

RECTOR'S PROGRESS REPORT  
(for July-December 1983)\*

The University has now moved perceptibly from its initial five years into its new direction under the Medium-Term Perspective (MTP). As 1983 ends we are through the first third of the six-year MTP.

You will recall that when we were about to enter 1982, the first year of the MTP, I referred to it as a time of passage, and through the second year I showed that there was convincing evidence that we were moving in the right direction. In planning for the biennium 1984-1985, therefore, with four years left under the MTP, we had to pause and take stock of how things stand in our Medium-Term Perspective. Given the work that has been accomplished during this second year, 1983, I think we can say that we have weathered the difficulties in moving into the University's next stage, we have achieved progress in our University Programme, and we now are on the threshold of a major institutional development.

In this progress report I shall concentrate on the three major topics on the agenda of this twenty-second session of the Council.

- (1) the Proposed UNU Programme and Budget for the Biennium 1984-1985;
- (2) the proposed establishment of the World Institute for Development Economics Research (WIDER) as the first UNU research and training centre; and
- (3) external evaluation of post-graduate fellowship training and selected associated relationships of the UNU.

To enable me to focus on these principal topics before us, I am providing you a written summary of activities and developments that have occurred since the twenty-first session last summer.

(1) Proposed UNU Programme and Budget for the Biennium 1984-1985

As agreed to by the Council at its eighteenth session in November 1981, the University will now be adopting its first biennial Programme and Budget, for 1984-1985. This enables us to plan and fund our research, post-graduate training and dissemination activities for a period twice as long as we have been used to do since 1975, thus affords us more certainty, continuity and flexibility in our programme development and management. As in the past two years, our planning, programming and budgeting for 1984-1985 have been guided by Council policies, objectives and themes embodied in the Medium-Term Perspective (1982-1987).

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\* Presented on 5 December during the twenty-second session of the Council of the UN University

Under the MTP "the long-term programmatic goal is to develop and carry out a broader, coherent, decentralized, responsive and flexible over-all University Programme." I believe we can say with confidence that, with the Council's full support, we have made progress toward this goal and will continue to do so in the coming biennium.

You will recall that we began by organizing the over-all University Programme into 12 sub-programmes. Each sub-programme was placed under the primary responsibility of one of the three Vice-Rectors in charge of programmatic work. However, our experience in 1982 and 1983 has indicated that the sub-programmes tend to become compartmentalized under separate programme managers. As a course correction, we decided to transform the 12 sub-programmes into 9 programme areas. The programme areas are open to all the three programme divisions, Development Studies Division, Regional and Global Studies Division, and Global Learning Division. Consequently, the new arrangement would encourage greater pluralism in approaches and greater interaction and interdisciplinarity among projects grouped under a particular programme area which can now be managed by different programme directors.

The nine interrelated programme areas, each with ongoing and new projects, are:

1. Peace and Conflict Resolution
2. Global Economy
3. Energy Systems and Policy
4. Resource Policy and Management
5. Food-Energy Nexus
6. Food, Nutrition, Biotechnology and Poverty
7. Human and Social Development
8. Regional Perspectives
9. Science, Technology and the Information Society

The University Programme with its nine programme areas and over 40 projects is designed to achieve greater coherence through coordination and integration across the programme divisions and programme areas and between the University Centre and its various networks around the world.

By bringing all the MTP elements of the five themes and the programme areas under the overarching Charter concern for "human survival, development and welfare", it is possible to categorize the work of the University into three main thrusts which define its emerging intellectual profile: (1) peace and conflict resolution, (2) development in a changing world, and (3) science and technology for human welfare.

Following established practice, the Proposed UNU Programme and Budget for the Biennium 1984-1985 is presented in two parts: Part I, Organization and Management and the University Programme in Medium-Term Perspective; and Part II, Budget. In Part I the programme areas and projects are explained in relation to our five themes which are also briefly elucidated. In Part II, the component projects and activities of the University Programme are described in the text opposite the budgetary allocations I am proposing.

For convenience, I have provided you with a Budget Summary Presentation which contains the necessary tables and the part of the Budget document that requires the Council's adoption. For now let me just say that, exclusive of the funds to be generated by establishing our first research and training centres, the proposed 1984-1985 Programme and Budget now before you is based on an income of \$37,300,000 and represents an increase of \$2,500,000, or 7.4 per cent, over the 1982-1983 figure, without taking into account the inflation factor.

(2) The Proposed Establishment of WIDER

Under the MTP "the long-term institutional goal is to make the University a more decentralized and a multi-centred institution whose continuing presence, activities and impact are felt in more countries and regions, and globally." In other words, we aim steadily to make the UNU a truly global university of the 21st Century. Towards this goal the Council has guided and encouraged exploration, planning and negotiations concerning three or four possible research and training centres to be created in various regions but serving worldwide constituencies of the University. Council also adopted statutes laying down general and specific criteria for institutional relations and development. Last summer Council put on the agenda for this session the matter of approval of any draft agreements on WIDER, Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (INRA) and the International Institute for Biotechnology.

It will be my great pleasure to present to you tomorrow the generous offers of the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Government of Finland to host what would be, with Council's approval of its establishment, the World Institute for Development Economics Research, UNU's first research and training centre. The establishment of WIDER would be a milestone in the University's development as "a world-wide system of research and training centres and programmes", as envisaged in the University Charter.

Inasmuch as WIDER is the first research and training center to be set up by the Council, I wish to call attention to the fact that it took us two years, since the Council's eighteenth session in November 1981, to explore, plan and negotiate for its establishment under the Council's policy guidance. This process is briefly recalled in my introduction to the proposed Statute establishing WIDER. The proposed Statute provides details of the legal status, structure, location, purposes and activities, personnel and funding of WIDER; these are designed to fulfill the general and specific criteria adopted by the Council in the Statute on Institutional Structure and Relationships.

The hallmark of WIDER would be a high scholarly capability and institutional autonomy, within the UNU framework, in marshalling and examining facts, formulating hypotheses, and proposing policy choices in regard to the multifarious problems of the global economy. While the work of WIDER would not automatically result in the development of new economic concepts or theories, its establishment would help create conditions that should stimulate and support efforts towards conceptual and theoretical breakthroughs both within and outside the UN University, through its systematic co-operation with a network of existing national

institutions and international organizations. Accordingly, WIDER should aim at playing a catalytic role that would help to co-ordinate, integrate and make more effective the many existing efforts rather than duplicate them.

As the prototype research and training centre of the UNU, we have designed WIDER's structure and relationships with its network and with the University Centre in ways that would best ensure academic excellence, relevance to the overall concerns of UNU, and accountability to the Council. Among the basic principles of academic organization and management underlying the Statute on WIDER are those that would:

- (1) facilitate the fulfillment of UNU's purposes under its Charter and the policies and objectives determined by the Council for the whole University and for WIDER itself;
- (2) enable WIDER to organize its work with the optimal autonomy, freedom and efficiency that are among the essential pre-conditions for achieving academic excellence and effectiveness;
- (3) ensure the institutional integrity of the UNU as a whole and the coherence and synergy in the relationships and interactions between the over-all University Programme and the programme of WIDER, and between the University Centre and WIDER;
- (4) guarantee the academic freedom of WIDER;
- (5) ensure the Council's full, ultimate control and direction of WIDER;
- (6) maintain, at all times, WIDER's responsibility and accountability to the Council whose delegated authority WIDER's Board and Director would be exercising;
- (7) ensure the Rector's authority and responsibility vis-a-vis WIDER, as the chief academic and administrative officer of the University;
- (8) provide an effective presence of the University in the country and region of WIDER's location and the UNU's world-wide network; and
- (9) provide for strengthening of the University's relations with universities, research centres and organizations concerned with global economics and development, and help strengthen the academic and scientific capabilities of institutions and scholars, particularly in developing countries.

In my opinion the philosophy of WIDER and the principles of organization and management upon which the Institute is based are sound and valid. I believe, furthermore, that the Proposed Statute in particular, as well as the Draft Memorandum of Understanding and Draft Host Country

Agreement, supporting the proposal for Council to establish WIDER, fulfill the general and specific criteria laid down by the Council.

I think you should know that we have kept the two prospective host governments of WIDER informed of our negotiations with each of them. Their generous offers of contributions to the Endowment Fund earmarked for the institute and other financial support, as well as of physical facilities, are impressive indeed. The offers and pledges would seem to validate the policy and strategy adopted by the University in mobilizing for its work in its research and training centres substantial funds that would not otherwise be available to it. Far from becoming a drain on the resources of the University, the establishment of WIDER would add from US\$20 million to US\$30 million to the University's Endowment Fund, from the host government alone. We expect the contributions of other interested Member States, foundations and organizations to the support of WIDER.

More generally, the increased visibility and credibility of the UNU as an academic institution, resulting from the establishment of the research and training centres, will undoubtedly also enhance the significance of the general programmatic work of the UNU Centre, and stimulate the interest of various countries to make general contributions to the Endowment Fund.

I request Council to study and discuss the two offers which are set out in a comparative framework. At the end of a closed session tomorrow, I hope Council will conclude its consideration of WIDER, decide on which offer to accept, and approve the statute for the institute, the host country agreement, and the memorandum of understanding confirming the selected host country's offers and pledges. Following the Council's decision, I shall take the next steps, including the selection of the members of the Board and the appointment of a search committee for the director of WIDER, as well as the establishment of a joint working group of the UN University and the host government to deal with the various matters related to the establishment of the institute. Efforts should also be undertaken to ensure the continued goodwill and collaboration of the country whose offer has not been taken up by the Council.

Compared to WIDER we are not yet ready to present any draft agreements on the INRA or the International Institute for Biotechnology (IIB). However, we have made progress with respect both to INRA and IIB, and I have provided you with separate reports concerning both proposed institutions and also the proposed research and training centre in Japan.

(3) External Evaluation Reports on Post-Graduate Training and Selected Associated Relationships

The Council established the policy on evaluation of the work of the University when it adopted the MTP and the provisional statutes. In the MTP Council emphasized the importance of systematic evaluation, including independent external evaluation. "In the medium-term," the MTP says, "the University will strive to ... evaluate the University's

development in its initial stage, from 1975 to 1981, and in its next stage, from 1982 to 1987, and for this purpose among others, establish the Planning and Evaluation Services to assist the Rector and Vice-Rectors in the evaluation process." We have complied with the MTP by stepping up the external evaluation of the University's development, focussing initially on the networks and their relations with the University Centre and the training role of the University.

In presenting to you the individual evaluation reports by our external evaluators and my "Comments" on them, I wish to emphasize that these are in the nature of "feedback", as much the external evaluations constitute important management tools for the Council in setting the overall policies for the evaluation of the UNU for the Council's own use in evaluating the University's experience in fellowship training and its relationships with our associated institutions. The Committee on Institutional and Programmatic Development has had a fruitful initial discussion of these inputs to the Council's deliberations. I look forward to the Council's consideration of the reports and my "Comments" so that we can be guided by Council in our efforts to plan specific ideas and carry out recommendations for improving both our post-graduate training and our associated relationships. In the meantime, I have indicated to you some of my tentative responses to the reports in my two sets of "Comments" which I have given you.

#### Post-Graduate Training

As of December 1983, the University has awarded 478 fellowships and 369 Fellows have completed their training. As decided by the Council, the University has directed an increasing share of resources to fellowships and training. The allocation of funds to fellowships will be increased from 10.5 per cent in 1982-83 to 11.9 per cent in 1984-85. Fellowship and training funds will be increased from US\$3.5 million to US\$4.4 million, or a 23.7 per cent increase, whereas research, seminars and workshops, publications, and institutional grants will be increased from US\$11.6 million to US\$14.4 million, or a 24.6 per cent increase. In addition, the Governments of Ireland and Spain have expressed their interest in contributing funds specifically for UNU training.

The external evaluation of post-graduate training was carried out by Dr. Gelia T. Castillo, Professor of Rural Sociology, University of the Philippines, and Dr. Antonio Ordonez-Plaja, former Minister of Health, Columbia, former Chairman of UNICEF Board, presently part-time consultant in Public Health to the World Bank and to PAHO/WHO and part-time Professor of Instituto Colombiano del Sistema Nervioso. The report is a valuable contribution to the University's efforts to systematically assess its training activities and their development.

The primary aim of the University's fellowship training activities, which is linked closely with its research and dissemination of knowledge activities, is to help scholars, particularly young scholars, develop or improve analytical skills, understanding of complex problems in a global context, and the ability to conduct and direct research. A further aim is to help alleviate the intellectual isolation of persons in Third World scientific and academic communities and, by the same token, to

help reduce the brain drain. A major aim of post-graduate training is, in fact, to strengthen the capacity of Third World institutions, in particular, through the training of institution-builders, high-level researchers and leaders in human resource development to help stimulate endogenous development for self-reliance.

Most of the fellowship training activities until now have been concentrated in work that was done in and emerged from the former World Hunger Programme and the Natural Resources Programme. The MTP has paved the way for the broadening of training to include greater inter-disciplinarity and to undertake new activities under its five themes in such areas as the studies on peace and global transformation, global economics, bio-technology, food-energy nexus, global learning and communications.

In their conclusions the evaluators said that a large majority of UNU Fellows have found that their training contributed greatly to their problem-solving skills, enhancing their status and broadening their horizons. They pointed out that those Fellows who received village-level experience unanimously endorsed it. Some of the Special Fellows have made significant contributions to policy decisions and to developing inter-institutional relations. It is also noted that the selection of Fellows has been done very carefully.

The analysis of the regional distribution of UNU fellowships by the evaluators points to the need for a better regional distribution of fellowships to increase the number especially from Africa and the Middle East. Already, efforts are in progress to select more candidates from these regions in order to correct the imbalance.

The other points raised by the evaluators concern the need for greater interdisciplinarity in training, the UNU after being understood by the Fellows merely as a financial source, and the need for greater effort to meet individual academic needs of the Fellows.

While the concept, aims and activities of the University are increasingly better understood by governments, institutions, organizations and the UN system itself, we cannot claim that correct knowledge of the University is widespread. Within the limitations of its human and financial resources, the University undertakes various activities to overcome this. However, misconceptions about the University persist to varying degrees. The evaluators' report refers to at least two such misconceptions; the first is that the UNU is perceived mainly as a donor agency by associated institutions and by the Fellows. Secondly, the University does not undertake follow-up action once the training of a Fellow is completed. The University's input has and will continue mainly to be intellectual and also partly financial in nature. UNU Fellows have been participating in UNU workshops and symposia and have also contributed to the review of the programme activities of the University. It is of course important for the University to be in touch with Fellows once they have completed their training. However, as the number of Fellows trained by the University increases, it will not be possible for the University to involve all the Fellows in substantial interaction with it. The University will, therefore, have to study the

most effective means by which opportunities can be provided for some Fellows to participate more actively in the work of the University in addition to its maintaining communication with them.

The evaluation report has brought to light a number of questions that will have to be dealt with more systematically over a period of time. It has contributed to highlighting the strengths as well as weaknesses and limitations of the University's fellowship training. Some of the issues have been resolved, while others with policy implications for the whole University will have to be dealt with in various ways and over a longer time span. The report has also covered other matters of concern to the University, including the misconceptions about the University. It is necessary to overcome these misconceptions and to disseminate correct information on the concept and work of the University.

The evaluation report as a whole has been most valuable in helping to make all those involved in the University's training activities recognize a number of points which deserve special attention in developing the UNU's fellowship activities.

#### Selected Association Relationships

The external evaluation of the University's relationships with selected associated institutions was organized in October-November 1982 and examined four institutions within the framework of the former Human and Social Development Programme and the former Programme on the Use and Management of Natural Resources. As the Human and Social Development Programme had not undertaken any training activities but had concentrated on research, the evaluation considered the associated relationships with the Institute of Developing Economies (IDE), Japan, which co-ordinated the research project on Technology Transfer, Transformation and Development: the Japanese Experience; and the Marga Institute in Sri Lanka, which co-ordinated the project on the Sharing of Traditional Technologies. The evaluation of the work within the former Natural Resources Programme examined the associated relationship with the University of Khartoum, Institute of Environmental Studies (IES), Sudan, which participated in the project on the Assessment of the Application of Scientific Knowledge to Arid Lands Problems, and with the University of Ife, Department of Geography, Nigeria, which had undertaken a project in Energy Systems for Rural Communities.

The IDE and the Marga Institute evaluations were undertaken by Dr. Arne Haselbach, Director of the Vienna Institute for Development, and Professor K.J. Ratnam of University Sains Malaysia. The evaluations of the University of Khartoum and the University of Ife were carried out by Professor Georges Aubert, Inspecteur General de Recherches de Office de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique Outre-Mer (ORSTOM), France, and Professor George Benneh of the Department of Geography, University of Ghana, Legon.

In order to ensure that all concerned would benefit from these evaluations, the reports were sent to the respective institutional co-ordinators for comment and were studied by programme directors and by

staff at the University Centre. Their views have been taken into consideration in the preparation of my own comments. The reports have been helpful to the University and to institutional co-ordinators in making course corrections, and will be useful in the future development of research, training, and dissemination activities. The evaluation exercises have helped to bring the institutions and the University closer together and to promote better understanding between them. They also pave the way for new types of future co-operation to be developed in line with the policy of continuing cooperative relationships where the original programme upon which the association was based had been phased out.

In my "Comments" on the evaluation reports on selected association relationships I summarized some of the lessons we can learn from the shared experience of the UN Centre and the four associated institutions.

The evaluations have been helpful not only in the assessment of the associated relationships but also in the understanding of the difficulties and problems involved in the implementation of the projects, building of networks, and developing interdisciplinarity and multi-dimensionality. The experience gained and lessons learned should be valuable for better planning and organization of the complex of relationships and programmes of work in the future, and for more efficient implementation of the UN University Programme.

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Before closing I should like to just call your attention to the resolution of the Economic and Social Council asking the University Council to consider rescheduling its sessions so that its annual report can be submitted to the General Assembly through the ECOSOC. This may have implications for the frequency of Council sessions as I have explained in document L.12, and in terms of the updating of the Council's Annual Report when reporting to our sponsoring institutions.

Substantial progress has been made in planning for the permanent headquarters of the United Nations University. Several meetings have been held between the Ministry of Education of the Government of Japan and the United Nations University at different levels with a view to arriving at a mutual understanding on the size and other characteristics of the headquarters facilities and a research and training centre in Japan. Although no firm commitments can be made at this stage with regard to the establishment of a research and training centre in Japan, the site for the research and training centre would be reserved within the site for the permanent headquarters and this factor would be taken into account in determining the plans for the headquarters building.

Since the twenty-first session of the Council last summer, the University has organized two consultations on the proposed research and training centre in Japan: one with Japanese scholars and scientists and the other with officials of the Government of Japan. The first meeting held on 22 September 1983, brought together a cross-section of Japanese scholars and scientists for an exchange of views on various long-term

options for the proposed research and training centre. The second consultation was held on 21 October 1983 with officials of the Government of Japan who had been informed of the various views expressed by the scholars and scientists at the first meeting. The University plans to convene another consultative meeting in early 1984 in which a limited number of international scholars and scientists from various parts of the world and from Japan can examine the various possibilities for the research and training centre. Consultations of this nature will continue in the future as appropriate.

In closing, I thank you for your attention to the three main subjects of this Council session that I have just presented for your consideration. These are not only the outcome of several years of evolution of the UNU, both programmatically and institutionally, but will be also the bases and framework for the University's work in the next two or more years. I have presented them together at the beginning of this session in order to highlight the main issues and decisions that we must resolve.