

data are scarce. Yet, simple quantification exercises can be very useful to put some bounds on future possibilities.

- (iii) Provide discussion papers to the national teams on selection criteria to choose among the available tools and methods available to them and mentioned in the methodological papers for each phase of the implementation guidelines.
- (iv) Design a strategy to assign specific roles to country officers of UNDP, the World Bank and other stakeholders. A stronger involvement of these officers would certainly benefit the project. This strategy should include but not be limited to provisions for them to obtain and disseminate available institutional documents and information (for example, World Bank's global analysis and country strategy papers, both macroeconomic and sectorial). Their role in sensitization tasks, in maintaining the governments interest in long-term planning, and in providing contacts with other projects with long-term implications could be very valuable. A more creative approach should be devised by the regional team.
- (v) The regional team should respond promptly and critically in writing to all documents being produced by the national teams. All technical weaknesses detected in the national efforts by the regional team should be fed back to the national teams as soon as possible so that corrective actions may be taken.
- (vi) The regional team should encourage direct exchanges of information and experiences between participants of the different NLTPSs. This would be valuable not only for team leaders and members of staff, but also for the «National Prospective Commissions» or equivalent consultative and supervisory bodies which have been established in most or all of the NLTPSs.
- (vii) The evaluation mission is convinced that an explicit decision to limit the number of countries where NLTPSs are undertaken, in order to concentrate for example in those four or five countries where NLTPSs are more advanced or proceeding at a faster pace, would not necessarily enhance the effectiveness of the African Futures project. On the contrary, it could hamper some of the advances already made and limit the impact and credibility of the exercise. Further, concentrating in a few countries would not guarantee that progress would be faster or that the analysis would be deeper. Present implementation problems are not related to inadequate or insufficient attention by the regional team, but rather to prevailing conditions in these countries and some project design limitations which should be accepted rather than modified. The evaluation mission recommends that the **decision as to the number and selection of countries where NLTPSs are to proceed be left to the regional team**, which is in a better position to pass judgement and has fresher field information. The evaluation mission found the regional team to be very

responsible and is certain that it would not put the project in any kind of peril simply out of stubbornness.

- (viii) The methodology should be strengthened in its strategic planning side. Activities included in subprogramme (c) above are considered an important step in this direction, but still insufficient.
- (ix) It was also detected during the country visits that the national teams would appreciate more information and guidance during the transitions between phases of the methodological guideline.
- (x) As pointed out in previous sections of this report, the evaluation mission feels that the project would benefit if national teams were provided with some long-term frameworks of reference on possible continental and/or regional futures. The regional team has already commissioned some papers in this direction, but it is felt that more should be done. Further, it is recommended that these papers receive a much wider diffusion than has been the case so far, both within and outside the national teams, even in their draft version.
- (xi) Participation of the national team leaders in efforts such as the workshop planned with the Millennium project of the United Nations University would increase the awareness of the national teams to possible influential external factors and could help the development of a core of shared views or issues to be considered in all the country efforts. It is recommended that at least the leaders of teams which are already in phase II or more advanced be invited to this workshop.
- (xii) The regional team's efforts to increase the dissemination of its activities and the results obtained so far by the regional and national teams should be intensified. Many of the activities in the corresponding 1994 work subprogramme (see (f) above) are directed towards groups not involved in the project (futures studies practitioners in general), to let them know of its development. Much more emphasis should be placed on disseminating the specific results obtained so far among all the stakeholders directly or indirectly involved in the project. The evaluation mission had access to drafts of valuable documents not known to the national teams, nor to their supervisory or consultative bodies, or the sponsoring agencies and donors. These documents should have a much wider circulation, even if they are still in a preliminary version. Their dissemination should also be encouraged within a wider audience (ie, government officials, key intellectual figures, distinguished and responsible members of the mass media, etc).
- (xiii) Communication channels between the regional team and the sponsoring agencies and donors should be reviewed. Many more officers of these agencies should be kept informed than those officially in charge of the project. Both the

regional team and the sponsoring agencies should collaborate with each other in order to facilitate more fluid information exchanges. Responsibility should not rest only in the regional team. Concerted efforts by all parties are needed. The evaluation mission believes that some of the apparent differences of perception on what has been or can be achieved by the project and possible adjustments to it, derive in a great measure from insufficient and partial information flows.

- (xiv) The evaluation mission is under the impression that the regional team is under unnecessary pressures from too many sources. It has to respond to too many clients, which not always coincide in direction, and this hinders its job. UNDP in particular should clarify the proper authority and/or procedural channels regarding the different aspects of the project. This is particularly important given the complexity and scope of the project.
- (xv) The evaluation mission suggests that either the Technical Advisory Board (TAB) of the African Futures project be abolished or its functions and operating procedures be redefined. It is understandable that due to financial constraints the expected 1994 TAB meeting may be cancelled. Under these conditions, the TAB will not be able to fulfill its original assignment (advising on priority research/study themes, the preparation of the conceptual and methodological framework, the establishment of the regional data bank, and the training programs). Under the present arrangement, possible TAB inputs to the project would come too late to have any impact on its development. A 1995 TAB meeting would make no sense, unless the reason for holding it was based on political or other reasons rather than on technical ones. Considering that TAB inputs could be valuable to the project, perhaps other operating procedures should be sought, provided these do not represent an additional and/or excessive work load or costs for the regional team.

E.4. NLTPS Implementation and Results.

E.4.a. Background.

The following evaluation of how the exercise is being implemented in practice is based mainly on the field visits paid to five countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea-Bissau, Swaziland and Zambia. The limited time available to visit each country allowed only for a few interviews with the national teams leaders and members of staff and with a few individuals involved in the exercises (ie, UNDP resident representatives and/or field economists, members of the consultative or supervisory boards of the NLTPSs, and some government officials). Given the complexity and width of scope of the NLTPSs this allows only for a partial and very limited view of the implementation process. Although efforts were made by the evaluation mission to complement the information using sources provided by the

regional team members, the following has to be taken as an incomplete and possibly biased assessment (country reports are attached as annexes).

E.4.b. Assessment.

1. Implementation in practice

(i) Côte d'Ivoire.

Côte d'Ivoire's NLTPS is **the most advanced in the implementation process**. The Côte d'Ivoire's government had previously commissioned at least two long-term country studies: *Côte d'Ivoire 2000* (in 1969-70) and *Côte d'Ivoire 2010* (in 1974-75). They were done by foreign consultants, with limited participation of society. The latter, done by the French Office of Foreign Studies, is a good although partial study, which apparently stirred some discussions on the long-term futures of the country, but which had no noticeable impact on the short and medium term plans of the government. However, these efforts show that the government already had certain degree of sensitivity to the need for long-term visions of the country's futures, before embarking in the present NLTPS. The study is being done by the National Plan Office, within the governmental structures (Ministry of Finance). The national team was identified at the end of 1992. Discussions with the African Futures' regional team leader were held during January 1993 and the corresponding Project Document was signed in February, 1993. The national team became operational in March-April, 1993. A «National Futures Commission» of a consultative nature was formally installed in October, 1993. The national team consists of four members, including the team leader, who is the Director of the National Plan (Ministry of Finance). He relies on an adjunct Coordinator, who is a planner within the National Plan Office. Work is being done basically by two of the team members; an economist and a geographer. During the initial stages of the project a sociologist was incorporated to the team, but he later left (officially because there were difficulties in negotiating his being commissioned to the project). The team leader is too busy with his other governmental responsibilities (in fact, he was too busy even to receive the evaluation mission) and he is not active in the project activities. Nevertheless, it is him who has to make all important decisions and apparently he does so in some instances without full information or understanding. The two operational members of the national team seem both competent in their own fields, but it seems they would be unable to take on the needed leadership. During their interview they showed discrepancies of opinion as to the approach which should be followed in the project and on their interpretation of the process as a whole. The **institutional set-up** for the project is, therefore, in the eyes of the evaluation mission, **far from ideal** (and violates some of the premises established by the NLTPS