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FOR A FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE
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PROVISION TO DEVELOPING COUNTRY PARTIES OF
TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Addendum

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE TRAINING PROGRAMME TO PROMOTE THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

Note by the interim secretariat and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research

I. Background and Committee mandate

1. During its seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth sessions, the Committee was informed about the pilot phase of the joint training programme (CC:TRAIN) of the interim secretariat and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) to promote the implementation of the Convention (see A/AC.237/28, A/AC.237/40, A/AC.237/52 and A/AC.237/75). The Committee noted with satisfaction the progress achieved on CC:TRAIN and requested the interim secretariat and UNITAR to continue their efforts to complete the pilot phase of the programme; to prepare, in the light of the evaluation, a full proposal for the second phase; and to report on further progress to its eleventh session (A/AC.237/76, para.99).
2. CC:TRAIN aims to promote the implementation of the Convention by supporting and strengthening national institutions and processes which facilitate the development of national implementation strategies. The national implementation strategies will lay the institutional

and policy framework for future capacity building and the preparation of the national communication and its technical components, as well as outlining the policy considerations required to integrate climate change responses with national development goals.

II. Programme activities to date

3. In the three participating countries (Lithuania, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe), progress has been made in terms of strengthening the country teams and in preparing the necessary groundwork for conducting climate change studies and developing national implementation strategies. So far, much of the work of the country teams has focused on coordinating the efforts and interests of various governmental agencies in the area of climate change and coordinating bilateral and multilateral assistance relevant to climate change and the Convention.

4. A series of national consultative meetings has started in Viet Nam and Zimbabwe. These meetings aim to assist the various interested agencies and non-governmental actors in the three countries in preparing for participation at the Conference of the Parties (COP). They will also help to coordinate various initiatives related to climate change and technical study projects, as well as current international assistance activities in the three countries.

5. In Viet Nam, the country team has facilitated the ratification of the Convention. A full-time focal point within the country team has also been identified and a small secretariat established with some counterpart funding from the Government to service the country team and other activities related to climate change. The country team, for example, will be serving as coordinators for a bilateral sealevel rise study.

6. In Zimbabwe, a full-time focal person has likewise been identified who will head a small secretariat to service the country team. One of the tasks of the secretariat is to help coordinate the various climate change related projects in Zimbabwe and to ensure that these projects are harmonized within a coherent policy and institutional framework.

7. In Lithuania, progress has been slowed by the reorganization of the Environment Protection Department, which is now the Environment Protection Ministry. However, efforts are under way to enable the country team to work under the coordination of the Environment Protection Ministry.

8. Nationals designated by the country teams from Viet Nam and Lithuania have attended technical training workshops organised by the United States Country Studies Programme on national inventory and vulnerability assessment, which also provided follow-up technical assistance. The participation of these nationals was part of the cooperative arrangement developed between CC:TRAIN and the United States Country Studies Programme.

9. Work on the CC:TRAIN training packages continues. A first version of the information package on climate change and the Convention will be available during the eleventh session of the Committee. The guidance package on formulating national implementation strategies should be ready, as expected, in March 1995.

10. Contributors to the development of the training packages include the UNEP Collaborating Centre on Energy and the Environment (UNEP/RISØ), the Environmental and Social Impacts Group of the United States National Centre for Atmospheric Research, and the United States Country Studies Programme.

III. Programme evaluation

11. In October 1994, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conducted an evaluation of the pilot phase. This involved missions to the three participating countries and meetings with the responsible parties at UNDP, the interim secretariat and UNITAR. The evaluation was undertaken halfway through the pilot phase in order to determine whether the pilot phase programme was meeting its original objectives, and to provide guidance for the remaining portion of the programme, as well as to assist in the development and appraisal of a full phase project.

12. The evaluation confirmed the validity of the objectives and approach of CC:TRAIN and, in general, encouraged further support for the establishment of effective country teams on the implementation of the Convention. Its findings and recommendations may be grouped into three areas: a preliminary assessment of the current pilot phase; guidance for the remaining period of the pilot phase; and recommendations for the next phase of CC:TRAIN.

13. The evaluation made the following assessment with respect to the first nine months of the programme:

(a) Clearly CC:TRAIN alone will not result in countries being able to meet all of their commitments under the Convention nor could it fully succeed in helping countries integrate climate change strategies in existing and future development plans;

(b) The first round of national workshops and seminars was successful in raising awareness about the Convention and initiating a process for policy dialogue, but greater effort and more resources are needed immediately after the workshops in order to sustain the interest and momentum generated;

(c) While the "country team" approach is appropriate, certain changes in the timing of assistance must be made in order to address the specific needs of policy makers and the technical personnel involved. For example, the national workshop should be made more distinct from the country team seminar;

(d) The institutional arrangements for the programme between UNDP and UNITAR should have been more direct; this would have avoided the delay in launching the programme and minimized administrative overheads. On the other hand, significant institutional linkages with relevant bilateral and multilateral programmes have been established which increase the impact of the programme at the national level;

(e) While certain measures have been taken to reduce the administrative costs, most notably the reallocation of funds for the post of programme manager to the development of training resources, more resources are necessary both to develop the training resources and to support the work of the country teams;

(f) It was unrealistic to expect that a set of global training and information resources could have been developed during the first three months of the programme. In addition, the scope and costs of the task were underestimated and this has led to some delays and changes.

14. For the remaining nine months of the pilot phase, the evaluation recommended the following:

(a) More resources should be allocated to supporting the activities of country teams, developing training resources and providing guidance on the development of national implementation strategies;

(b) The role of the country teams should be made more explicit, and specific guidance on how they are to be organized, how they should function and how they could improve results, should be provided. In particular, a full-time focal point in the country team should be supported and provided with more resources to service the team;

(c) In addition, the country teams should be more actively supported to help them evolve into national committees with specific political mandates and dedicated resources to carry out the task of developing national implementation strategies;

(d) UNDP and UNITAR should work to improve the involvement of the UNDP country offices in supporting the work of country teams;

(e) For the remaining period, CC:TRAIN should focus on and devote more resources to the development of the training packages already identified as essential materials for the effective work of the country teams.

15. For the next phase of CC:TRAIN, the evaluation recommended the following:

(a) The next phase should consider developing regional networks of support institutions in the implementation of the programme in order to establish a more regular, or even continuous, presence in the participating countries;

(b) Based on the experience in the pilot phase, a longer time period -- between two and three years -- should be considered for programme implementation.

D. Plans for Phase II

16. A project document on CC:TRAIN Phase II has been prepared for submission to the GEF Council in April 1995. Several recommendations in the UNDP evaluation report have been incorporated in the project document. An independent technical review by the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the project document has already been conducted. The review made several positive suggestions and further confirmed the concept, approach and objectives of CC:TRAIN.
