment to the post of Technical Secretary as of July 1996. Having been informed that the Chairman of the ACC Organizational Committee considered that paragraph 16 of the report of the Subcommittee on its twenty-third session did not accurately reflect his views concerning this appointment, CCPOQ expressed its preference for the appointment to be effected by secondment from a member organization.

13. CCPOQ furthermore approved the agenda, date (17-21 March 1997) and venue (Katmandu, Nepal) of the Subcommittee's twenty-fourth session.

4. Operational guidance on monitoring and evaluation

14. CCPOQ reviewed and approved an operational guidance note for the application of the guiding principles for a monitoring and evaluation methodology in the context of the programme approach (annex II).

5. <u>Operational activities reference manual</u>

15. CCPOQ agreed to publish and distribute to headquarters and field offices an operational activities reference manual containing key common principles and procedures for the delivery of United Nations system operational activities.

B. <u>Summary of discussions</u>

1. <u>Programme coordination issues</u>

(a) <u>Poverty eradication</u>

16. In reviewing the report of the brainstorming workshop on poverty eradication (Turin, 21-23 February 1996), CCPOQ emphasized the complexity and multidimensional nature of poverty eradication. Because of its multisectoral dimensions, the goal of poverty eradication required operationalization through its translation into specific objectives and time-bound targets.

17. In order to avoid duplication with the work of the newly established ACC task forces for the integrated follow-up to the global conferences, CCPOQ decided not to convene the planned inter-agency working group for implementation of the workshop's report. CCPOQ took note of the conclusions and recommendations of the workshop, which it decided to transmit to the task forces for appropriate consideration, particularly the recommendations contained in paragraphs 37-42 of the report concerning country-level action. CCPOQ recommended that the ACC task forces give consideration to the following issues: (a) the workshop's recommendation calling for an agreed working definition at the country level on conceptual and measurement issues; (b) the issue of operationalizing the recommendation on promoting bottom-up participatory approaches in developing and implementing poverty eradication strategies; and (c) the establishment of impact assessment and monitoring of poverty eradication programmes, including harmonized United Nations system procedures to this effect. CCPOQ also agreed that it should return to the issue in the context of structuring the follow-up to be given to proposals reached by the task forces.

18. A number of comments were made concerning the value of targeting poverty eradication programmes, such as for the rural poor; the relevance of the issue to all countries, including notably the economies in transition; the commodity approach to poverty eradication; and means of developing incentives for inter-agency collaboration.

19. Recalling that coordination of the activities of the United Nations system for poverty eradication would be the main theme of the coordination segment of the substantive session of 1996 of the Economic and Social Council, the representative of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development invited the views of members on policy issues to be addressed in the preparation of the Secretary-General's report on the subject, with particular reference to priority areas for improvements in United Nations system coordination, including analytical aspects of poverty eradication and joint action by the system. While requesting responses by end-March 1996, the United Nations representative advised that the United Nations would explore modalities

for subsequently consulting agencies on a draft of the Secretary-General's report. It was agreed that the workshop's recommendations concerning country-level action (para. 16 above) should also be taken into account in the formulation of the report.

(b) Post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction

20. CCPOQ took note of the report of its working group (ACC/1996/POQ/CRP.2), which met in January 1996 and reviewed progress on four subjects: United Nations system capabilities, framework and strategy, resource mobilization and lessons learned. Expressing its appreciation to the Department for Development Support and Management Services of the United Nations Secretariat for the revised draft report on United Nations system capabilities in post-conflict reconstruction, it requested all agencies to review their inputs for accuracy and completeness with a view to limiting listed capabilities to immediate post-conflict issues on which agencies had demonstrated actual capacities for assistance. The above revisions, together with information on contact points within agencies, were to be sent to the Department in Vienna by end-March 1996. It was suggested that the document specify that activities were self-listed and did not reflect an independent assessment of capacities. The document would be finalized by mid-April for distribution to United Nations system headquarters and field offices, as well as outside agencies and resource mobilization mechanisms, as appropriate. The United Nations Development Programme/Office for United Nations System Support and Services (UNDP/OUNS) agreed to handle the production and distribution of the document within the United Nations system.

21. CCPOQ deliberated on the elements of a post-conflict recovery framework and strategy on the basis of a paper prepared jointly by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, UNDP and the Department for Development Support and Management Services. The paper was perceived as representing a good initial conceptualization of the issues with a view to developing operational guidelines for use by United Nations system headquarters and field offices. It was noted, inter alia, that: (a) the final conceptualization and the elaboration of the guidelines should involve informal consultations with specialists throughout the system, including the Bretton Woods institutions; (b) more work was needed on definitions, timing of actions, and the relief-development interface; (c) the guidelines should address the issue of overall field-level responsibility, as well as quick response mechanisms, lines of authority, distribution of responsibilities, cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions, technical support capabilities, information flows and relations to funding mechanisms; (d) the guidelines should promote field coordination among resident coordinators/humanitarian coordinators and related field teams, as well as facilitate Headquarters support, bearing in mind the roles of the special representatives of the Secretary-General, and of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat; (e) in the interim, agencies should proceed with ongoing assistance and mechanisms; (f) the framework and guidelines, while necessarily geared to actions by the United Nations system, should also relate to the broader context of the international situation and to the actions of major donors, and linkage should accordingly be made with the major resource mobilization efforts, and proposals to that effect would be elaborated by UNDP in a paper on resource mobilization; (g) linkage should also be made to the

process of agency and inter-agency response to Council resolution 1995/56, entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations", in order to capitalize on the synergy of parallel events; (h) attention should be given to ensuring timely information flows through clear channels of communication so as to enable quick and effective response by United Nations bodies and also to facilitating the tapping of United Nations system capabilities by the Bretton Woods institutions, bilateral and regional donors. The United Nations system capabilities report (see para. 20 above) was seen to be helpful to that process, and the drafting of post-conflict guidelines should take into account existing ACC guidelines on the resident coordinator system, as well as the IASC guidelines for humanitarian aid coordinators.

22. It was further noted that the General Assembly, in its resolution 50/120, had mentioned the requirements of the continuum from humanitarian assistance through rehabilitation to development in the delivery of operational activities for development.

23. The representative of UNDP/OUNS reported that the UNDP Emergency Response Division had been vested with responsibility for 5 per cent of UNDP core resources for use in countries in special situations. Part of those funds could be made available to strengthen coordination of United Nations system action, particularly in the context of the resident coordinator system. Guidelines on the use of those UNDP core resources would be considered by the UNDP Executive Board in May 1996. CCPOQ members welcomed this information and requested that appropriate cross-references be made in the CCPOQ post-conflict guidelines.

24. CCPOQ agreed that the Department for Development Support and Management Services (New York) would lead a small working group in finalizing the integrated framework and strategy paper and in developing related operational guidelines, on the basis of the following timetable: (a) by mid-April, (i) clarification of the conceptual paper, (ii) link up with the Council response in the Department of Humanitarian Affairs and elsewhere, (iii) consultations with relevant departments and agencies, and development of proposals for key aspects of the guidelines (such as defining leadership/ coordination roles and lines of authority); (b) by mid-June, elaboration of draft guidelines for review with interested parties at the time of consideration by the Council of the progress report on resolution 1995/56; (c) by September, circulation of the revised framework and strategy paper and draft guidelines for review at CCPOQ.

25. On the issue of resource mobilization for post-conflict activities, CCPOQ considered a draft from UNDP. It agreed that UNDP, in collaboration with the Department for Humanitarian Affairs, the Bretton Woods institutions and other interested programmes and agencies, should prepare proposals for submission to CCPOQ at its ninth session, bearing in mind the inter-agency work led by the Department in response to Council resolution 1995/56. CCPOQ noted that resource mobilization should be underpinned by the strategic framework for post-conflict activities, which would facilitate support of programmes by donors.

26. As to lessons learned, the Secretary reminded CCPOQ members that the working group had requested participants to send his office brief notes on their

organization's approach to and experiences on the subject, as well as a list of relevant studies published or planned, for compilation and submission to CCPOQ at its ninth session.

(c) Collaboration with non-governmental organizations and other partners in civil society

27. CCPOQ deliberated on the issue of collaboration with non-governmental organizations and civil society on the basis of the consultant's report contained in document ACC/1996/POQ/CRP.3. While welcoming the consultant's analysis and recommendations, some speakers suggested that more examples on models of agency cooperation with non-governmental organizations should have been cited and that the definition of civil society should be sufficiently broad to encompass elements other than non-governmental organizations. The consultant's proposal for the establishment of a system-wide institutional framework to enable regular meetings by units responsible for non-governmental organization liaison was generally endorsed, and the Committee requested the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), in consultation with interested agencies, to elaborate a discussion paper on the proposal for consideration by the Committee at its ninth session. Other speakers proposed that consideration be given to (a) improving non-governmental organization liaison through means - such as electronic networking - other than physical meetings; (b) expansion of the database on national non-governmental organizations through a focus on efforts at the national level; (c) clarification of the nature of additional support required by non-governmental organizations from United Nations agencies; and (d) the modalities for mobilizing non-governmental organization inputs to the ACC task forces on the follow-up to United Nations global conferences.

28. The representative of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development briefed CCPOQ on the scope of the work of the Council and the United Nations Secretariat working groups on relations with non-governmental organizations. Several speakers drew attention to the need to take stock of various efforts within the United Nations system to rationalize and intensify relations with non-governmental organizations, which would facilitate the assessment of CCPOQ's potential contribution to the issue of expanding relations with non-governmental organizations.

29. CCPOQ agreed to update the recommendations formulated by the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities) in 1988 on the means of improving the collaboration between the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations. One speaker noted that the revision would need to take into account such issues as the capacity of non-governmental organizations, their accountability and sustainability, and the long-term viability of their projects, particularly since many non-governmental organizations were not self-financing and depended on Governments and donors for their funding. Another speaker noted that the rapid increase in the number of non-governmental organizations was posing formidable challenges in assessing their capacity and financial viability.

30. CCPOQ furthermore decided to transmit the consultant's report after revision for consideration by the ACC subcommittees reporting to CCPOQ.

(d) <u>ACC standard classification of programmes</u>

31. In his introductory statement, the Chairman of the CCPOQ technical working group on the revision of the ACC programme classification drew the attention of CCPOQ to a number of unresolved issues concerning subsector 090, "Communications"; the location of "reproductive health" under sectors 110, "Population" and 130, "Health"; the proposals by the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD) to introduce new dimensions to the classification to capture data relevant to Agenda 21; the classification of basic education; and the location and composition of water-supply and sanitation activities. The working group had agreed that those issues should be resolved through bilateral discussions between the agencies concerned. A major question that arose in the revision exercise concerned the implications for reporting on follow-up to major global conferences. In that connection, he noted three relevant initiatives, the official development assistance tracking system, a draft breakdown by UNDP of poverty eradication activities, and a CCPOQ-sponsored disaggregation of post-conflict activities based on the current ACC classification. The working group had proposed that a study, possibly to be led by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), should be launched to shed light on how best to proceed.

32. Several members advised that bilateral discussions on unresolved areas, including the classification for basic education and reproductive health, were being pursued. UNESCO also agreed to consider undertaking the proposed study. Some concern was expressed that a double listing of an activity with equal value would be a bad precedent. In response to further views expressed on the need to capture in the revision the reporting requirements resulting from global agendas, the working group Chairman noted that it was not possible to attempt to build a classification system on the basis of the individual needs of all agencies or of multisectoral themes. Agencies should not be restricted by the sectoral classification, however, and could use a combination of different components of the classification for such reporting.

33. Pending the resolution of the many problem areas, CCPOQ decided to postpone finalization of the revision until a later date. Meanwhile, agencies were invited to complete their consultations and to refer the results to the CCPOQ secretariat. CCPOQ agreed that the technical working group should be maintained in order to address the outstanding issues. Pending agreement on a new classification, the Chairperson, in her capacity as Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), noted the intention of her organization, for the immediate future, to base its bilateral reporting to donors on the proposed breakdown for the population sector, with the substitution of reproductive health for family planning.

(e) <u>Follow-up to International Year of the Family</u>

34. CCPOQ considered the report of the Fifth Ad Hoc Inter-agency Meeting on the International Year of the Family (Vienna, 22 and 23 May 1995), and endorsed recommendations 1 and 6 of the report relating to the designation of agency focal points for family matters and collaboration with non-governmental organizations. While not endorsing the establishment of a permanent mechanism for the follow-up of the Year (recommendation 2), CCPOQ welcomed the proposal of

the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development to convene inter-agency meetings, as appropriate, in consultation with interested agency focal points on family issues. CCPOQ took note of the Department's proposed handling of recommendations 3-5.

(f) Subcommittee on Nutrition

35. CCPOQ took note of the report of the Subcommittee on Nutrition (SCN) on its twenty-third session, held in Accra, Ghana, and expressed appreciation for the substantive work accomplished. It approved the agenda, dates (17-21 March 1997) and venue (Katmandu, Nepal) for the twenty-fourth session of SCN.

36. CCPOQ furthermore noted that its approval of the appointment of a successor to Dr. J. Mason as SCN Technical Secretary in July 1996 would be sought by correspondence, noting its preference for that appointment to be made by secondment from a member organization.

37. With respect to the SCN biennial programme budget, CCPOQ received confirmation from the Technical Secretary that contributions from member organizations were entirely voluntary and implied no longer-term commitment. CCPOQ recognized that such voluntary contributions by member organizations could only be pledged after their own biennial budgets had been established, i.e., towards the end of the first year of the preceding biennium. It therefore agreed to recommend to CCAQ(FB) that SCN be authorized to submit its proposed programme budget to CCPOQ at its first regular session of the second year of the preceding biennium (i.e., March 1997 for the 1998-1999 budget), for referral to CCAQ(FB) for final approval.

2. Operational activities for development

(a) Follow-up to the triennial comprehensive policy review

38. The Chairperson recalled the favourable reaction by the General Assembly to the report of the Secretary-General on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/50/202-E/1995/76), to which CCPOQ had contributed. Based on her own participation in the debates, she underlined the concern of Member States for coordinated United Nations system programming processes, including common evaluation procedures, and their particular interest in capacity-building and impact assessment.

39. The representative of the United Nations presented a management process for implementation of Assembly resolution 50/120. He stressed that, in contrast to its approach in its resolution 47/199, in its resolution 50/120 the General Assembly had avoided over-prescribing the actions required, and had agreed to give general policy guidance on the directions to be followed. Innovations or greater emphasis could be remarked in the following areas: collaboration with countries without country strategy notes; monitoring and evaluation, with the stress on monitoring; resource mobilization; regional dimensions of cooperation; strengthening policy dialogue; collaboration with civil society and non-governmental organizations; enhancement of the resident coordinator system;

collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions; relief to development linkages; and impact evaluation. Moreover, many of the existing provisions in Assembly resolution 47/199 were reaffirmed in the strong expectation that they would be fully implemented.

40. On the issue of the country strategy note, CCPOQ observed that in order to advance the country strategy note process, an objective analysis would need to be made to ascertain (a) its value added to Governments; (b) ways to better integrate the programmes of agencies without field representation and those of civil society; (c) how the United Nations system could bring its advocacy role to bear to persuade Governments to respond to internationally agreed commitments; (d) the need to assure better interface between agencies' mandates and national development priorities; (e) constraints in national capacity and the needs for capacity-building to underpin the country strategy note process; (f) the provisions that need to be made to bring donors and other development partners into the process; and (g) improved monitoring of the alignment of individual agency programmes with individual country strategy notes.

41. On an informational point, the representative of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) noted that her organization was in the process of developing guidelines for its field staff to allow IMF collaboration in the country strategy note process and to enhance consistency with other government policy papers, including the policy framework papers (PFPs) and IMF policy advice.

42. Concerning the linkages between the country strategy note and the programme approach, one speaker emphasized that the programme approach was equally applicable in non-country strategy note countries, based on the overall development strategy of the country. Many speakers underlined the need for greater advocacy and clear messages of support for the country strategy note process by heads of agencies to their field staff.

43. On the issue of national execution, one speaker noted that while national execution was the ultimate goal, the handing over of functions should be a step-by-step process, tailored to the absorptive capacity of recipient Governments. Among the issues that needed to be addressed in the revision of the guidelines on national execution were the issue of national capacity-building; how to assure substantive and financial accountability of recipient countries for the use of United Nations resources; the role of the United Nations system in monitoring and evaluating the outcome of nationally executed programmes; and the issue of better utilization not only of national resources but also of United Nations resources in national execution. Recalling its previous decision to undertake a reassessment of the common guidelines on national execution and implementation arrangements, CCPOQ requested that the United Nations provide for such a reassessment in the management process and undertake an appropriate review exercise in consultation with national authorities and United Nations agencies and with the support of the CCPOQ secretariat.

44. On regional coordination, one speaker noted the need to issue directives, prior to the next ACC regional meeting of agencies active in Europe (February 1997), to guide the conduct of operational activities at the regional level involving the participation of non-United Nations organizations. Another speaker mentioned that one input into the consideration of that issue was the

ongoing initiative to analyse linkages between the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the regional commissions. Another speaker mentioned as further input the work of the regional commissions/UNDP task force within the context of the senior officials meeting.

45. On the issue of strengthening field-level coordination, several speakers observed that the exercise should not limit itself to the pilot studies envisaged for the five countries; rather, efforts should be focused on identifying initiatives for which dialogue was already taking place on sectoral issues, such as those being conducted by the World Trade Organization (WTO) on trade issues, the World Bank and IMF on economic and financial issues, and UNICEF on issues of basic social services, to see how the dialogue could be made more effective. It was noted that UNCTAD was in the process of instituting a country review process on such issues as investment and trade efficiency, using as a model the peer group mechanism of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development to guide national policy reforms.

46. On the issue of decentralization, one speaker observed that the differential degrees of delegation of authority to the field offices sometimes compromised United Nations system cooperation even in agreed areas because of differences in the capacity of field agencies to respond. CCPOQ noted that the process of decentralization should be continued, taking into account relevant issues, including accountability, with a view to elaborating proposals for more effective decentralization.

47. On the issue of impact evaluation, the vital importance of that issue was recognized in the light of current demands by donors for agencies to demonstrate their performance in qualitative terms as a prerequisite for funding. As a first step, the representative of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development invited all organizations to provide to his office by 15 April 1996 information on the following: (a) any planned major impact evaluation for the next 3 years; (b) suggestions for topics to be evaluated; and (c) indications of joint evaluations that each organization would be willing to participate in.

48. CCPOQ considered in relationship to this item the report of the 1995 meeting of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Evaluation (IAWG). While CCPOQ members appreciated that IAWG should have autonomy of action in the discharge of its technical functions, it was none the less felt that IAWG was in need of policy guidance by an ACC body. The Chairperson indicated that she would be pursuing discussions on that matter with the UNDP Administrator and the Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development.

49. The representative of the United Nations briefed CCPOQ on the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General for submission to the substantive session of 1996 of the Council for the high-level meeting of the operational activities segment, the theme of which was the strengthening of collaboration between the United Nations development system and the Bretton Woods institutions in the area of social and economic development. He suggested that the report could cover such issues as (a) strengthening of country level cooperation; (b) modalities of reporting to respective and relevant intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions; (c) collaborative activities in

countries in special post-conflict/reconstruction situations; (d) exchange of information and data in areas of policy analysis and development; and (e) statistical collaboration. Among the possible thematic areas for collaboration were poverty; Africa; financing of development; the effects of globalization on developed and developing countries; environment; and selected sectoral issues. Several participants offered suggestions on issues to be addressed, such as investment policy and trade efficiency; structural adjustment programmes; and ensuring a coherent and integrated response to the follow-up to global conferences. Several speakers stressed the importance of examining and building on the experiences of existing, well-functioning collaboration mechanisms, such as the mutual tapping of technical expertise and the ongoing dialogue between UNDP and IMF on the concept of high-quality growth and sustainable development. The reinforcement of collaboration in areas with potential for lightening the administrative burden of developing countries, such as through fielding of common missions, common situational analysis and unified reporting, were also emphasized. Another speaker underlined the importance of selectivity in the identification of issues and the value of preliminary discussions, including with the Council Bureau, to ensure that the background paper would foster productive discussions and guide the elaboration of decisions to be taken. The representative of the United Nations advised that the United Nations would consult with the Bretton Woods institutions on issues to be discussed and that it would consult CCPOQ members on the report to be submitted to the Council.

(b) Role and functioning of the resident coordinator system

50. The Chairman of the Working Group on the Resident Coordinator System presented the draft report of the Working Group meeting held on 11 March 1996, with cross-reference to the management process for the implementation of Assembly resolution 50/120. He noted that emphasis would be placed on broad approaches, including training and briefing, strong advocacy by executive heads, more systematic and objective analysis of the functioning of the resident coordinator system, and the use of lessons from best practices to update the guidelines for the system. The timetable for the latter, including consultations with United Nations resident coordinators, the Working Group itself, field offices and executive heads with a view to review by CCPOQ at its tenth session, in March 1997, was noted.

51. CCPOQ took note of the report of the Working Group, with the incorporation of the following agreed revisions: (a) in paragraph 3, the third sentence should read "All appropriate support should be explored as agreed ..."; (b) in paragraph 9 (b), the relevant phrase should read "... revised statement by the Chair, in consultation with interested organizations and with the support of the CCPOQ Secretary ...". Regarding the involvement in the system of agencies without field representation, which was recognized as an issue of real concern, certain speakers considered that such agencies had primary responsibility for keeping the resident coordinator informed of their programme activities.

(c) Programme approach

52. CCPOQ considered the report of an inter-agency workshop on the programme approach (Turin, 11-13 October 1995), and offered a number of reflections on the

need to (a) focus on good country practices and case studies in developing operational guidelines; (b) broaden the interpretation of the common understanding of the programme approach to allow for its application in countries without national programmes, even in those experiencing complex emergencies, i.e., on the basis of a situation analysis that would then underpin the elaboration of a comprehensive strategy with a cluster of activities needed to address the problems at hand; (c) underpin the programme approach with a logical framework that defines the goals and objectives and an input and output analysis; (d) secure commitment with all development partners on the programme approach; and (e) take into account the absorptive capacities of countries at different stages of development in developing a common framework on the programme approach.

53. Some discomfort with the programme approach was expressed by agencies with a specific sectoral or technical mandate, because they feared being marginalized or excluded by technical cooperation policies based entirely on broad development themes.

54. Noting that an effective programme approach was based on its assimilation and practice by national authorities, CCPOQ stressed the need for advocacy and training by the United Nations system. The Turin Centre reported that it was in the course of validating a newly developed training module for the programme approach. The resident coordinator system was considered to be the key instrument at country level for developing a programme approach with the Government and ensuring integrated inputs by the United Nations system.

55. Noting that the management process for the implementation of Assembly resolution 50/120 envisaged further work on improving the definitions and guidelines for the programme approach, CCPOQ decided that the workshop's draft revision of the common understanding should be reviewed in that context.

56. CCPOQ reviewed and approved an operational guidance note for the application of the guiding principles for a monitoring and evaluation methodology in the context of the programme approach (annex II), which had been elaborated by the programme approach workshop in consultation with the Inter-Agency Working Group on Evaluation.

(d) <u>Financing modalities for operational activities</u>

57. CCPOQ took note of the report of the Task Force on Financing Modalities for Operational Activities, and thanked the Chairman for his presentation. The report, particularly the proposed questionnaire on support costs generated much interest. It was agreed that its scope should be broadened to solicit information on overhead reimbursement practices in respect of non-governmental organizations, the private sector, the Bretton Woods institutions and other parties. Meanwhile, CCPOQ members would pursue discussions with their financial/ operational departments to seek advice on how they would like to proceed with that issue. CCPOQ endorsed the principle that participation in the Task Force should be limited to those with expertise on the subjects being discussed. In that connection and bearing in mind travel restrictions, it was suggested that partial task force meetings in both Geneva and New York could be arranged to ensure maximum substantive participation by organizations. It was

noted that the Task Force was planning to schedule its next meeting to coincide with the substantive session of 1996 of the Council.

(e) Operational activities handbook

58. CCPOQ welcomed the Secretary's proposal for publication of a CCPOQ operational activities reference manual, and agreed on its contents and joint CCPOQ/OUNS/Turin Centre financing. Updating of the manual should be envisaged annually, and should feature as a CCPOQ agenda item at one of its regular sessions. Electronic accessing of the manual and its translation into other official United Nations languages would be explored. It was agreed that a preface of the manual, including provisions for updating, would be circulated by the CCPOQ Secretary to members prior to publication.

3. CCPOQ administrative issues

(a) Report of the Secretary

59. In presenting his report on developments since the previous regular session of the Committee (ACC/1996/POQ/CRP.12), the Secretary drew attention to the budget reductions that had been proposed for the 1996-1997 biennium in response to the CCAQ(FB) appeal for further austerity measures. He furthermore informed CCPOQ of the departure of the Secretariat's administrative assistant, Mrs. A. Intrator, at end-March 1996. CCPOQ endorsed his appreciation for her contribution to the work of CCPOQ over the past two years. It was agreed that the Secretary's report should henceforth include a section on progress made in implementation of the decisions and substantive work of CCPOQ.

(b) Functioning of CCPOQ

60. CCPOQ reviewed the impact, effectiveness and methods of work of CCPOQ in the light of the reforms introduced in 1993 to ACC machinery and the recent establishment of the ACC inter-agency task forces to follow up the global conferences. Members generally considered that CCPOQ had made significant progress and achieved substantive results, with many concrete outputs, which, however, were probably insufficiently known and greater attention should be given to ensuring a visible impact.

61. There was general agreement on the continued need for CCPOQ not only to be responsive to the requirements of central intergovernmental bodies but also to assist in influencing their agendas and bringing matters to their attention in a substantive and timely manner. The Council should therefore be encouraged to plan ahead in identifying matters for discussion. CCPOQ should also seek to assist ACC in its functions by submitting for its attention issues requiring action-oriented decisions, as well as effective and committed follow-up by all parts of the system.

62. There was recognition that CCPOQ's dual programmatic and operational role was not always fully balanced but that the two were intrinsically linked and mutually supportive. In that context, CCPOQ agreed to bring to the attention of ACC its potential contribution in assisting in effective and coordinated

follow-up to the work of the ACC inter-agency task forces on programme and operational issues. Consideration would furthermore be given to emphasizing programme coordination at one of CCPOQ's two annual regular sessions, and emphasizing operational activities at the other, which might assist member organizations in providing the most effective representation.

63. CCPOQ noted that its areas of responsibility were generally more broadly based than other parts of the ACC subsidiary machinery, and that its programme of work covered a range of analytical, programmatic and operational issues. In contrast to the more direct interface of, for example, IACSD with the Commission on Sustainable Development or CCAQ(PER) with the International Civil Service Commission, CCPOQ played a more central role both in the preparation of issues for discussion by the Council or the Assembly and in various "household" duties on behalf of ACC, such as the review of reports by ACC subcommittees or the Joint Inspection Unit. That role might well increase in importance if ACC reduced the number of its annual sessions.

64. Regarding CCPOQ's methods of work, it was considered that two regular sessions a year were appropriate, although perhaps with more focused agendas and shorter sessions. Clearance of texts by correspondence would be encouraged as far as possible. The practice of thorough technical preparation of issues through working groups and task forces of specialists would be pursued. The possibility of such groups meeting in two halves (such as in New York and Geneva) should be explored as a cost-effective measure requiring only the travel of the Chairperson or Secretary. Greater involvement by individual members in the preparation of issue papers and conducting consultations for CCPOQ could support that process.

65. Several members underlined the value of the CCPOQ meetings for exchange of information, to stimulate or monitor progress, or for the presentation of key agency developments of interest to all members.

(c) Future programme of work

66. Several speakers emphasized the need for a more selective and more concise agenda on issues of topical interest with a view to anticipating or raising issues for discussion in the Council and ACC. CCPOQ discussed and agreed on a draft agenda for its second regular session of 1996, for approval by ACC.

(d) Nomination of CCPOQ Chairperson

67. The Committee unanimously recommended the appointment of Mrs. Mary Chinery-Hesse, Deputy Director-General of ILO, as CCPOQ Chairperson for the two-year period 1996-1998. CCPOQ expressed its gratitude to the outgoing Chairperson, Dr. Nafis Sadik, for her outstanding, spirited and result-oriented leadership and valuable contribution to the work of CCPOQ, to which she pledged her continued support.

4. Other matters

(a) JIU reports

   (i) United Nations system common premises and services in the field (JIU/REP/94/8)

68. CCPOQ approved on behalf of ACC the draft ACC comments on the JIU report, as set out in document ACC/1995/POQ/CRP.14, with the provision that the views expressed by CCAQ(FB) at its eighty-fourth session (Rome, February 1996) be incorporated.

   (ii) United Nations system support for science and technology in Asia and the Pacific (JIU/REP/97/7)

69. CCPOQ reviewed and approved the draft ACC comments on the JIU report on United Nations system support for science and technology in Asia and the Pacific, as set out in document ACC/1996/POQ/CRP.15. It nevertheless noted the somewhat over-enthusiastic wording of those comments, which had not benefited from system-wide inputs in their preparation. It was also pointed out that gender dimensions should be fully taken into account, using the methodology proposed by the Commission on Science and Technology for Development.

(b) Mid-term global review of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s

70. The representative of UNCTAD briefed the meeting on the outcome of the High-Level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Mid-Term Global Review of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s (New York, 26 September-6 October 1995). He drew attention to potential areas for United Nations agencies' contribution to the follow-up, including carrying out sectoral appraisals and assistance to least developed countries in the follow-up to other global conferences. In that connection, he noted ongoing consultations involved UNCTAD, UNDP, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Population Fund and Norway on the 20/20 initiative presented at the World Summit on Social Development. In conjunction with the UNCTAD IX conference, he noted that the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) would be convening inter-agency consultations on the follow-up to the mid-term global review.

(c) United Nations staff college

71. The representative of the ILO Training Centre at Turin briefed the meeting on the proposed staff college project, launched by the Secretary-General on 8 January 1996. Its main objectives were to improve United Nations performance and effectiveness through training, with a focus on enforcing cross-programme linkages, strengthening human resource development and management practices; and to establish a common corporate culture. The college is expected to network with training services and institutions both within the United Nations system, such as the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, the United Nations University and the International Institute for Labour Studies as well as the World Bank and selected national and regional institutions. Financed initially by the

Government of Italy and private-sector contributions, the project is envisaged to be self-financing after a 5-year period through charging of user fees. Close cooperation with CCAQ, CCPOQ and the Joint Consultative Group on Policy was considered essential to the project.

72. Expressing their interest in the project, several members underlined the importance of fostering links with CCPOQ, which could be a channel of policy messages from the United Nations system, particularly in operational activities. CCPOQ strongly recommended that its Chairperson be invited to sit as an _ex officio_ member on the college's advisory panel. CCPOQ also called for discussion within its own Advisory Panel on Operational Activities Training on how to develop a CCPOQ role in relation to the staff college.

(d) Habitat II

73. The representative of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements briefed the meeting on preparations for the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). Significant sections of a plan of action had been adopted by the Preparatory Committee, with the remainder to be finalized at the Conference itself, (Istanbul, 3-14 June 1996). Important progress had been made in discussions on the issue of the human right to shelter. On behalf of the Secretary-General of the Conference, the representative expressed his warm appreciation for the enthusiastic response of agencies in supporting the substantive preparations of the forthcoming conference.

(e) World Trade Organization

74. The Committee was briefed by the Deputy Director-General of WTO on the organization's role in providing a forum for negotiating and enhancing the predictability of multilateral trading rules, in the settlement of trade disputes, and in the gradual dismantling of world trade barriers. He highlighted the scope of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade agreements (1986-1993), which were expected to substantially boost world trade. Twelve WTO committees had been established to oversee the implementation of multilateral trading rules on various aspects of trade in goods and services. The Deputy Director-General also noted the cooperation between WTO and the United Nations system, for example, with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and WHO on sanitary and phyto-sanitary issues, with UNCTAD and the International Trade Centre on trade policy issues and market access, and with World Intellectual Property Organization on intellectual property rights.

Annex I

DRAFT STATEMENT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF
GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 50/120

"ACC attaches the highest importance to the effective and coherent
implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/120. This resolution, which
builds on its predecessor 47/199, represents an important practical step in
achieving further reforms in the operational activities for development, with
special reference to the interlinked areas of effective governance of
operational activities, of predictable and assured funding in keeping with the
increasing needs of developing countries, and of increased efficiency and
coherence of the programming, delivery and management of operational activities,
particularly at the field level.

ACC will continue to take all necessary steps to ensure that the United
Nations system provides recipient countries the best possible support in their
development efforts. To this end, ACC and its members who are mandated to
provide operational activities for development are determined to strengthen
their collaboration at the country level through the resident coordinator
system. This will involve the full and coherent implementation of all
provisions of Assembly resolutions 50/120 and its predecessor 47/199,
particularly those elements that have a direct bearing on the effectiveness of
United Nations system development cooperation at the country level.

ACC will take the required steps to implement Assembly resolution 50/120 in
a fully coordinated manner, as outlined in the management plan prepared in
accordance with paragraph 52 of the resolution, which the Secretary-General will
submit to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1996.
In proceeding with the implementation of the resolution, account will be taken
of the decisions emanating from the Council and decisions emanating from other
relevant governing bodies.

Through its Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions
and other mechanisms, ACC will issue updated guidelines on the functioning of
the resident coordinator system, reflecting fully the experience acquired so far
and addressing all actions called for in paragraphs 36 to 43 of resolution
50/120. The members of ACC mandated for operational activities for development
will pursue the strengthening of this system, inter alia, through clear
instructions to the country representatives and through support to the
coordination function at the country level. The Secretary-General, in his
capacity as Chairman of ACC, will instruct resident coordinators, with the
support of the Special Coordinator for Economic and Social Development, on
measures to strengthen the resident coordinator system.

ACC attaches particular importance to ensuring that all parts of the United
Nations system work on the basis of a mutually agreed common understanding of
the principal components of resolution 50/120. To this end, a series of updated
and interlinked guidelines will be developed on the country strategy note
process, the programme approach, national execution and the functioning of the
resident coordinator system. Moreover, the work of its task forces will be

translated into operational guidance for the resident coordinator system. In
this connection, the further improvement of the country strategy note process in
line with the provisions of resolution 50/120 will be given particular
attention. ACC is committed to providing full and coordinated support to the
country strategy note process and to ensuring cooperation with and support to
this process under the leadership of the resident coordinator.

ACC will undertake action to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of
operational activities and to achieve the impact assessment called for in
paragraph 54 of resolution 50/120. Greater effort will be devoted to
harmonizing various procedures and simplifying the requirements placed upon
recipient countries, while at the same time strengthening accountability
capacity.

In order to achieve the optimal use of available resources, efforts will
continue to enhance the sharing of various services at the country level, and
common premises, whenever feasible and cost-effective."

*   *   *

To give further effect to this statement, all members involved in
operational activities for development agree to circulate it to their own staff,
including field representatives, together with a strongly supportive statement.
Moreover, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in his capacity as
Chairman of ACC, will ensure the wide distribution of this statement, including
to the Economic and Social Council at its upcoming substantive session of 1996.

Annex II

OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE NOTE FOR THE APPLICATION OF THE
GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR A MONITORING AND EVALUATION
METHODOLOGY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PROGRAMME APPROACH

1.   The incorporation of monitoring and evaluation needs (of all development partners) and modalities should be an integral part of the design, formulation and management of a national programme and its contributing components.

2.   In the context of the programme approach, monitoring and evaluation are means for contributing effectively, at all stages of programme development and management, to (a) clarifying the purpose and strategy of a proposed approach, including the results to be achieved; (b) highlighting the significance of various programme components, including their linkages as well as their causal relationship to the success of the programme, and the relevance of supporting policy actions; (c) validating the continued relevance of a programme, its components and approach; (d) responding to management needs in monitoring the performance of a given programme and its components; (e) supporting an effective decision-making process; (f) ensuring substantive accountability; and (g) promoting a learning process. For these purposes, monitoring and evaluation should be seen as advocacy means for better management practices and not only as technical ends.

3.   Monitoring and evaluation of external contributions to a national programme should be conducted, wherever possible, within the framework of the national programme, and should be harmonized and/or at least coordinated.

4.   After determining the monitoring and evaluation needs for a given programme, an assessment should be made of existing monitoring and evaluation capacity at corresponding national and sectoral levels, including both public and private institutions, and its effective functioning. The purpose of this assessment is to verify whether the monitoring and evaluation needs could be fulfilled by the current monitoring and evaluation capacity or whether some strengthening is required.

5.   Assistance, as required, to the national (executing and implementing) authorities in developing/strengthening appropriate monitoring and evaluation capacity should be foreseen as part of the contributory programme. Such assistance can comprise both training and provision of hardware/software equipment. National authorities should furthermore be assisted in the identification and/or establishment of baseline data at relevant levels of monitoring and evaluation needs.

6.   Monitoring and evaluation of a given programme should make optimal use of existing data at country level, through improved collection and analysis, for the assessment of progress based on performance indicators and success criteria.

7.   The possibility of pooling resources from individual contributory programmes for strengthening national monitoring and evaluation capacities/data collection should be explored.

8.   In the context of the programme approach, monitoring and evaluation should provide a more focused tool for achievements assessment, through the evaluation of progress towards the attainment of national development objectives. In this respect, monitoring and evaluation at the programme level may build on the monitoring and evaluation of individual components (project level) and promote their complementarity.

9.   Mechanisms should be developed for sharing experience through the establishment of informal networks for posting and transferring ideas, experience and knowledge in monitoring and evaluation. These could include electronic networks, such as the Internet, linking United Nations system practitioners at all levels and facilitating selective, user-driven, practical application.

10.   The monitoring and evaluation modality should facilitate accountability to governing bodies and funding sources, as well as answerability to beneficiaries. They should focus on the substantive performance of the programme (relevance, impact and sustainability) as well as its efficient implementation (cost effectiveness, programme adjustments, observance of timetable etc.). Financial accountability will normally be covered through the audit-related provisions foreseen for project/programme components.

11.   Sustainability of results should be seen not only in a static manner as the capacity for a specific institution to reproduce the results attained with external assistance but also in a dynamic dimension, i.e., the capacity for the institution to use the results of that assistance to further develop its own capacity for managing change.

Annex III

AGENDA

1. Adoption of the agenda.

2. Programme coordination issues:

    (a) Poverty eradication;

    (b) Post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction;

    (c) Collaboration with non-governmental organizations and other partners in civil society;

    (d) ACC standard classification of programmes;

    (e) Follow-up to International Year of the Family;

    (f) Subcommittee on Nutrition.

3. Operational activities for development:

    (a) Follow-up to the triennial comprehensive policy review;

    (b) Role and functioning of the resident coordinator system;

    (c) Programme approach;

    (d) Financing modalities for operational activities;

    (e) Operational activities handbook.

4. CCPOQ administrative issues:

    (a) Report of the Secretary;

    (b) Functioning of CCPOQ;

    (c) Future programme of work;

    (d) Nomination of CCPOQ Chairperson.

5. Other matters:

    (a) JIU reports;

    (b) Mid-term global review of the Programme of Action for the least developed countries;

(c) United Nations staff college;

(d) Habitat II;

(e) World Trade Organization;

(f) Any other business.

Annex IV

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Chairperson: N. SADIK (United Nations Population Fund)

Secretary: D. DEANE (United Nations Office at Geneva)

Technical Secretary: S. TOH (United Nations Office at Geneva)

United Nations, its entities and programmes

United Nations
  Department for Policy Coordination and   M. Stoby
  Sustainable Development   A. Haemmerli

  Department for Development Support and   D. Stillman
  Management Services

  Department of Humanitarian Affairs   R. Kent

  United Nations Centre for Human Settlements L. Ludvigsen
                                P. Garau

  Economic Commission for Europe   D.Pastizzi-Ferencic
                                G. Sambucini

  United Nations Office for Project Services D. Michel

United Nations Conference on Trade   J. M. Burley
and Development   M. S. Yeterian-Parisi
                                A. Abbas

United Nations Environment Programme   A. Renlund

United Nations Children's Fund   A. Vaher
                                P. McDermott
                                N. Galer

United Nations Development Programme   N. Chandavarkar
                                E. Cain
                                N. Fabiancic

  United Nations Volunteers Programme   R. Leigh

United Nations Population Fund   A. MacDonald
                                M. Simonen

Office of the United Nations   S. Berglund
High Commissioner for Refugees

United Nations International Drug Control   G. Day
Programme

World Food Programme   J. Chapelier

Joint and Co-sponsored United Nations   S. Cowal
Programme on HIV/AIDS   E. Manipoud

Specialized agencies and International Atomic Energy Agency

International Labour Organization   J. Sorensen
                                                        R. Kirszbaum

  International Training Centre   H. Geiser
  of the ILO at Turin   N. Tal

Food and Agriculture Organization of   E. Hein
the United Nations   B. Jacobsen

United Nations Educational, Scientific   B. Duvieusart
and Cultural Organization

International Civil Aviation Organization   B. O. Asante

World Health Organization   F. Littaua
                                                        J. M. Matsumoto
                                                        J. Martin
                                                        M. Belsey
                                                        S. Holck

World Bank   E. Pachter

International Monetary Fund   H. Shugarman

Universal Postal Union   K. K. Samawi

International Telecommunication Union   J. Elotu

World Meteorological Organization   D. Van de Vyvere

International Maritime Organization   D. J. Kerlin

World International Property Organization   V. Yossifov

International Fund for Agricultural Development   B. S. Diouf

United Nations Industrial Development   W. Luetkenhorst
Organization   S. Saiki

International Atomic Energy Agency   M. Opelz

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World Trade Organization   J. Seade

ACC Subcommittee on Nutrition   J. Mason