



Technical co-operation among developing countries

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TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Enhancing the capacities of developing countries for technical co-operation

Summary

In response to the Decision of the Governing Council at its twenty-fourth session, 1/ the Administrator submits this report. In view of recommendations 31 and 32 of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, the report is also submitted to the High-level intergovernmental meeting on the review of technical co-operation among developing countries for its consideration.

This report was prepared by four consultants. The Administrator endorses the report in general. On some of the subjects contained in this report there are, however, relevant recommendations which Governments may also wish to consider in such reports as the Study on the role of experts in development assistance, 2/ Country programming as an instrument for co-ordination and co-operation at the country level, 3/ and the Role of qualified national personnel in the social and economic development of developing countries. 4/

The report reviews the utilization of developing country capacities in technical co-operation projects and considers ways of strengthening technical co-operation among developing countries (TCDC) during the Third UNDP Indicative Planning Figure (IPF) Cycle and the Third United Nations Development Decade. Recommendations to Governments and the organizations of the United Nations system are made under each of these three headings. A brief summary of the main recommendations is included in the report.

1/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council (E/6013/Rev.1), p. 145.

2/ DP/334.

3/ DP/254.

4/ DP/443.

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I. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are broad recommendations covered in detail in the text of the report:

1. There should be stronger emphasis in the future on TCDC as an instrument for intercountry co-operation in those fields and programmes where developing countries have built up indigenous capabilities, acquired experience that is unique to their problems and conditions and where there are mutual advantages and complementarities in co-operating among themselves.
2. Particular attention should be given to the integration of TCDC as part of the activities of existing intergovernmental organizations, regional and subregional integration schemes and other structures established by developing countries in their common interest.
3. Lasting co-operative arrangements at the substantive and technical level should be systematically promoted by linking appropriate institutions, facilities and programmes in various fields in developing countries willing to commit themselves to serve as partners in technical co-operation.
4. There is an urgent need to improve the system of information on TCDC needs, capacities and opportunities so as to ensure an efficient flow of information to Governments and institutions of developing countries using the facilities of the United Nations organizations and through arrangements between the developing countries themselves; gaps in information needed for operational purposes (including experience obtained at the project identification and formulation stage) represent at present one of the main problems affecting TCDC. Information Referral System (TCDC/INRES) offers excellent potential for reducing this gap.
5. Efforts should be made to associate horizontal technical co-operation structures and programmes in the developing world with technical and financial resources of developed countries including institutions, plants and other facilities in fields where sharing of capacities and experience would be beneficial to developing countries.
6. In the promotion of TCDC activities in the above directions, the United Nations system should play a catalytic, supportive and innovative rather than operational role. To this end a change of emphasis is needed from input-oriented project concern to a broader approach of promoting and strengthening mechanisms and programmes to expand and diversify TCDC as part of the natural process of intercountry co-operation in the developing world.

Specific suggestions and recommendations related to the above points are contained in sections IV and V of the report.

7. Although TCDC should concentrate primarily on intercountry co-operation outlined in the report and briefly summarized above, there is a need to continue efforts to ensure the full utilization of developing country capacities in

projects assisted by the United Nations system, as foreseen in recommendations 31 and 32 of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action and decisions on TCDC made by the UNDP Governing Council at its 24th session. It is important that the focus of these activities be on opportunities and advantages rather than on constraints which have already been discussed and studied by the UNDP Governing Council and the governing bodies of many of the agencies. These efforts should be result-oriented in terms of helping to solve problems or reaching project objectives rather than merely attempting to increase project inputs from developing countries. There is a particular advantage in using developing country capacities in fields where they have accumulated valuable and often unique experience through their own development efforts under conditions peculiar to developing countries.

Recommendations related to these matters are contained in section III.

8. The Third UNDP IPF Cycle (1982-1986) will provide new opportunities for TCDC action which should be an integral part of the preparation of the country programmes and of project formulation, execution and evaluation. In addition, TCDC can help to meet needs identified during the programming process but which cannot be accommodated in the country programme.

9. The strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade now in the process of preparation should set out in broad terms the ways in which TCDC can help as one element in attaining the objectives established by the General Assembly.

Recommendations related to points 8 and 9 are contained in sections IV and V, respectively.

II. INTRODUCTION

1. At its twenty-fourth session (13 June-1 July 1977), the Governing Council adopted a series of proposals and recommendations aimed at promoting access to opportunities for providing project inputs by developing countries under the technical co-operation programmes of the United Nations development system. The Governing Council considered that the utilization of the capacity of developing countries for providing experts and consultants, fellowship placements, subcontracted services as well as equipment and supplies constitutes an important means of strengthening technical co-operation in general and technical co-operation among developing countries (TCDC) in particular. The Governing Council decision listed a number of measures to be undertaken by the Administrator, including the preparation of "a technical study on criteria for evaluation of project inputs from developed and developing countries in the context of operational needs of technical co-operation programmes". In response to this request the present report was prepared by the following team of consultants through the Special TCDC Unit of the UNDP: Kurt Jansson (Finland), Co-ordinator, Kazi M. Badruddoza (Bangladesh), Oumar Touré (Senegal) and Harry Will (Sierra Leone).

2. Information for the report was obtained from existing documents and, in particular, through consultations with Governments and with specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system. In the course of these

consultations, carried out by the consultants and by staff members of the Special Unit for TCDC, a number of countries in all developing regions were visited and meetings were held with officials concerned with technical co-operation and TCDC in particular. Discussions were also held with representatives of several developed countries. Within the system, consultations were arranged at Headquarters level with officials of the major agencies. Regional and local agency personnel were also consulted to the extent that this was possible during visits to developing countries. The suggestions and comments made during these consultations have been taken into account in the preparation of the report.

Approach to the report

3. The above-mentioned Governing Council decision should be seen in the light of subsequent developments, particularly the plan of action for promoting and implementing technical co-operation among developing countries, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, held in Buenos Aires from 30 August to 12 September 1978. The plan of action places TCDC in the context of the attainment of the new international economic order and the determination of the developing countries to achieve national and collective self-reliance. As elaborated in the plan of action, TCDC is an important instrument for strengthening international co-operation for development including especially economic co-operation. As such, TCDC has a broader objective than merely attempting to increase the use of developing country inputs in technical co-operation projects. The consultants have therefore interpreted the Governing Council's concept of "criteria" to mean factors that influence TCDC as one of the instruments for strengthening the developing countries economically and institutionally.

4. Section III of the report reviews, in the light of recommendations 31 and 32 of the Buenos Aires plan of action, the present situation regarding the utilization of developing country capacities in projects involving the United Nations system, and section IV looks ahead at the Third UNDP IPF Cycle (1982-1986) in terms of ways of increasing the use of these capacities. Section V considers the outlook for TCDC in the United Nations Third Development Decade in the light of the basic objective of strengthening the position of developing countries in international development co-operation. In each section suggestions and recommendations are made for the further promotion of TCDC as foreseen in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action.

III. UTILIZATION OF DEVELOPING COUNTRY CAPACITIES FOR PROJECT INPUTS

5. It should be pointed out that while this section reviews, in accordance with the mandate given by the Governing Council for the report, the subject at hand from the point of view of the United Nations system, many of the conclusions and observations in the report are mutatis mutandis applicable to TCDC in the wider context of strengthening technical co-operation for development through all appropriate arrangements, as further discussed in section V. This is so because many of the recommendations and suggestions included in the present section deal

with the organizational aspects of TCDC at the Government level with the aim of strengthening structures and institutions for TCDC in general whether or not the United Nations system is involved but drawing on the wide experience of United Nations organizations in technical co-operation. At the international level, the system should be prepared to assist Governments in finding the most appropriate inputs for projects regardless of the source of financing and the mode of project execution. Hence, recommendations for improving the functioning of the agencies in this respect have implications for TCDC beyond the confines of United Nations-assisted programmes.

6. The policies and practices of the United Nations development system have changed greatly over the past three decades. Technical assistance through direct transfer of skills and techniques to a "recipient country" has become technical co-operation based on the fact that the Governments now have full responsibility for the formulation, implementation and follow-up of projects for which they seek the co-operation of United Nations organizations. Since the adoption by the Governing Council of the decision on "new dimensions in technical co-operation" in 1975, the United Nations system has continued to adapt its policies and procedures in order to put this principle into practice. A clear expression of this evolution was contained in Governing Council decision 25/20 at its 25th session in 1978 confirming that every project receiving technical co-operation of the United Nations system is Government-managed. As a result of these developments the system now offers the Governments a wide range of options for project formulation and implementation. These include project execution by the Government with the involvement of a United Nations agency, direct recruitment of international project personnel, UNDP financing of national professional project staff and subcontractors, domestic procurement of equipment and supplies as well as the award of fellowships and the selection of training facilities by the Government.

7. This flexibility and the fact that the final decision in all important matters concerning a project rests with the recipient Government, affect TCDC in two principal ways: (1) It puts to the test the ability and willingness of individual developing countries to carry out their commitment to TCDC by placing them at the time of project formulation and execution squarely before choices, many of which will be of great importance for TCDC (particularly under execution by the Government itself); (2) It requires continued efforts by the United Nations agencies to ensure a systematic and efficient flow of information to Governments of developing countries on the practical implications of each option and on the modalities, sources and availability of project inputs required. Gaps in this information flow represent one of the main problems affecting TCDC at the present time.

8. It is in the light of these factors that the situation concerning project inputs is reviewed in this section.

Project personnel

9. In terms of project expenditure the expert component remains the most important one in the system and represented in 1978 51.4 per cent of a total

UNDP expenditure of \$429.2 million. Available statistics show that the share of experts and consultants from developing countries has risen slowly but steadily over the period 1975-1978 from 26.9 per cent in 1975 to 29.2 per cent in 1978.

10. Behind these general figures there are a number of factors to be considered in order to obtain a fuller picture of the situation. Although the trend is clearly towards greater use of project personnel from developing countries, it should be noted that the bulk of those recruited come from a handful of countries which have a surplus of university-level manpower. These countries have an obvious interest in making surplus expertise available to other developing countries even to the extent of being willing to use part of their own IPFs for this purpose. This lack of spread of sources of project personnel over the developing world as a whole poses problems in terms of limited choices by the recipient Governments from the point of view of professional qualifications, cultural and political considerations and language. There have been instances where a Government has simply told United Nations agencies not to submit candidates from certain countries. The problem is compounded by the fact that many developing countries, particularly those at the lower levels of advancement, cannot afford to release scarce specialists in many fields. One agency was recently informed by a Government not to recruit in that country expertise in the field of training and education without separate approval each time by the Ministry concerned. During recent discussions in the WHO Executive Board it was recognized that because of the uneven distribution throughout the world of human resources for scientific and technological programmes, some developing countries might not welcome the agency recruiting their experts.

11. The trend towards a greater use of highly qualified short-term experts and consultants is another factor to be considered. In the case of FAO, the agency with the largest UNDP financed programme, 52 per cent of a total of 1,375 candidates submitted during the period July 1978-June 1979 were for consultant assignments. In UNIDO short-term highly specialized assignments accounted in 1979 for about 80 per cent of the appointments. The average length of UNIDO's expert appointments for the same year was 4.48 man/months. The same general trend has been reported in most other agencies, although all of them have pointed out that the need for longer-term resident experts continues to be strong in a number of fields particularly in projects that have to do with institution-building, training and research.

12. The greater use of short-term consultants with highly specialized skills tends to further limit recruitment in many developing countries where few of them exist. At the same time the problem of "limited choices" will increase since consultants from developing countries with the required qualifications can be found mainly in those few countries that have a surplus of highly educated specialists. This in turn creates limitations on the placement of candidates as mentioned above.

13. The element of what has been referred to in United Nations documents as "attitudinal barriers" favouring inputs from developed countries cannot be overlooked in considering the demand side of the picture. Here one enters into intangibles that are difficult to pinpoint, let alone quantify. To measure it in terms of candidates from developing countries submitted by an executing agency

but not chosen by the Government would be to disregard a number of factors that contribute to a decision by the host Government. It is true that there are officials who, especially if they have been educated abroad, have a tendency to consider qualifications obtained in developing countries to be a priori inferior and therefore not acceptable. But there are other factors that influence the choice and which have to do with the specific requirements of each project component. These include technical backstopping and additional assistance that may be obtained through the candidate's association with sources in his home country or elsewhere; familiarity with imported equipment in general use in the host country; knowledge obtained informally of earlier performance of the candidate and his personality; previous experience of candidates from the same source of recruitment; the length of time required for the release of candidates, etc. These are considerations that are not related to a general attitude but to specific needs and circumstances of a particular project. Political and cultural factors may also enter into the picture when a choice is made among candidates.

14. The point to be made here is that without knowing exactly why a candidate from a developing country was not selected in each case, generalizations regarding "attitudinal barriers" and statistics of candidates not selected are not helpful. It is the prerogative of the Government to make the final decision and the responsibility of the United Nations system to see to it that all the necessary elements are made available to the Government to enable it to make the right choice of candidate, whether from a developing or developed country, for each assignment. The wide range of options for project design and implementation referred to earlier makes it possible for the Government to fully utilize project inputs from other developing countries since decisions about these inputs are made by the Government itself. The Government may even go as far as to plan and time a project in a way that will facilitate the use of developing country inputs for purposes that would best serve the interest of the project.

15. On the supply side "attitudinal barriers" may exist among the staff of United Nations agencies dealing with technical co-operation but consultations with the major agencies indicate that this is no longer a major problem. After the Buenos Aires Conference all agencies have made strong commitments to TCDC at the level of their governing bodies and their secretariats. One agency's governing body has termed its policy "positive discrimination" in favour of using developing country capacities. The agencies are making consistent efforts to increase the submission of candidates from developing countries and to reach the target of at least 50 per cent, as recommended by the UNDP Governing Council. Much will depend on the functioning of the recruitment services of the United Nations system in developing countries, a matter requiring the attention of both the Governments and the United Nations agencies.

16. In this context the consultants considered the matter of proposing a set of criteria to help in the assessment of the suitability of candidates. The underlying idea was to develop a tool that would ensure maximum objectivity and eliminate or reduce the effects of individual attitudes and preferences both at the level of the recruiting agency and the Government. The consultants concluded after discussions with the major agencies that this would be impractical and would, in any event, not be needed at this stage of TCDC.

17. On the first point, it would not be technically feasible to develop criteria applicable to the very wide range of fields and projects in which more than 10,000 experts are working at any given time under the United Nations programmes. General common criteria concerning technical and professional qualifications, work experience, personality, language, familiarity with cultural, economic and social conditions in the country of assignment, etc., are applied by agencies and Governments as a matter of course and in relation to the requirements of individual projects. Beyond that, criteria would be helpful only if they are established for each project at the stage of project formulation. This can be done by Government technical officers and specialists from the United Nations agency concerned. Since such criteria must, in order to be helpful, be strictly project-specific, the consultants did not consider it feasible to propose a general model. It is recommended that the UNDP select a few projects now in the formulation stage to test the usefulness of a set of criteria or a checklist that would identify for each expert and consultant post of a project the desirable qualifications in terms of depth and range of technical and professional expertise and other areas of competence required, such as management and supervisory competence, organizing ability, experience of similar work on previous assignments, training or institution building experience and other factors, which (apart from general standards relating to personality traits and language) are of particular relevance to each specific task. The relative importance of each of these factors would be indicated on a common scale. This type of systematized information may assist the recruiting agency in screening candidates and the Government in selecting experts for the posts. It would in any event provide the agencies with more meaningful information than the routine job descriptions of different formats now being used and would be a step towards greater uniformity among the agencies in assessing candidates, a matter which needs attention as part of a more co-ordinated recruitment system. This device may also, since it would necessitate a careful analysis of required expert qualifications for each post at the project formulation stage, help to avoid specifications of unrealistically high technical requirements that may be far in excess of what is really needed thus making it more difficult to find candidates in developing countries.

18. The consultants also considered the feasibility of introducing some kind of test to evaluate the qualifications of individual candidates. It would be possible to apply methods that permit the measuring of quantifiable factors such as technical qualifications, education, skills, work experience, language proficiency, age, health, etc., in relation to a detailed and precise job description but this would leave out the important non-quantifiable elements such as personality, ability to work with people of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, motivation and perseverance in difficult circumstances. It is doubtful whether this type of screening aid would be helpful in a programme employing thousands of experts and consultants in hundreds of professions and under greatly varying working environments, but there may be a need for some case studies of completed projects to throw light on the question of what non-measurable factors proved to be important for the success or failure of the assignment. The case studies may provide material for a methodology to test candidates in a manner that would reduce subjective judgements.

19. The general conclusion on the question of criteria is that whatever attitudinal problems that may still exist, will gradually become minimal as measures to strengthen the recruitment services of the Governments and of the United Nations system will take effect and the widest possible search for expertise will produce a sufficient range of competent candidates for the consideration of Governments. But the consultants consider it useful to undertake case studies such as those suggested above for the purpose of a greater harmonization of recruitment and selection methods in the United Nations system.

The strengthening of recruitment service

At the agency level

20. On the basis of discussions with United Nations agencies, the consultants have concluded that there are two principal problems hampering a more rapid increase in the use of developing country expertise: limitations in the search for candidates by the agencies, and problems of organization for this purpose in the developing countries.

21. Rosters of experts and consultants represent the principal source for recruitment in all agencies with the exception of the highly technical smaller agencies such as ITU and WMO whose specialized needs can best be met by other arrangements. The rosters are at various stages of computerization but during 1980 all of them are expected to be fully operational. The main problem is how to rapidly increase the number of candidates from developing countries and how to keep the rosters up to date.

22. Based on a review of the recruitment efforts underway in the major agencies, the following recommendations are made:

(a) The search for candidates should be decentralized along the lines initiated by the UN/TARS which has established regional offices in Africa, Asia and Latin America with the office in Geneva covering North Africa and the Middle East (the office for Africa has not yet been set up due to financial constraints). Eventually, the agencies should move towards joint prospecting efforts at the regional level beginning with the utilization of the TARS offices and as soon as possible, strengthening these offices to serve most of the major agencies as joint regional prospecting offices to be under the direction of a recruitment specialist preferably from the region. The experience of WHO's regionalized approach should be fully utilized. At the same time, Agency Headquarters and field personnel should continue to be used to the extent possible for the prospecting of candidates for the rosters.

(b) Special prospecting missions should be increased and should, whenever practicable, be organized so that they can serve the needs of as many agencies as possible. Interagency co-ordination is required here; these missions should also promote linkages between institutions and other sources of expertise in developing countries to facilitate exchanges between them.

(c) For the Third UNDP IPF Cycle (1982-1986), where possible, attempts should be made to forecast by sector the need for experts and consultants of expertise which is generally available from developing countries.

(d) In preparing and periodically updating their rosters, the Governments of developing countries should be requested to forward to the agencies lists, sector by sector, of prospective candidates from inside and outside the Government who would be made available for longer or shorter terms during each country programme cycle.

(e) Sharing of roster information should be systematically practised by the recruitment services, particularly between those agencies which are concerned with a number of related sectors, and between them and the Governments. There is a need to harmonize the computerization to make the different systems compatible. The long-term goal should be a central computerized roster for the whole system on the availability of expertise, equipment suppliers and subcontractors. This would draw on the experience and data obtained by the agencies in order to make the system compatible with existing rosters and responsive to the needs of the agencies. Financial and technical problems are likely to delay the achievement of this goal for a considerable time.

(f) Greater efforts should be made to promote "networks" of sources of expertise in developing countries by promoting co-operative agreements between selected and evaluated organizations, institutions, centres and programmes willing and able to make a commitment to supply expertise to other developing countries.

At the Government level

23. Probably the single most important problem affecting the utilization of developing country expertise in projects is the weakness of organization for recruitment in most developing countries. Whereas national recruitment services are operating efficiently in practically all developed countries, only 20 developing countries have established such services and they function well mainly in the small group of countries referred to earlier which are particularly interested in placing experts abroad.

24. An important task for the agencies should therefore be to assist Governments in the establishment or strengthening of national recruitment services so as to facilitate the location and quick release of candidates for all technical co-operation programmes. This has been done by some agencies, notably the United Nations and UNESCO. One of the main purposes of the regional TARS offices referred to above is in fact to foster machinery similar to that of European countries where the national recruitment services are particularly efficient.

25. It is essential that developing countries exchange among themselves, upon request, rosters of candidates available for TCDC assignments.

26. The consultants believe there is a need to tackle this problem in a more systematic manner before the next UNDP IPF Cycle (1982-1986). It is recommended

that interagency projects be initiated by the UNDP at the national level to assist individual Governments to work out a plan aiming at the establishment of national recruitment services. This will require consultations with Governments and specific advice on the establishment and operation of recruitment services and should not be left to sporadic attempts by various agencies to improve recruitment in their particular sectors. Until such time as national recruitment services are functioning in a wider range of developing countries, it is unlikely that any efforts by the agencies to recruit more expertise from developing countries will have the desired effect.

27. There are a number of other problems such as poorly drafted job descriptions, insufficient attention to transcripts of qualifications and other material in the submission of candidates, and long delays in Government decisions on candidates submitted. These delays were identified by some agencies as sometimes seriously hampering recruitment in developing countries. Problems such as these are well known and there is no need to discuss them in this report. It can be expected, moreover, that problems within the direct control of the developing countries themselves will gradually be reduced as the principle of Government management responsibility is being applied in practice and mechanisms for recruitment are developed at the country level.

Equipment and supplies

28. This component represented in 1978 24.5 per cent of a total UNDP project expenditure of \$429.2 million. It is thus considerably less important in terms of expenditure than the expert and consultant component. The share of developing countries in value of purchase orders placed, although slowly increasing, remains a small part of the total. The latest consolidated figures show that in 1975 the share was 2.5 per cent of all technical co-operation programmes (UNDP, regular budgets and trust funds). Judging from recent figures given by the major agencies the position has changed only marginally over the past 10 years. In the UNDP-financed projects the share of developing countries rose from 12.1 per cent in 1975 to 16.8 per cent in 1978.

29. Many of the reasons for this situation are not related to weaknesses in the United Nations system. They include:

- lack of manufacturing capacity in most developing countries of high-technology equipment for which the bulk of funds under this project component is used;
- as the production in many developing countries is oriented mainly towards their domestic markets, there are problems of maintenance and spare parts in the absence of networks of dealers and services in other developing countries;
- most firms in developing countries lack experience in export marketing and in handling commercial transactions efficiently along internationally established practices;

- slow delivery and failure to produce equipment and supplies in sufficient quantities at the agreed time;
- high quality of equipment and supplies does not always come up to the expectations of the developing countries;
- costs are frequently higher in developing countries because of lower productivity and lack of economies of scale; in the view of most agencies the 15 per cent preferential treatment formula proposed by the UNDP Governing Council in 1977 has not helped despite liberal application by agencies.

30. Looking at the future, it can be expected that the over-all share of equipment and supplies in project inputs will gradually increase, inter alia, for the following reasons:

- the growing availability of expertise in developing countries will, in the long run, decrease the need for international project personnel thus releasing funds for other purposes;
- as the level of technical requirements rise in developing countries, the need for equipment inputs in projects will increase;
- direct project execution by Governments and the new flexibility in UNDP financing of national expertise is likely to mean a greater use of IPF resources for equipment and supplies particularly in host countries at the upper levels of economic development. The fact that bilateral aid is often tied to donor-country markets will probably also be an incentive for Governments to allocate for equipment a growing share of their IPFs over which they have practically full control within the limits of UNDP's "accountability" principles.

31. In view of these factors, it will be of particular importance for the United Nations system to help developing countries to make full use of the production capacity of other developing countries. Here, complementarity of production will be of mutual benefit to these countries.

32. The principal problem amenable to United Nations action is the lack of information both on demand and supply. On the demand side the agencies do not have sufficient information on capacities existing in many developing countries to supply the equipment needed for projects. On the supply side, manufacturers in developing countries lack information on what equipment is required by the United Nations system and what procedures and practices are to be followed in order to be able to sell to the agencies (and to Governments, in the case of Government-executed projects).

33. Taking into account action already taken, including particularly the establishment in 1977 of the Inter-Agency Procurement Services Unit (IAPSU), the consultants wish to make the following recommendations:

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(a) Only a centralized information and referral system can improve the role of developing countries in providing equipment for projects. To this end, Inter-Agency Procurement Services Unit should be strengthened to enable it to expand the work it has started to conduct surveys in developing countries on the basis of equipment lists established by the agencies for the purpose of identifying suppliers in developing countries; this work needs to be stepped up during 1980-81 to help gear up the United Nations procurement system for the Third UNDP IPF Cycle; the aim should be to complete by the end of 1981 surveys in all developing countries considered potential suppliers of equipment for projects. At the same time the agencies should continue local prospecting through project staff, regional and country offices, staff travel, etc., to build up their knowledge of procurement possibilities and potentials.

(b) The major agencies should consider a plan under which they would, preferably under the auspices of IAPSU, organize subregional meetings of selected developing countries to discuss with manufacturers and suppliers the requirements of the United Nations system, the procurement rules and procedures of the agencies and the capacities of the firms to supply the equipment needed; this should be done on an experimental basis and in co-operation with the regional economic commissions and regional and subregional economic groupings and organizations.

(c) Developing countries should exchange information on manufacturers and suppliers of equipment and opportunities should be arranged for officials to visit other developing countries to prospect for equipment and supplies for projects.

(d) The agencies should share on a regular basis information on manufacturers and suppliers in developing countries and on their performance. Some agencies, such as the World Bank and UNICEF, have had long experience of procurement in developing countries which should be fully utilized by all agencies.

(e) The present way of providing advance information on business opportunities offered by United Nations projects should be reviewed since several of the agencies consider the Development Forum Business Edition as inadequate. This should be done in close co-operation with IAPSU as already envisaged.

(f) A system of feedback from projects on the quality of equipment and performance of suppliers should be established; this could probably be arranged through existing UNDP and agency field staff.

(g) As in the case of rosters of experts, there is a need to move towards compatibility of procurement computerization; this should be done before the various agencies have proceeded too far in their coding systems.

(h) The agencies should follow ILO's example, where feasible, in issuing equipment planning guides; these have proved to be very useful both to suppliers and users.

(i) Assistance should be provided to developing countries to produce equipment and supplies needed for projects and to help suppliers to gradually be able to provide the necessary after-sale service. Joint ventures among developing countries need to be explored.

34. The policy of the agencies should be to ensure an efficient system of information on equipment and supply requirements and availabilities throughout the world to enable Governments to choose the inputs they consider most suitable. The paramount concern should be to serve the best interests of the host Government and the project. Quality and timeliness of the inputs must come first and the aim of increasing the use of manufacturing capacities of developing countries remains a subordinate concern. For the latter there is a wide scope for improvement in areas where sophisticated equipment is not required and where appropriate technology is of particular importance in striving towards self-reliance. A more efficient system of production and marketing will in the long run increase the placing of equipment orders in developing countries. It would be unrealistic to expect developing countries to prefer products from other developing countries out of solidarity. Decisions are based mainly on economic and technical reasons and the matter of "attitudinal barriers" enters in reality very little into the picture provided that all the necessary information is available to the Governments. In this context, it is important that IAPSU proceed speedily with its task of suggesting unified procurement procedures for the United Nations system so as to simplify and improve procurement methods with the ultimate aim of achieving common procurement information and referral for all agencies concerned. It is not suggested that procurement itself be centralized but that procurement by the agencies be facilitated to help ensure the availability of appropriate equipment and supplies at the most economical prices.

Subcontracts

35. The share of subcontracts in UNDP-financed projects for 1978 was 12.5 per cent out of a total expenditure of \$US 429.2 million. Fresh statistics are not available on the total expenditure on subcontracts by the United Nations development system as a whole (UNDP, regular programmes and trust and agency funds), but in 1975 this was estimated as \$US 55.2 million or 7.8 per cent of a total of \$US 70.4 million. For 1979, the total relative share is estimated by most agencies to be less than 10 per cent. The share of developing countries in the value of subcontract awards in UNDP-financed projects was 7.0 per cent in 1975 and 16.6 per cent in 1978.

36. These statistics are not very meaningful for several reasons. The data base is not uniform for all agencies and even the definition of what is included under the term "subcontracts" differ among some agencies. Furthermore, the content of the various agency programmes entail different needs for subcontractual services. Some agencies, such as the United Nations and the World Bank, need services mainly at a high level of technical sophistication, while others, such as FAO and UNESCO, use subcontracts mainly for the preparation of local studies and surveys and data collection, etc., not involving large expenditures. Some fields, such as agriculture, rural development and education, lend themselves better to the use of consulting capacities in developing countries than certain high-technology fields, such as telecommunications, civil aviation, computer science, mineral exploration and industrial technology, etc., where experienced consulting firms exist primarily in industrialized countries. The statistics are sometimes distorted by one or two large contracts awarded to developing

countries one year while in another year the subcontracts may be small but more numerous. Trends are therefore difficult to discern over the United Nations system as a whole. FAO provides, however, an interesting example of recent developments in a large agency. During the period September 1976 to February 1979, FAO committed \$US 31.1 million for contracts with national institutions. The share of developing countries was \$US 16.7 million or 54 per cent. In terms of value the major share of the total commitment was for "development support activities" (such as advisory work sector studies, surveys, data collection, manuals, etc.) rather than high-technology work. This explains why institutions in 17 LDCs received 32 per cent of the total FAO commitment of \$US 16.7 million. Obviously, such agencies as ITU, WMO, ICAO, UNIDO and the World Bank could not show comparable figures for developing countries let alone the LDCs, simply because of the specialized expertise involved in most projects which is not available in most developing countries.

37. The fact that less than 10 per cent of the value of subcontracts go to developing countries indicates the need for two lines of action in the system: (1) more systematic prospecting for and identification of existing consultancy capability, and (2) the strengthening of this capability and the building up of new consultancy services in developing countries. Some of the agencies have for a considerable time been concerned with the first task. Through the use of regional and local offices and field staff and travel by staff from their Headquarters contracts services, attendance at conferences and meetings, etc., information on existing subcontracting resources has been collected. This has been helpful but represents mostly sporadic efforts limited in scope and depth and appearing in many cases to be by-products of other activities and projects. Very little has been done specifically to strengthen consultancy organizations or to help establish additional facilities. Once developed to the operational stage, the Information and Referral System (INRES) could form a base for information on such consultancy facilities and play an important role in improving the situation in this area.

38. UNIDO initiated in 1979 a more substantive approach by the use of a consultant to identify national and regional consultancy organizations in four East African countries and to analyse their problems and needs with a view to helping to promote consulting services within the TCDC framework. UNIDO staff missions have also been carried out in selected countries in Asia and Latin America, mainly for the purpose of locating consultancy institutions that could be included in UNIDO's roster. This may lead to further co-operation to build up consultancy capacities and foster subregional and regional co-operation for this purpose.

39. Strong consultancy services are of great importance for self-reliance and the introduction of appropriate technological, economic and social measures by the developing countries. The following action is recommended as part of TCDC:

(a) A co-ordinated programme by the United Nations system should be initiated on a regional and subregional basis to identify and evaluate existing consultancy facilities in developing countries. While the organizations of the

United Nations system should continue their individual efforts in their fields of competence, a way should be found for joint action to save time and funds. A beginning could be made by each organization reviewing their need for consultancy services in the major areas of their programmes. Field missions to selected developing countries covering the needs of several agencies could be organized for the purpose of making an inventory of potential consultancy institutions which would later be technically evaluated by the agency or agencies concerned. Adequate resources should be allocated to enable IAPSU to cover, by the beginning of the Third UNDP IPF Cycle, consultancy services in some sectors, but the main thing here is to initiate a co-ordinated interagency effort through whatever modality is considered suitable.

(b) The system should provide support, including training, for building up the country's consultancy services through projects designed to strengthen their management and operational capacity and, where necessary, the technical and functional capacities in specific areas. The use of expatriate national expertise would be particularly relevant here.

(c) Intercountry co-operation for the development of consultancy services should be promoted. This is considered by several agencies to be a very important need which could be met through TCDC if systematically promoted by the agencies. Through links between consultancy institutions and firms, experience and expertise could be exchanged to improve the institutional base, the methodology of consulting work and the training of regional personnel at the management and technical levels. Consultancy firms in developed countries should be involved in this process, for example, through "twinning" arrangements. The FAO has adopted a policy of giving special consideration in contract awards to firms willing to associate their offer with a firm in a developed country.

(d) Lists of existing consultancy firms should be established and exchanged between the firms and Governments of developing countries; appropriate arrangements for this should be made by the Government's focal point for TCDC. There may be a need for regulatory control by the Government to screen consultancy facilities to improve their quality.

Fellowships and training

40. Under the general heading of fellowships, training is provided in a variety of ways including formal and informal training ranging from degree and postgraduate academic studies to in-plant training, study and observation tours, workshops, seminars and symposia. Accordingly, the duration varies a great deal. Fellowships may be granted for just a few days for attendance at seminars and workshops and may last as long as four or five years under certain special long-term fellowship programmes. The bulk of fellowships are part of larger projects with other inputs, particularly experts.

41. The relative importance of the fellowship component in terms of expenditure remains small compared to the expert component. The 1978 figures showed that \$US 39.2 million or 9.1 per cent was spent on fellowships out of a total UNDP

expenditure of \$US 429.2 million. This represents a small but steady increase from 7.6 per cent in 1970 and 8.6 per cent in 1977. Recent statistics are not available on fellowships financed from trust funds and agency regular programmes, but it is estimated that the fellowship component represents less than 12 per cent of the total technical co-operation expenditure. The share of fellowship placements in developing countries in 1978 under the UNDP-financed programme was 2,386 fellowships or 33.2 per cent out of a total of 7,184, as compared to 2,686 or 34 per cent out of a total of 7,909 fellowships in 1975. Figures are not available on the fields, purposes and duration of these fellowships but it can be assumed that a considerable number of placements in developing countries were for seminars, workshops and symposia, which are usually hosted by developing countries, rather than on training fellowships of longer duration.

42. It may be noted that some of the major agencies have increased their placements in developing countries in 1978. These include the World Bank (from 22.6 per cent in 1977 to 45.5 per cent in 1978), WHO (from 22.1 per cent to 46.4 per cent), FAO (from 26.5 per cent to 30.4 per cent), UNESCO (from 24.5 per cent to 38.2 per cent) and UNIDO (from 7.4 per cent to 14.9 per cent). But without an analysis of the actual content of the training given through the fellowship programmes, the role of the developing countries in helping to increase skills and knowledge in other developing countries cannot be assessed. For example, a large number of fellowships for participation in seminars, workshops or observation tours hosted by developing countries adds statistically to their "share" of fellowship placements but may have less value to the participating countries than fewer long-term placements for technical, vocational or on-the-job training specifically tailored to the needs of the individual. For a meaningful monitoring of the trends in fellowship placement the data base needs to be uniform and the statistics broken down into a number of subsectors.

43. As in the case of the other components, the most powerful force in TCDC is the existence of incentives, whether economic, technical or political, for developing countries to share their capacities in technical co-operation. In the field of training there are a number of such incentives. These include the greater relevance of training available in developing countries in a growing number of fields and skills, the usually lower costs involved, the lower risk of a "brain drain", and the potential for continuing co-operation in training through complementarities under multi- and bilateral arrangements among developing countries. The growth in number, scope and quality of training facilities in developing countries makes it feasible to concentrate on the future use of these facilities in the United Nations programmes. The fact that incentives exist and that Governments have the final say in deciding on fellowship placements should over time mean that training will take place primarily in developing countries in many fields.

44. There are, of course, constraints such as the capacity of countries to accept trainees, slowness of placement and lack of experience in handling trainees, attitudes favouring the training and education in industrialized countries (particularly as long as the employment value of such education is high) and the fact that specialized training in certain high-technology fields is available mainly in industrialized countries. Most of these are development problems of a long-term nature which go beyond the field of training.

45. The consultants believe the main tasks of the United Nations system are: (a) to accumulate as complete information as possible on training needs and facilities in developing countries and to ensure efficient circulation of the information to these countries; (b) to help evaluate these facilities; (c) to assist in strengthening, wherever necessary, existing programmes and facilities; (d) to identify gaps in training and to foster co-operation among developing countries to fill these gaps; (e) to ensure an efficient flow of information to developing countries on training available throughout the world, whether in developing or developed countries, to enable the Governments to select the most appropriate training.

46. The United Nations system is pursuing these tasks at varying degrees of speed and substantive success. On the basis of a review of work done by the major agencies and existing plans, the following recommendations are made:

(a) In view of the importance of building up the human resources in developing countries, it is recommended that the Governments include in each project a strong training component and utilize fully the training facilities available in the region and elsewhere in the developing world.

(b) The work of compiling and issuing catalogues, directories, compendiums and other information on training programmes and facilities should continue but there is a need to review their usefulness in their present format and to establish a plan, agency by agency, for improving their content, updating and wide dissemination of this information for the needs of the Third UNDP IPF Cycle.

(c) Training institutions and programmes need to be evaluated more systematically; evaluation criteria and methodology should be discussed among the agencies and there should be a regular interagency exchange of information and experience on evaluation results.

(d) The "systems approach" of creating networks of complementary training programmes is recommended. This involves the identification, evaluation and, where needed, strengthening of national institutions in developing countries by subregions, regions and globally, and making arrangements for co-operative agreements under which each institution or programme is committed to provide training in an agreed field or specialty.

(e) Greater use should be made of group training schemes on a regular basis at selected institutions, centres and plants in developing countries, a line of action pursued particularly by UNIDO and UNCTAD/ITC; this may also require assistance to upgrade some institutions for this purpose.

(f) Twinning arrangements between training institutions in developing countries should be promoted more vigorously, and appropriate institutions in developed countries may be associated in efforts to upgrade training facilities in developing countries.

(g) Training programmes should be promoted at the regional and subregional level, particularly within the framework of regional and subregional organizations and groupings of states and institutions through standing arrangements, as has been done by UNCTAD/ITC and the regional economic commissions.

(h) The needs of the LDCs should receive greater attention as being particularly amenable to TCDC, for example, through agreements with institutes in the developing countries offering training opportunities in fields and technologies appropriate to conditions of LDCs;

(i) The agencies should in each fellowship submission inform the Government of appropriate training, often at less cost and more appropriate in content, available in the region or elsewhere in the developing world, even when the application states a preference for placement in an industrialized country.

(j) There should be a continuing flow of up-to-date information to Governments on appropriate training available. The goal should be to provide equally meaningful information on developing and developed countries making an objective decision by the Government feasible.

Statistics

47. As a general observation, the consultants wish to state that too much attention should not be paid to statistics on project inputs from developing and developed countries. The data base used by the various United Nations agencies is not uniform and the figures are therefore not compatible. Furthermore, too much emphasis on agency performance in terms of input statistics tends to detract from the central task of promoting output oriented TCDC not only within the United Nations system but through all appropriate mechanisms and organizations for development co-operation.

IV. TCDC IN THE THIRD UNDP IPF CYCLE (1982-1986)

48. The Buenos Aires Plan of Action was adopted when the second UNDP country programming cycle was entering its third year of implementation. Preparations are now being made for the next programming period. A brief look ahead at how TCDC can be made an integral part of the UNDP-assisted programme is therefore in order.

49. It appears that considerable attention has in the past, for good reasons, been devoted to ways of increasing project inputs from developing countries. This input-oriented approach tends to obscure the broader aims of TCDC as a process of sharing technical, human and economic capacities to find solutions to problems common to several developing countries or specific to some of them. This goes much beyond the scope of the technical co-operation activities of the United Nations system and will be briefly discussed in the next section.

50. In the context of technical co-operation per se, it needs to be stressed that TCDC is intended to help solve particular problems rather than increase the use of experts, equipment, subcontracts, etc., from developing countries. Focusing

on constraints rather than opportunities would be unproductive at this stage of TCDC. To the extent that TCDC offers advantages to developing countries in helping to reach their development objectives, they will make use of developing country capacities. A more result-oriented approach is needed and the Third UNDP IPF Cycle provides opportunities to put it into practice.

51. In the light of consultations held with Governments and United Nations agencies, the consultants wish to make the following suggestions for the next country programming cycle from the point of view of TCDC:*

(a) When the country programme is being planned it is important for the Government to consider what contribution TCDC can make towards the attainment of each of the objectives identified in the planning process. This policy would be advantageous to the Government in its efforts to achieve maximum results with resources available in the IPF and through TCDC arrangements. If TCDC operational inputs are identified in each country programme, it would be possible for the United Nations system to obtain a general overview, regionally and globally, of the resources that need to be mobilized through TCDC during the five-year period.

(b) In assisting the Government in planning the country programme, the system should be prepared to provide, at an advanced stage of the programming process, sector-by-sector information on TCDC capacities and experience in other countries that they find relevant in terms of the objectives identified; the importance of this information being available was emphasized by many of the Governments consulted. The final country programme should, in the document itself or in some other appropriate manner, indicate the projects and, to the extent possible, the modalities for TCDC that the Government intends to explore and utilize.

(c) At the project design stage, when objectives are identified, the activities planned and the composition of inputs determined, the possibility of using TCDC "packages" for the project or some of its parts should be one of the important considerations taking into account their relevance to the project objectives; the agencies and Resident Representatives should be prepared to provide specific information on capacities available under TCDC for each project component, particularly through intercountry co-operative arrangements; the latter would be important in terms of additionality of resources and relevance of inputs from countries having built up indigenous capacities under similar conditions; information on TCDC capacities will provide one of the elements in the Government's decision on the options open to it for project formulation and execution, a matter reviewed in section III; in this context, information on various types and modalities of TCDC projects tried out in different countries should be communicated

* Since section V focuses on expanding TCDC through regional and subregional arrangements, the consultants did not consider it necessary to review UNDP intercountry programming procedures for TCDC in the present section.

to the Government by the United Nations system; a plan for the timing, financing and modalities for obtaining TCDC inputs should, if necessary, form part of the project document, either as an annex or as a section in the workplan. It is essential that the Government's focal point for TCDC be closely involved in the preparation of this plan.

(d) For project execution, recommendations have been made in section III to improve the delivery system of the agencies in terms of TCDC; an additional task will be to keep under review throughout the country programme period new opportunities for TCDC to help each project reach its objectives, this should be a regular part of tripartite reviews and project evaluations; it will require initiatives and innovative approaches by the agencies and the Government but it can be of considerable importance in projects which need support not available from UNDP or agency sources.

(e) There is a need for the evaluation of selected projects to identify those TCDC factors which are helping or have helped the achievement of the project objectives, as well as those deficiencies in TCDC factors which are adversely affecting the attainment of these objectives; this is a long-term task the results of which should help in the future evaluation of TCDC policies and action; at the mid-point of the third cycle an interagency review at the country level may be needed to determine further steps to foster TCDC and to look ahead to preparations for the next programming cycle.

(f) The Government should consider, in co-operation with the UNDP office and the agencies, ways in which TCDC could be used to help meet needs identified during the programming process but which cannot be accommodated in the country programme. It should be a continuing responsibility of the resident representative and the agency field staff, using information available from the United Nations agencies and other sources such as regional and subregional intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to provide the Government with information available on TCDC capacities and modalities.

(g) In order that these recommendations can be effectively implemented, it is essential that the TCDC focal points at the country level and in the United Nations agencies be strong and active; the Resident Representatives have an important role in assisting the focal points in their function and urging Governments to establish focal points where they do not yet exist; special training for officials in charge of focal points should be organized with UNDP assistance, where needed.

V. TCDC IN THE THIRD DEVELOPMENT DECADE

52. As has already been stated, TCDC in the United Nations system has in the past focused mainly on promoting the utilization of developing country capacities for inputs in projects assisted by UNDP and agency programmes. From a substantive point of view, this has been an important aspect of TCDC since it has increased the use of experience accumulated by the developing countries themselves in fields

in which they have built up indigenous capabilities that are uniquely relevant to their problems and conditions. The impact of these activities has, however, clear limitations as shown by the fact that the United Nations system as a whole (including WFP, UNICEF, UNHCR and UNRWA) is responsible for only 14 per cent (1978 figure) of the total flow of official development assistance (ODA) as defined by the OECD. This project approach has been necessary and should continue in order to "operationalize" the TCDC concept and ensure that the United Nations technical co-operation programmes afford the developing countries full opportunities to contribute their experience and capacities to projects. But there is now a need to direct TCDC towards a greater emphasis on intercountry co-operation over a wide range of development problems by expanding it beyond the confines of the technical co-operation programmes of the United Nations system. In this effort the United Nations agencies can play an important role as catalysts, innovators and promoters of intercountry co-operation to help achieve the major over-all TCDC objectives as broadly summarized below:

- enhance the ability of developing countries to move towards self-sustained development and eventual self-reliance through their own efforts and through effective links with other countries at the subregional, regional and interregional levels;
- achieve complementarity among developing countries through the adoption of appropriate policies and the sharing of human, economic and technical resources;
- strengthen the position of developing countries in negotiations to restructure the international economic system and in the conduct of their economic relations with the industrialized countries;
- develop institutions, structures and programmes serving the needs of groups of countries in fields of common interest in order to help each country to fully exploit and develop its resources and potential.

53. There are a variety of ways in which these objectives can be pursued on the basis of commonality of interests among developing countries. In the light of information available on work done and being planned by UNDP and the agencies, the following suggestions are made;

(a) Further efforts are needed to promote TCDC as part of the activities of existing economic groupings, regional or subregional integration schemes and other structures established by Governments in their common interest whether for over-all economic or technical co-operation or for specific sectoral or functional purposes; in this way TCDC will function as an integral part of structures for intercountry collaboration rather than through ad hoc arrangements or on a project-by-project basis; UNCTAD and ITC have obtained considerable experience in pursuing this approach in the field of trade and monetary matters, partly with UNDP financing and partly through trust funds and third country financing.

(b) Some of the intergovernmental organizations and institutions established for economic links may have to adjust their policies and mechanisms in order to

carry out operational activities; it will be necessary to determine the problems requiring technical co-operation for the common benefit of the countries concerned, and to identify the capacities they have developed and are willing to share in a programme serving the needs of the group. Support for such preparatory work and for the initial organization of operational activities can, if needed, be provided by the United Nations system, particularly the regional economic commissions. This may take the form of temporary secondment of staff to the secretariats of regional or subregional organizations or the use of consultants with experience in technical co-operation planning and administration. Although the organization or institution would itself have to be primarily responsible for the financing of its operational programme on a TCDC basis, possibilities for obtaining support for individual projects can be explored with interested donor countries or multilateral programmes, once the necessary operational policies and structures have been established and the fields of action defined. There is also considerable potential for interregional TCDC through action by subregional and regional organizations, particularly if the co-operation is built around complementary capacities to tackle priority problems of common concern to the various regions. It is not possible here to review the fields in which TCDC action would be feasible since different regions and subregions have different priorities. The main point is that the necessary policies and permanent mechanisms need to be developed or strengthened in order to make TCDC an integral part of the activities of intergovernmental organizations and institutions set up by developing countries to pursue common objectives. In the various substantive fields the United Nations system should expand the promotion of lasting co-operative arrangements of a formal type between developing countries by linking existing institutions and programmes that have proved their ability and are willing to commit themselves to serve as partners in an agreed technical co-operation programme; the WHO, for example, has adopted this "network approach" in the field of training community-oriented health personnel; a review of the potential for promoting this form of co-operative arrangements bilaterally or among groups of countries should be undertaken by the United Nations agencies and plans of action should be agreed upon in relevant fields.

(c) During the Third Development Decade TCDC should become a modality for expanding North-South channels for technical co-operation flows; horizontal co-operation structures and programmes must become strong enough among developing countries to attract additional financial and technical participation from developed countries; the problem of finding projects acceptable to bilateral aid programmes can be overcome if TCDC is pursued and strengthened as part of intergovernmental and non-governmental systems of co-operation for development.

(d) During the Third Development Decade intercountry technical co-operation should be extended into new substantive fields and using new approaches for the planned utilization of the steadily increasing human and technical capacities of developing countries; there is a wide scope for this type of action not necessarily involving financing by the United Nations system but requiring initiatives and organization on the part of the agencies; in some of the agencies the traditional way of promoting TCDC may continue to predominate unless some arrangements are made at Headquarters and at the regional level to ensure

sufficient attention to TCDC action in a wider sense which would help break the limitations resulting from the present secretariat focus on TCDC as part of UNDP/agency assisted individual projects; the Resident Representatives of the UNDP should be encouraged to take initiatives and an increased flow of information on TCDC experience is needed for this purpose; the regional economic commissions and the TCDC focal points should play a key role in orchestrating this approach to TCDC.

(e) The strategy for the Third Development Decade now under preparation should set out in broad terms the ways in which TCDC can help as one element in the attainment of the agreed objectives; to this end, proposals need to be prepared by the UNDP and the agencies; the problems of the LDCs should receive special attention.

(f) Governments of developing countries should be encouraged to identify priority areas for TCDC as part of the preparation of their national development plans. It is suggested that the methodology for this be considered by the UN Committee for Development Planning.

54. There are certainly other modalities to increase the impact of TCDC. The point to be made is that during the current decade TCDC should be able to expand beyond the financial and organizational limits inherent in the United Nations system and grow as a natural part of multinational development co-operation based on common interests. The United Nations system will continue to play a central role as a catalyst, repository and disseminator of information on TCDC capacities and experience and as a generator of action.
