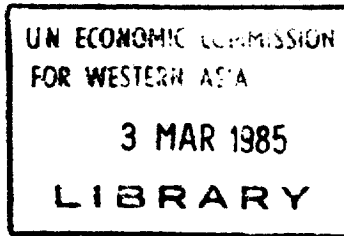




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UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distr.
GENERAL

E/ECWA/XII/CP/6
21 February 1985

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

Technical Committee
Third session
20-23 April 1985
Baghdad

Item 7 of the provisional agenda

PROGRAMME OF WORK AND PRIORITIES 1986-1987

Note by the Executive Secretary

85-0200

1. The document under review (E/ECWA/XII/CP/6/Add.1) constitutes the Commission's draft programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1986-1987. It has been formulated in accordance with specific instructions from United Nations Headquarters, in the light of pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly and in observance of the priorities established by member States.
2. In formulating the various programme proposals, due attention was given to the zero-growth policy dictated throughout the United Nations system. Accordingly, maximum restraint has been exercised in forwarding budgetary requests. As a result, the number of programme elements undertaken by the substantive Divisions has been reduced from 86 during the 1984-1985 biennium to 70 programme elements during the 1986-1987 biennium, reflecting a decrease of around 19 per cent. This reduction was effected with the objective of avoiding unnecessary proliferation of a large number of programme elements. It was governed by a measured estimate of the use of minimum resources required for the implementation of the programme, a rational perception of the scope of activities that can be efficiently and effectively undertaken by ECWA and careful planning of activities that lend themselves to inter-divisional or cross-organizational implementation at the regional and international levels.
3. The shaping of the programme of work and priorities in the light of the above-mentioned considerations involved the following: (i) the redeployment of resources to higher priority programme elements after due consideration of resources released as a result of the termination of certain activities during the 1984-1985 biennium; (ii) the conception of more comprehensive, better integrated and more action-oriented programmatic content, bearing in mind operational activities contemplated for joint implementation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), regional organizations and donor countries.
4. In this respect, it is worth noting that the concentration of resources and the shaping of a better integrated programme have also been facilitated by the acquisition of computer facilities at ECWA and the initiation of work on the establishment of a computerized data base.
5. The salient features of the proposed Programme of Work and Priorities for 1986-1987 in terms of resource requirements for established and temporary posts, the redeployment and reclassification of posts, consultancies, travel, meetings and publications are outlined below.

(a) Established posts for the period under review comprise 108 Professional and 207 local level posts. Compared with the 1984-1985 biennium, this reflects an increase of one professional post requested for supporting activities undertaken by the newly established Electronic Data Processing and Information System (EDPIS) at ECWA.

(b) In observance of the reallocation of priorities mandated by the member States during the second session for the Standing Committee for the Programme (resolution I (II)), a total of four Professional and five local level posts have been proposed for redeployment in order to keep abreast with the suggested programmatic revisions.

(c) In the above context, it also found necessary to review the job descriptions of the entire Professional staff at ECWA and to propose the reclassification of seven posts. Due attention was given to General Assembly resolution 38/106 relating to the provision of a senior women's programme officer.

(d) It was also proposed that a total of six established Professional posts, funded from extrabudgetary resources, should be retained during the 1986-1987 biennium in addition to the re-establishment of one extrabudgetary post which was previously allocated during the 1980-1981 biennium to the Management of Technical Co-operation Unit.

(e) A total of 27 consultancies is foreseen under the regular budget during the 1986-1987 biennium. In terms of cost, this represents an increase of \$US 43,000 over the 1984-1985 biennium attributable to the need of the Division of Administration for the service of a legal advisor, a medical doctor and an education specialist.

(f) Five ad hoc expert group meetings under the regular budget are planned for the 1986-1987 biennium, compared with a total of eight similar meetings held during 1984-1985. The estimated cost of the meetings represents considerable savings of \$US 86,100. Two additional ad hoc expert group meetings financed from extrabudgetary resources and five inter-governmental meetings are also planned during the 1986-1987 biennium.

(g) Proposed requirements, for travel of staff represent an increase of \$US 9,900 over the current biennium attributable to the necessity of strengthening the work on the Annual Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the ECWA Region and to the establishment of the ECWA statistical data base.

(h) In connection with proposed publications for the 1986-1987 biennium, a total of 37 issues of recurrent publications, 42 studies or reports and the proceedings of 3 meetings, amounting to a total of 82 documents, is foreseen. It is expected that 90 per cent of these documents will be printed at ECWA, owing to the introduction of internal printing and text processing facilities, thus effecting a sizeable reduction in the cost of printing.

6. The adoption of the proposed programme of work and priorities is subject to review by the Budget Division at United Nations Headquarters and the approval of the concerned legislative organs of the United Nations.