Technical co-operation: new prospects and dimensions

Report of the Director-General

(Part 1)

(First item on the agenda)
Corrigendum

International Labour Conference, 63rd Session, 1977

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INTRODUCTION


There are many reasons why this essential instrument among the means available to the ILO should once again be systematically examined by all the member States.

Although, admittedly, spectacular progress has been achieved during this period by many developing countries, the continuance and in a certain sense aggravation of the problems of social and labour policy all over the world—and particularly in the developing world—make it necessary to pursue more energetically than ever the effort undertaken by the world community to bring about progress and justice, in which effort the technical co-operation of the ILO remains a valuable instrument.

The ILO has a further reason for periodically reconsidering technical co-operation. For an organisation that was originally intended to be mainly a standard-setting body, and which continues systematically to expand the network of international labour standards, the importance and continued growth of its direct operational activities might be seen as introducing—or likely to introduce—at best an imbalance and at the worst a distortion in the general activities of the institution; consequently the exact role of technical co-operation in relation to the major objectives of the ILO and its links with the latter’s traditional activities should be kept under close and regular examination.

The present Report does not claim to offer this session of the Conference an exhaustive account of the practical work of the ILO over the past ten years and even less of that since the end of the Second World War. Nor does it contain a detailed description of operations and projects. It bears essentially on future activities, which is why it suggests to the Conference some subjects for consideration based on the present situation—described both in its most important general aspects and from the angle of the trends that are emerging in each of the major areas in which the Organisation exercises its activities—with a view to helping the Conference to reply as clearly as possible to the following essential questions:
Technical co-operation

1. What path should be set for ILO technical co-operation on the eve of the 1980s?

2. Does the general conception of technical co-operation and its methods meet the needs of member States? If there is a need for change or modification, what measures of adaptation should be recommended?

3. Should the traditional fields of the ILO's operational activities be reviewed and, if so, from what angle?

4. What is the specific role of the ILO in the international co-operation effort which unites member States (both through the over-all United Nations system and through other channels)? What are its strong points and its difficulties?

Without replying at this stage to these questions—on which, it is to be hoped, the Report will provide delegates with ample food for thought—I should like to make a few preliminary remarks.

The first question, as to the present relevance and usefulness of technical co-operation, is not a rhetorical one. First of all, it is sound policy to review any activity that is reputed to be of essential importance. Secondly, this question is raised with increasing frequency, whether because of the unwieldiness of bureaucratic methods (some of which can raise doubts as to the effectiveness of the effort as a whole) or because of the oft-mentioned theory that technical co-operation carries the seeds of its own demise. This was and is true of one important aspect of technical co-operation, namely the transfer of knowledge, on which the first programmes launched by the United Nations General Assembly at the end of the Second World War were based.

That being said, now that the Third Development Decade is on the horizon, I maintain that international co-operation for development, involving both the individual efforts of member States and the joint efforts of these same States united by their common determination and inspired by higher ambitions in an organisation such as the ILO, will remain an essential activity. It might even be claimed that it transcends its concrete form—direct action—and serves to combine all the instruments at the disposal of the Organisation: standard-setting activities, research, meetings, the collecting of information and operational activities.

The present Report, to my mind, justifies this view and provides the means of appraising the vocation and place of ILO technical co-operation in the face of the needs of member States on the eve of the 1980s.

The real problem, therefore, concerns not so much the raison d'être of technical co-operation as the adaptation it requires, or its perfectibility. The Report goes into the changes that should be made in the light of the experience acquired by member States and by the Office.
Introduction

Obviously, the changes relate first of all to the conception and methods of implementing technical cooperation: that is the second question raised in this Report to the Conference.

As regards the conception, the Report seeks to emphasise the strong points and the weak points—from the angle of the responsibilities of the ILO and of its tripartite structure—of the country programming system instituted by the UNDP. As regards implementation, the Report considers the measures that might be adopted to reduce as far as possible the direct and indirect cost of cooperation.

Among these measures immediate mention must be made of the importance attached to the increasing use of existing local or regional institutions.

This tendency is likely to become stronger now that the developing countries have themselves embarked upon mutual technical cooperation. This development, which has been made possible by the progress achieved in all fields by many countries of the Third World, is to be warmly welcomed. It will not fail to lead to a change in the role of international agencies with a technical calling.

The difficult problem—on which the Conference is invited to provide advice and suggestions—lies in correctly determining this role within the framework of an intensified policy under which projects will be implemented by the countries themselves. For its part, the UNDP, which is the main driving force of international technical cooperation, intends to give it a fresh impetus by defining what it terms “new dimensions” for it. The ILO cannot but support these plans. In so doing, our Organisation which, through its experts, instructors and fellows, provides varied services, will in several cases continue to supervise many of the programmes but it will be doing so more and more as a partner ready to lend its support—by means of the advisory services of its technicians, for example—to help member States, individually or collectively, to achieve the major objectives of our times.

While having to demonstrate its ability to adapt its methods of work as regards the planning and carrying out of technical cooperation, taking account of the rapidity of the changes that are taking place before our eyes all over the world and in particular in the developing countries, our Organisation will have to pay greater attention than ever to the actual content of technical cooperation programmes.

This is the third question raised in this Report, which endeavours to provide some of the answers by indicating the paths along which the Office plans to direct its practical activities, taking account of the major decisions of the Conference and the Governing Body in recent years.

Among such decisions, those emerging from the discussions of the World Employment Conference are of particular importance. The Conference set the triple objective of attaining full employment in decent working conditions and ensuring respect for fundamental rights and freedoms.

Since then the Governing Body has examined the conclusions of the Conference. I have taken both these conclusions and the discussions in the
Technical co-operation

Governing Body into account in drawing up the Programme and Budget proposals for 1978-79, which may be said to constitute the first phase of a process that should gain in depth and intensity over the coming years and find expression, first, in national policies and, second, within the framework of the Third Development Decade.

Throughout this process there will be the problem—which has already arisen—of organising our activities, and particularly our operational activities, in as practical a manner as possible and in conditions that will meet the ambitious objectives proposed by the World Employment Conference. This will mean helping member States, their governments, their employers, and their workers, at the national level, in their efforts to promote an active employment policy based on satisfying the needs of the population. It will also mean finding practical solutions to the problems—which in fact are international problems—affecting employment throughout the world, whether as regards international migration, technology (in close co-operation with other international agencies), the international division of labour (including adaptation policies), etc. The Organisation will thus be able to make a decisive contribution along the lines laid down in the resolutions of the General Assembly on the New International Economic Order and within the framework, which the Assembly will no doubt specify, of the Third Development Decade which, it is to be hoped, will emphasise the social dimension of development as much as the economic dimension.

Faced with these problems, I am relying considerably on the lessons that will emerge from the discussion of this Report to finalise a series of technical co-operation activities which, combined with research and standard-setting activities, will gradually help the ambitious campaign against poverty launched by the World Employment Conference to materialise. Concurrently, the Organisation must press on, equally forcefully, with its activities in the field of conditions of work. There must be interpenetration and mutual support between employment and conditions of work.

In this respect the Organisation has a valuable instrument: the International Programme for the Improvement of Working Conditions and Environment (PIACT), which was developed on the basis of the resolution adopted by the International Labour Conference and of the proposals submitted to and endorsed by the Governing Body. Covering essential fields such as occupational safety and health, environment, social security, etc., this Programme, together with those relating to employment, industrial relations and sectoral activities, increases the possibilities of our Organisation in its struggle to provide not only more jobs but also better jobs, while ensuring respect for human rights and basic freedoms.

These questions on the direction, methods and content of technical co-operation must be considered in the ILO in the light of the very special role of our Organisation as a result both of its mandate and of its tripartite structure. This is the fourth question raised in the Report. This role and the position the
ILO occupies within the United Nations system increase its opportunities but also create difficulties for it. Both aspects should be considered: it is true that the exceptional character imparted to the ILO by its tripartite structure makes it a first-class agent for a whole series of activities in the field of development. This was seen clearly at the World Employment Conference. This is where the ILO's opportunities lie, particularly at a time when there is growing awareness of the fact that development is a global process in which the social aspects are inseparable from the economic ones and in which government action—in whatever field—does not of itself result in action by the governed.

This is why the active and determined participation of all the forces involved—workers' organisations in town and country, employers' organisations, co-operatives, consumers' associations, youth movements—is indispensable to the implementation of the development plans set in motion by the public authorities. Without this participation the economic—to say nothing of the social—cost of these development plans would far exceed that of the efforts aimed at facilitating the participation of these forces.

However, it has to be admitted that the participation of employers and workers in technical co-operation is relatively limited, that social development projects are still all too often allocated only a mediocre share, that there is a gulf between the decisions taken by member States in Geneva and those they take in their own countries. It is to be hoped that ILO activities for the defence of human rights and of freedom of association, seeking to strengthen industrial relations and workers' education, will cease to be regarded—as is all too often the case—as specific activities, separated and to some extent isolated from the other tasks of the Organisation, and will come to be seen rather as a necessary stimulus to development.

The Report analyses these problems and proposes a number of solutions for consideration by the Conference; these solutions, naturally, give pride of place to the development of activities to strengthen the social partners and government structures. It is to be hoped that the discussions by the Conference on this capital point will help to strengthen the technical co-operation activities of the ILO in the desired direction as well as the political will of countries. Fortunately, there are growing signs of this will, as witnessed by the decision which the countries took last year to re-examine existing development strategies from the point of view of the struggle against poverty and the satisfaction of basic needs.

Obviously there is no question of the ILO, just because of its special vocation and tripartite structure, acting alone in technical co-operation. It has been—and will continue to be—scrupulous in keeping to the place assigned to it in the general system of international organisations. It has endorsed the "Consensus"\(^1\) which governs the UNDP and collaborates closely with the latter by participating and supporting its activities.

\(^1\) Annex to United Nations resolution 2688(XXV) concerning the capacity of the United Nations development system.
The Report tries to emphasise, however, the ways in which the ILO could carry out its special role more effectively within this general framework. It also pleads in favour of the allocation of modest technical co-operation credits under the regular budget to enable it, without infringing the rules governing international technical co-operation, to carry out its particular responsibilities more efficiently. The plea was heard by the Governing Body when it examined my Programme and Budget proposals for 1978-79 and I venture to hope that the Conference will see the matter in the same light.

The elements that will enable the Conference to answer the questions I have just summarised are grouped in the following three chapters. The first describes the general framework of the ILO’s technical co-operation today. The second reviews the main trends in the fields of action of the Organisation. The third describes the policy questions that the ILO must deal with to increase its drive and effectiveness in technical co-operation in its general pursuit of progress and justice for mankind.
TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AND ITS BACKGROUND

The opportunities and problems arising from the ILO's technical co-operation work are important and complex. But they concern only one of the major instruments with which the Organisation seeks to fulfill its mission of promoting freedom and social justice and improving conditions of work and life throughout the world. While many aspects of this particular means of ILO action can be examined separately, it cannot be considered in isolation from our other main instruments of standard-setting, research, technical meetings and the upholding of human rights. The sharp distinction that used to be drawn between technical co-operation and "traditional activities" is now obsolete. Although the various methods of action remain distinct, the dividing lines are becoming blurred and a major purpose of ILO programming work is to integrate them to the largest appropriate extent. Only in this way can the resources of the Organisation be fully mobilised for the important contribution that it must make to the shaping of a better world.

In terms of resource use, technical co-operation is, of course, a very important means of ILO action. The figures in table 1 show how total expenditure on ILO technical co-operation, measured in United States dollars, has trebled over the past decade. It is, of course, true that owing to the cumulative effect of inflation and depreciation of the dollar, the increase in the real volume of technical co-operation has been very much smaller. But it is likewise true that, whereas in 1967 total expenditure on technical co-operation from all sources of finance was equivalent to 77 per cent of the regular budget approved for that year, expenditure in 1974-75 was slightly larger than the amount of the total regular budget for that biennium.

The fact that such a relatively large volume of technical co-operation could be achieved and maintained gives reason for some satisfaction. It shows that the Organisation is relevant to the needs of those developing countries which made requests for ILO assistance out of their planning figures under UNDP country programming or which provided their own financial resources under funds-in-trust arrangements; this is especially significant, as recipient countries generally spend more from their own resources in terms of their local
Technical co-operation

Table 1. Total expenditure on ILO technical co-operation programmes (1967-76) (In thousands of US dollars, not including administrative expenditure)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>UNDP 1</th>
<th>Regular programme</th>
<th>Other programmes 2</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>14 047</td>
<td>78.6</td>
<td>2 171</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>17 071</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>2 339</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>20 406</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>2 863</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>25 417</td>
<td>84.9</td>
<td>2 512</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>33 221</td>
<td>87.6</td>
<td>1 666</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>31 490</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>1 232</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>30 788</td>
<td>86.1</td>
<td>1 452</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>32 922</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>1 222 ²</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>43 699</td>
<td>80.6</td>
<td>1 784 ²</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>38 435</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>2 238 ²</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Including the United Nations Fund for Population Activities. From 1967 to 1971, UNDP Technical Assistance and Special Fund components; from 1972 onwards, the first country programming cycle (1972-76).

2 Including multi-bilateral programmes, associate expert programmes, trust funds set up by the beneficiary governments and expenditure on a reimbursable basis under certain special programmes such as UNICEF, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Fund of the United Nations for the Development of West Irian (FUNDWI).

Thus, while it is submitted elsewhere in this Report that the aims of ILO technical co-operation work are unduly limited and proposals are made to enlarge them, nevertheless, without being in any sense complacent, we may feel reasonably content with what has been achieved so far—particularly since the developing member countries have indicated that they expect substantial increases in ILO technical co-operation. Thus, at the 61st (1976) Session of the International Labour Conference, a Declaration 1 was made on behalf of the Government Group of 77 Developing Countries, asking for a reorientation of "the working of the Organisation with a view to ensuring that a substantial

proportion of the allocations of the Regular Programme Budget in real terms should be utilised for direct assistance in the areas of main emphasis by 1981”.

THE DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM.

However, this sense of satisfaction must immediately be tempered by serious concern about the general state of the world development problem. The broad picture is not encouraging. In large areas of the Third World progress towards higher standards of living is not clearly visible. One reason is that in many countries growth rates have been low and have been further depressed by the recession in the industrial countries since 1974, so that the already inadequate economic basis for social progress has been weakened. This is especially so in those countries that already are the poorest, in which well over 1,000 million people are living at annual incomes per head of less than US$200 (US$150 on the average), and in which improvement is therefore most urgently needed. To some extent, in the absence of adequate data and methods of comparison, the precise levels of income prevailing in these countries, changes in them, and their expression in dollars or in other currencies, are matters of conjecture rather than accurate measurement. Nevertheless, while pessimism about the prospects of the poorest countries need not be absolute, few would view them with confident optimism.

In countries with an annual income per head of more than US$200 but less than US$375, i.e. those described by the World Bank as “middle-income developing countries”, the record of economic growth over the past decade as a whole has generally been much better. But they too have recently suffered from the world-wide depression and, except for the oil-exporting countries, their present prospects are no longer so good.

Clearly, the resource basis which economic growth must provide for social progress in the developing countries depends heavily on economic conditions in the industrial world. But it is now also recognised that prosperity in the rich countries is not sufficient. Even if this prosperity can be maintained, it will not automatically “trickle down” to more than possibly a few small, already rather highly industrialised, developing countries. In any case, the world economic system as it existed until the late 1960s has fallen into considerable disarray. What is more important is that this system is not considered to have provided the same opportunities of growth and general progress to the developing countries as it has to the industrial nations. This finding has led to the adoption, by the General Assembly of the United Nations, of the concept of a New International Economic Order.

The second reason why progress towards higher standards of living seems uncertain in large parts of the Third World is that such growth as has been achieved often failed to involve and benefit the poorest groups of the population. This second factor cannot be dissociated from the first—the overall lack of resources, low rates of past growth and uncertain prospects of future
Technical co-operation

growth. Many governments which are perfectly aware that the ultimate objective of development is not growth per se, but the eradication of mass poverty and unemployment, feel unable to make radical changes in their policies and programmes until there is an assured economic basis on which to do so.

It is also true that the need for a poverty-eradication strategy is only gradually becoming accepted. "The 'trickle down' theory of development has been rejected—both within nations and for the global economy as a whole".¹ But even some development theorists, and certainly many decision-makers, still cling to it both in industrial and in developing countries, sometimes as a matter of technical or scientific belief, sometimes out of economic or political interest.

Nevertheless, a degree of awareness of the economic interdependence between countries and groups of countries, and of the need for a global objective for eliminating poverty and unemployment has, of course, existed for several decades. In the 1940s this awareness was reflected in the ILO's Declaration of Philadelphia as well as in the Articles of the United Nations Charter pertaining to social and economic co-operation and in the constitutions of other international organisations. In those days of a very limited membership of the United Nations family, and of a relatively simple world economic and political structure, the practical significance of international co-operation in economic and social fields through these organisations was quite modest. In 1948 and 1949, as the first newly independent countries became member States, the General Assembly adopted resolutions concerning technical assistance for economic development as well as an expanded programme of technical assistance for economic development of underdeveloped countries. At the same time the World Bank, initially intended as an institution for financing the reconstruction of Europe and Japan, began to make loans also to some of these "underdeveloped countries".

Today, the United Nations system has evolved almost beyond recognition, reflecting the astounding shifts that in one generation have totally altered the world community that it seeks to organise and serve. It is marked by the emergence of a large majority of new nations which the United Nations itself had created, by the immense and still fast-growing majority of the world population living in these nations, and by the strong tensions arising from the vast disparities between the poverty of most of them and the affluence of others. The development problem now dominates the world scene. The early modest experiments in technical assistance have evolved towards "international development strategies" for two Development Decades, proclaiming goals and targets for economic and technical co-operation in a global attack on poverty and inequality. In turn, these strategies have been supplemented with targets and programmes—decided upon, in quick succession, by the member countries meeting in the General Assembly and the conferences of various specialised agencies—for the establishment of a New International Economic Order and

Background

for tackling the world’s environmental, food and population problems and, through the ILO’s own World Employment Conference, for meeting the basic needs of all people.

These events have reflected the growing multitude of major immediate problems concerning the world as a whole, in a context of fast-shifting international relationships of political and economic power. They have reflected concern at these problems without, by themselves, resolving the problems. In particular, negotiations over various issues involved in the creation of a new international economic system have not yet been completed. But the processes of shift and change proceed inexorably and, despite the tensions they were bound to generate, it has been possible to contain and channel them largely within the United Nations system. That system and all its components, including our own Organisation, have amply demonstrated their imperfections and limitations. In dealing with economic and social as well as with other issues it has produced disappointment, frustration and, occasionally, bitterness. It is right and proper that the organisation of its activities and the structure of its institutions working in the economic and social fields should now be under critical review. But the system remains the only framework for a global approach to the development problem. If it seems slow and weak in adjusting to the new political, economic and social realities of the world, let us bear in mind the unprecedented speed with which these realities have changed. It is hard to conceive of any major institution, whether national or international, public or private, that could have adapted instantly to the scale and speed of these tremendous changes.

Therefore, while fully conscious of the need for improvement and reconstruction, the point of departure of this Report is that the United Nations system remains, for the foreseeable future, the framework of a world-wide approach to the development problem and that the ILO’s concern with that problem should find its expression in that framework.

THE ROLE OF TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION

Thus, the ILO’s work for development should be conducted in the framework of the strategies, programmes, methods and procedures of the United Nations system as a whole, mindful always of both the limitations of the ILO’s responsibilities and the basic requirements of its mandate and tripartite structure. The need for a common framework implies the maintenance of suitable arrangements to ensure coherence and balance between our own activities and those of the other organisations, at the country level and in broader contexts. This raises questions of the place of the ILO within the United Nations development system, and its relationship with the UNDP in particular, in the light of the efforts now under way in New York to restructure the social and economic sectors of the United Nations system. Some of these questions will be reverted to further on.
Technical co-operation

International co-operation in dealing with the development problem essentially concerns trade and the transfer of financial resources for investment, and involves the exchange of existing technical knowledge and experience and the creation of new knowledge. The issues of international trade and capital movements are of major importance and are currently the subject of difficult negotiations in various international bodies. They cannot be usefully discussed in the ILO. Within the context of any global development strategy, the ILO's direct primary concern, in its technical co-operation and other activities as well as in the debates at the Conference and other major meetings, must be with domestic policies in the fields of labour and other social affairs rather than with issues of international economic policies as such. The two are related: trade and international capital movements have implications for the employment and the conditions of work of those affected by them and the ILO should draw attention to these aspects and seek international agreement on how best to deal with them.

Thus it can be seen that within the framework of an international development strategy, the ILO's concern is with technical co-operation and with the research and standard-setting work needed in support of it. Again, there are links with other types of activity. The need for technical co-operation often arises from projects concerning international trade and investment. Technical co-operation in the fields of vocational training and retraining and management development are obvious examples.

At the same time, as is noted in this Report, certain aspects of development that countries have always considered essential when meeting in the ILO are not clearly reflected in the priorities and activities of the rest of the United Nations development system. These aspects derive primarily from the ILO's tripartite structure, and arrangements should be made to ensure that they will be properly reflected in any global attack on the development problem. These questions will be reverted to in Chapter 3.

Perhaps the two main points to be made about technical co-operation are that it is not synonymous with technical assistance and that its agreed purpose is to create conditions of self-reliance on the part of the developing countries.

The key concept is self-reliance: the will and ability to make self-sustained progress, without one-sided dependence on others, though by no means excluding balanced interdependence with them. Today, the concept has heavy economic overtones, reflecting the view held by many developing countries that what perhaps they prize most, their political independence, is as strong or as weak as their economic self-sufficiency. More generally and basically, the concept implies an awareness that economic and social progress and stability can only be sustained if they are rooted in the country's own determination, choices, resources and efforts.

While these ideas have probably always been more or less clearly understood, it was a welcome and healthy sign of their acceptance when late in 1970 they were clearly proclaimed by the General Assembly in its statement.
Background

Concerning the United Nations Development Co-operation Cycle known as the "Consensus". This established, once and for all, that development planning in general and the programming of UNDP assistance in particular are the responsibility of the countries concerned. More recently, this principle of self-reliance was complemented by the declaration that the basic purpose of technical co-operation provided by the United Nations system is to build up productive capability and indigenous resources in the countries concerned by increasing the availability of the managerial, technical, administrative and research capabilities required in the development process.¹

Finally, in order to complement this important principle of technical co-operation, the concept of self-reliance has been given a further practical meaning by the definition of "new dimensions" in the means of achieving the purpose. Specifically, this re-orientation by the UNDP (endorsed by the General Assembly) of the methods of the technical co-operation involves a greater reliance on the human and material resources available in the developing countries themselves, the encouragement and support of programmes of technical co-operation among developing countries, and increasing responsibility for the execution of UNDP-assisted projects by the governments and institutions of the countries themselves.² In particular, the notion of technical co-operation among developing countries appropriately reflects the fact that, in technical co-operation as well as in international economic relations, self-reliance, as now understood, is not limited to individual developing countries, but includes joint action by groups of these countries.

Against the background of the work that countries have, over the years, accomplished through the ILO, self-reliance is a familiar and basic concept. The principles of tripartism and freedom of association presuppose that, at the national and international levels, groups of workers and employers organise for the purpose of furthering their own interests according to their own standards and with their own means and resources, independently from political powers. Their self-reliance in this sense cannot be wholly unlimited; it must be accommodated to the interests of other groups and to the social body as a whole. But, within the limitations this implies, these organisations are expected to be relatively independent and reasonably self-defined and self-directed. At a different level, that of the individual, the ILO's training activities (which have always constituted the bulk of its technical co-operation work) aim at inspiring people with confidence in their own ability to learn and to improve their conditions.

Thus, it should almost go without saying that in the ILO the new emphasis on self-reliance as an aim and tool of technical co-operation is to be welcomed and unreservedly supported. (Indeed, it can be no coincidence that the joint action for increased self-reliance by developing countries in recent years has been described as that of a "trade union" of the poorer nations, seeking

¹ UNDP Governing Council document DP/L.301/Add.10, June 1975, para. 1(e) (i).
improvement in their conditions through "collective bargaining" with other groups of countries.) Full implementation of the principles involved will call for important changes in established methods of work. Long-term missions by groups of experts will become less important as a method of technical co-operation, at least in the more advanced developing countries. New sources of personnel recruitment and of training opportunities must be identified in developing countries. More generally, the nature of technical co-operation will increasingly shift away from technical assistance in the sense of the transfer of knowledge and information by those who know to those who do not, to become true co-operation in the search for new solutions to common problems. For one important cause of the disappointing results of development efforts in terms of the eradication of mass poverty and unemployment is that, after three decades of experience, we must conclude that no ready-made programmes or techniques exist for dealing with these problems. Much remains to be discovered, tried in experiment, tested in different environments. In order to make this possible, the "new dimensions" also provide for the undertaking, with UNDP funds, of "high-risk" and pilot projects. The approach calls for an intensive exchange of experience among countries and for the pooling of resources in terms of human talent and physical equipment. It calls also for recognition that any transfer of technology or of "know-how" will require, to be successful, a special effort to motivate people and thorough social and psychological preparation. Such an attempt should preferably be undertaken by the recipient country itself or with the help of other developing countries which have recently been confronted with similar problems. In the process, the distinction between "donor" and "recipient" countries is becoming blurred. We are now engaged in a world-wide system of mutual co-operation where every country has something to learn and something to receive from others' whatever its level of development.

These changes must, however, come about gradually. This is so, because the developing countries differ greatly in their immediate needs and opportunities to apply the new dimensions. This is not simply a matter of level of income per head achieved (although the least developed countries form also the majority of the poorest countries) but some poor countries have developed very high standards of technical and scientific achievement in limited sectors of their economy, while some medium or even higher income countries still lack any substantial technological infrastructure of their own and will, for some time to come, continue to want technical assistance on a relatively large scale.

One further aspect of the new dimensions should be mentioned here. The view has sometimes been expressed that the cost of technical co-operation by conventional methods has in recent years risen exorbitantly and that some of the new methods (such as project execution by governments themselves) will enable substantial savings to be made. Cost increases have, indeed, been disturbingly large. For instance, during the first UNDP programming cycle, from 1972 to 1976, the cost of providing an expert rose by 67 per cent; and, for
the UNDP as a whole, expert costs account for more than 60 per cent of total project cost. The cost of administering and of technical backstopping of field projects by the UNDP and the executing agencies has similarly increased and, for several years now, has been the object of repeated criticism on the part of donor and host countries alike.

However, the increases in staff costs have very largely been the result of the inflation and depreciation of the United States dollar compared with other currencies. These developments were one of the causes of the severe liquidity crisis which struck the UNDP in 1975 and which has had serious repercussions on the volume of technical co-operation activities carried out by the ILO. The developments were largely beyond the control of the United Nations development system and they should not lead to premature conclusions as to the efficiency of the system and its methods of work. Thus, government execution of projects should be considered in its own right, in the light of the technical and managerial capabilities of host countries, but not as a mere device of cost reduction.

It is also in the nature of technical co-operation, as distinct from economic development assistance, that a large proportion of its cost consists of expenditure on personnel engaged in the transfer of existing and the creation of new knowledge and experience. While it is most useful that, within the new dimensions, a higher proportion of this expenditure can be for equipment, investment programmes are to be financed through arrangements for economic development assistance, not through those for technical co-operation. Moreover, the total disbursements for technical co-operation are only a small fraction of the total resource flows for development assistance. If they were fully spent on equipment, the over-all increase in international investment assistance would be almost negligible.

Of course, cost control and effective management of technical co-operation are of the greatest importance. It is not admissible for funds made available for the benefit of developing countries to be dissipated in bureaucratic waste. In so far as these matters are within our control, administrative cost must be cut to the bone. In this spirit, the Draft Programme and Budget which is before the Conference contains a number of proposals for cost reduction, including abolition of the entire budgetary subsidy for financing the support cost of the technical co-operation programme.

COHERENCE AND RESTRUCTURING OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

When speaking of self-reliance, country programming and the shift from technical assistance to technical co-operation, we are considering these matters with reference to the ILO’s work in the context of the United Nations development system. As already noted, the point of departure of this Report is that the United Nations system provides the framework for a world-wide
Technical co-operation

attack on the development problem and that the ILO's work on the problem should find its place within that framework. The precise roles of governments, agencies and experts, and the techniques and methods of technical co-operation have changed and must continue to do so. But the notion of a common framework and approach remains essential. It implies the pursuit of a common development strategy to be implemented by the membership acting, as appropriate and relevant, through the various component organisations of the system, including the ILO. A common approach does not imply uniformity but it does presuppose a strong sense of common purpose among all member countries, consistency among the objectives pursued by these countries through individual organisations, complementarity of their means and methods of work, and a proper balance among their programmes, both at the country level and in broader contexts. These are the main aspects of the perennial search for cohesion and co-ordination in the United Nations system.

A Report dealing with the ILO's technical co-operation activities is not the place for a full discussion of these issues. But neither can the implication of these issues for technical co-operation be examined in isolation. As the discussion in Chapter 3 of technical co-operation and other means of ILO action will illustrate, our "traditional activities" of research and policy-making, and our operational activities of technical co-operation, have been and must remain mutually supporting. Through its standard-setting work and through the conclusions emerging from its discussions on the basis of research work by the Office, the International Labour Conference determines the Organisation's policy, which must guide the Office when responding to requests for its services under technical co-operation projects. Conversely, the experience gained with such projects should be fed back into the research and policy-making work. Taking this one step further, the ILO's policy decisions (e.g. concerning workers' rights and freedoms, and the basic-needs approach) should be reflected in the policies and programmes of the United Nations system as a whole, while the experience of the system as a whole (e.g. with rural development) should be fed back into the ILO's on-going programmes. This presupposes that arrangements exist for the system-wide exchange of experience and policy formulation, which involve the ILO and other agencies, and to which the ILO and other organisations themselves have proper access.

In principle, such arrangements exist. At the global level the Economic and Social Council, now representing 54 governments, was intended to play a central role in over-all policy formulation for the entire United Nations system. The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs is responsible for providing research and analysis in support of this policy formulation, in co-operation with the secretariats of other organisations. The UNDP provides the main focal point for co-ordinating operational activities in the light of the over-all policies. Through bodies such as the Administrative Committee for Co-ordination (ACC) and the Inter-Agency Consultative Board, the executive heads and secretariats of the individual organisations exchange information and co-ordinate the programmes that member countries want them to carry
out; on the Board they discuss operational activities, in the Committee all other activities. The executive heads also report, individually and jointly, to the Economic and Social Council.

In reality, the Council’s decisions have been found to “lack the necessary degree of authority”. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs (ESA) “has very little practical impact on the administration of the ... United Nations Development Programme”, while “the UNDP experience in operations rarely feeds back into the work of ESA.” Thus, there is an artificial separation of planning and operations, to which the separation of the Administrative Committee and the Consultative Board has probably contributed. Moreover, in the Committee “there has seldom been adequate consideration of the over-all approach towards development assistance”, while “there are no joint mechanisms for effectively pooling the results” of the work of the various organisations in dealing with the development problem. An important special case of lack of co-ordination has been the “somewhat inadequate working relationship” between the World Bank and the rest of the system.

These are the findings of the group of 25 experts, whose report was the first step in the major effort for the restructuring of the United Nations system that is now under way in the General Assembly.1 The report deals with the subject of “global economic co-operation” as a whole; here we are concerned with its conclusions relating to technical co-operation only. It would be difficult to contest these conclusions, which show that member countries are not optimally served. What they mean in practice is that, when member countries reach policy conclusions concerning the development problem in the ILO (or other individual agencies), these do not effectively permeate the rest of the international apparatus through which member countries deal with this problem. Yet, several of the most important ILO policy conclusions definitely should permeate the whole system, particularly those relating to the basic-needs approach and the objective of full employment in decent working conditions and with full respect for the rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining. In the absence of effective arrangements for ensuring coherence in the approach of the United Nations system as a whole to the development problem, on the basis of an organic link between research, economic and social planning and policy analysis, on the one hand, and the planning of operations on the other, these policy conclusions tend to be accorded low priority, not only at the global level but also, as we shall see in Chapter 3, at the country level.2

To some extent, coherence of international action for economic and social development depends on consistency among the policy decisions taken by individual member countries when shaping their national development plans and the country programmes of external assistance based on these, and when briefing their delegations to the meetings of different international organisa-


2 ibid, para. 66.
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tions. This question also will be reverted to in Chapter 3. But the international arrangements themselves must obviously also be conducive to coherent and balanced decision-making.

As a minimum, the existing arrangements could be used to a fuller extent than they have been normally used in the past. Thus, in order to ensure that the conclusions and recommendations of the World Employment Conference can be implemented in all appropriate sectors of the United Nations family, the Director-General has brought the results of that Conference before the ACC. Jointly with the President of the World Bank, he has also proposed that that Committee address itself to the question of the United Nations system’s long-range aims for the eradication of mass poverty and unemployment in the developing countries. For his part, the Administrator of the UNDP has proposed that his organisation assume a new “conceptual role” and, in co-operation with the specialised agencies and with scientific institutions, build up a body of thinking and a reservoir of experience, to serve as the basis of a genuine unity of purpose among the participating agencies in their future technical co-operation work. In so doing, the UNDP would equip itself for undertaking substantive analysis of selected issues, among which rural development and development oriented towards the eradication of poverty would receive high priority.

However, while better use of the existing structure would mean progress, it clearly would not be sufficient: it is generally agreed that the structure itself needs changing. To ensure that the policies pursued by member countries through the ILO are also effectively influencing the rest of the United Nations system, the proposals of the 25 experts provide one good way of meeting this need. Of course, these proposals are part of a larger package, with implications going far beyond technical co-operation and the ILO fields of responsibility. They will not be judged in isolation, they are not the only proposals before the General Assembly’s Committee on Restructuring, and at the present stage it is impossible to foresee the outcome of that Committee’s deliberations. Therefore, no more need be said about the topic at this stage except that, from the point of view of the ILO’s work, it would be essential for tripartite decision-making to be effectively reflected in the work of any restructured United Nations system, and for the social aspects of development to be more clearly emphasised and provided for than the group of experts had the time to do.

A different problem of programme coherence exists at the country level. Country programmes of external contributions, by a variety of organisations, to a nation’s development efforts must be balanced and internally consistent, and this requires a high degree of co-ordination. According to the “Consensus”, it is the responsibility of the government of the country concerned to ensure this co-ordination in co-operation with representatives of the United Nations system who, for this purpose, are to act under the leadership of the resident representative of the UNDP. This co-ordination is not to be limited to activities financed by the UNDP but, again according to the “Consensus”, “efforts should be made at all levels to co-ordinate all sources of assistance in
the United Nations systems, with a view to achieving integration of the assistance at the country level”. Moreover, “It will be for the government to take into account, while preparing the country programme, other external inputs, both multilateral and bilateral”.

All this is sensible and important. It affects the ILO’s technical co-operation work mainly in two ways. First, it means that projects in the fields of ILO responsibility, when they are financed by the UNDP, are programmed under a process of co-ordination in which the national planning authorities and the UNDP resident representative rightly play a major part; but such a mechanism can work efficiently only if the sectoral national departments concerned (including in particular the ministry of labour) and the ILO have proper access to this process. As noted in Chapter 3, this has not always been the case.

Secondly, there is a need for co-ordination of country projects financed not from UNDP funds but from the ILO’s regular budget and from bilateral resources under “multi-bi” arrangements, with the ILO as executing agency. As shown in table 1, neither of these categories has ever been of the same scale as UNDP projects; nevertheless, each is of a significant size. The need for their co-ordination with UNDP country programmes is obvious and, in principle, the Office aims at informing and consulting resident representatives about the programming and design of such projects. It will continue to do so wholeheartedly and aim at full integration of those projects into the country programmes, provided the Office can participate effectively in the process of UNDP programming in the country concerned.

Does the need for co-ordination at the country level imply (as has sometimes been suggested) a need for channelling the largest possible amount of funds available for technical co-operation among countries that are members of the United Nations system through one channel, i.e. through the UNDP? The question is important, since the expenditure for technical assistance and co-operation under bilateral programmes of international development assistance far exceeds the contributions by the countries concerned to the UNDP and other United Nations funds. Most of the expenditure is, of course, incurred for projects that do not involve any specialised agency, but a portion is channelled through these agencies in the form of multi-bilateral or trust-fund projects. Moreover, a marked trend has developed between institutions responsible for other multilateral or bilateral programmes and United Nations specialised agencies with a view to reaching a common approach in specific operations both at the regional and the country levels.

There can be no doubt that central control of funds greatly facilitates the co-ordination of their use and a high degree of central control is therefore desirable. At the same time, more flexibility in the application of the principle would seem to be equally desirable. As is noted elsewhere in this Report, certain important kinds of ILO activity are either not eligible for UNDP financing or, with present methods of work, are unlikely to receive adequate attention in the process of country programming on the basis of indicative
planning figures. This is more especially the case with assistance to workers’ and employers’ organisations engaged in some development programmes. These projects are invariably small and do not involve important sums but, if they are to be maintained at all, provision has to be made for them under the regular budget. This does not imply overlapping or competition with the UNDP. Furthermore, as already noted, most donor countries wish to retain control over some portion of the funds which they make available for technical co-operation rather than channel them through multilateral programmes, for which these funds are, therefore, simply not available. The fact that some projects are financed from the regular budget and others from bilateral sources should not in itself be an obstacle to their full co-ordination with UNDP country programmes. As already stated above, it is the Director-General’s policy to aim at full co-ordination of the projects with which the ILO is concerned.

THE ROLE OF THE ILO

Thus, the main elements which provide the background and context of the ILO’s technical co-operation work are as follows:

— The nature of the development problem as it presents itself in the widely differing economic, social and political conditions of individual countries and groups of countries.

— The efforts that each country or group of countries is making in handling the problem.

— The general principles of policy embodied in the International Development Strategy as amplified by the resolutions of the General Assembly concerning the establishment of a New International Economic Order.

— The central leading role of the UNDP in co-ordinating the technical co-operation work of the United Nations system as a whole, irrespective of the source of funds used for this work, especially at the country level, as envisaged in the “Consensus” of 1970.

— The aim of achieving, as quickly as possible, self-reliance on the part of the developing countries, in particular by applying the methods of technical co-operation that constitute the “new dimensions” adopted by the UNDP and endorsed by the General Assembly.

Within this general framework, the ILO’s specific role is defined by the Organisation’s own mandate and standards, by its tripartite structure and by the over-all direction of its work in those areas of main emphasis in the current medium-term plan that have a bearing on technical co-operation.

In this connection, special importance attaches to the Declaration of the Government Group of 77 Developing Countries concerning the Programme Budget Policy of the ILO, made at the 1976 Session of the International
Labour Conference and which asked for a reorientation of the Organisation’s work with a view to bringing about a substantial increase in direct assistance to developing countries. Various aspects of the Declaration are discussed elsewhere in this Report. For present purposes, a key element in this statement is its emphasis on “the unique possibilities of this Organisation within the United Nations system to contribute towards the essential tripartite collaboration” in international co-operation “for the solution of the socio-economic problems of all nations and especially of the developing States”.

Tripartism is, indeed, the most important aspect that distinguishes the ILO from the other specialised agencies. It affects both the fields of ILO action (for instance, the support of employers’ and workers’ organisations as well as of labour ministries in individual countries) and its methods of work; the ILO seeks to associate representatives of employers and workers with the programming, implementation and evaluation of its own field projects and with those of other agencies.

Another way in which the ILO is distinct from the other international agencies is its mandate with regard to the development problem. On this point it has been remarked that, unlike the Constitutions of other organisations, that of the ILO does not mention technical co-operation as a means of action; indeed, the Constitution is very largely geared to the adoption and application of standards. However, article 10.2(b) does require the Office to provide assistance to governments, at their request, in the framing of laws and regulations on the basis of the decisions of the Conference and the improvement of administrative practices and systems of inspection. This would seem to establish clearly that “technical assistance” is a means of ILO action. Therefore, although the UNDP is and must remain the principal source of multilateral funds for technical co-operation, it is entirely legitimate to charge some funds for this purpose to the regular budget. The language of the Constitution also suggests that ILO assistance is intended as a method of promoting the practical application of standards. And, indeed, it is a powerful instrument for achieving this purpose. Far from there being a conflict between standard-setting and technical co-operation as means of ILO action, the two are mutually reinforcing and complementary. They have become the more so as our standards have gradually covered increasingly broad fields of labour and related social policies—employment policy, training, vocational guidance and labour-management relations as well as human rights and conditions of work.

The most recent and succinct statement of the ILO’s mandate with regard to the development problem is contained in the Declaration of Principles adopted by last year’s World Employment Conference: the ILO must adopt a basic-needs approach by seeking the achievement of the triple objective of full productive employment in decent working conditions and with full respect for the freedoms and rights of association and collective bargaining. In the Programme of Action which it adopted, the World Employment Conference also established a number of guidelines for national and international action to attain this triple objective. Thus, it agreed that there are two prerequisites for a
Technical co-operation

poverty-eradication approach to development, in which the basic needs of the
whole population are to be met by increasing free and productive employment.
One is an appropriate domestic economic and social policy. In practice, this
will often involve drastic changes in existing practices, priorities and policies.
The other prerequisite is a change in the system of international economic
relations that will permit developing countries to acquire the foreign resources
they need for implementing a basic-needs approach through trade, investment
and transfer of technology, along the lines of the resolutions adopted by the
United Nations General Assembly and other international gatherings, on the
subject of a New International Economic Order.

On this basis, the Conference was able to stress that meeting the basic needs
of all is a "one-world" problem, for the solution of which both industrial and
developing countries must assume certain responsibilities, individually, jointly
or collectively. In this perspective, the Declaration and the Programme of
Action to which member countries committed themselves at the Conference
may well turn out to have been a major step towards a new basic understanding
between the industrial and the developing countries of the world as to the true
nature and scale of the development problem, the action needed to tackle it
and the responsibilities of various groups of countries for taking this action. To
reach such an understanding, which has been referred to as a "global
compact", a "framework treaty" or a "planetary development bargain" for
international development co-operation, now seems to be the main challenge
facing the world.¹

In the context of any global development strategy the ILO's primary
concern, in its technical co-operation and other current activities as well as in
the debates at its Conferences and other major meetings, must be with the
domestic policies envisaged in the triple objective of the Declaration of the
World Employment Conference rather than with the issues of international
economic policy.

What are the main implications for the ILO's technical co-operation work
of the adoption of the triple objective of employment, decent working
conditions and freedom of association?

First of all, the achievement of full productive employment, far from
relying on the "trickling down" of general growth, calls for a deliberate
strategy giving people in the rural and informal urban sectors access to the use
of land, "know-how" and other resources to increase the volume and
effectiveness of their work. It involves the development of sizeable sectors of
small-scale enterprise in agriculture, industry and services and the design and
dissemination of suitable production technologies. It also calls for the provision
of education and training and for the organisation of rural and other public
works. In their turn, all these things involve the redistribution of investment

¹ World Bank: Address to the Board of Governors, by Robert S. McNamara (Manila,
4 Oct. 1976), p. 23; Jan Tinbergen et al.: Reshaping the international order: A report to the
Background

and public expenditure. Measures to these various ends are likely to affect adversely the short-term interests of groups involved in conventional development policies and their prospects of immediate improvement. This will arouse scepticism about the employment-oriented approach and create political resistance to it, which it will be necessary to overcome.

It is in view of all this that a strong and urgent need exists for the organisation of rural workers and of self-employed groups in the informal urban sector of many developing countries. It is clear that the promotion of organisations of these groups is widely regarded as one of the most important contributions that ILO technical co-operation can make to the implementation of the basic-needs approach. Such organisations are an essential tool in overcoming the opposition and scepticism that often still stand in the way of that approach. They are equally essential as means of enabling these groups of workers to participate fully in the drawing up and implementation of programmes for rural development and for the revitalisation of the informal sector—programmes for land reform, rural works, improving productivity in agriculture and small industry, and so on. It is through such organisations that the freedoms and rights of association and collective bargaining are to become reality for those large groups of workers who have hitherto been deprived of them in many developing countries, in practice if not in law or theory.

However, the World Employment Conference made it abundantly clear that the development problem will not be solved by the growth of labour-intensive rural and informal sectors alone. The Programme of Action also calls for the establishment of basic industries that would generate self-reliant and harmonious economic development and for "a reasonable balance between labour-intensive and capital-intensive techniques, with a view to achieving the fundamental aim of maximising growth and employment and satisfying basic needs" while "reducing the existing technological gap between countries". Thus, activities in the fields of vocational training and management development for employment in larger-scale, high-technology industrial sectors which have always constituted the bulk of the ILO's technical co-operation work remain fully relevant, even though the balance between these activities and assistance in the development of more traditional sectors should shift towards the latter.

Full and productive employment in itself is not necessarily beneficial to the poor. It is quite conceivable for a country's population to be mobilised for hard labour on behalf of an economic or political élite. Hence, the second element of the objective set by the World Employment Conference, of "decent working conditions" is as essential as those of full employment and respect for workers' freedoms and rights. Probably the best guarantee against exploitation and oppression in the rural and informal urban sectors is to create conditions in which people can organise their own economic activities. But this cannot be the full answer. It may be necessary to arrange for minimum wage regulation in certain activities, and for fixing fair rents for tenants and share-croppers, without undermining the economic basis for a high level of productive
Technical co-operation

employment. Furthermore, attention must be paid to the safety and health conditions of the new and expanded activities both in more or less traditional sectors and in higher technology modern sectors. The ILO’s International Programme for the Improvement of Working Conditions and Environment (PIACT) and its social security programme provide a framework for technical co-operation in these and related fields. There would seem to be great scope for such technical co-operation but, as noted elsewhere in this Report, the need for it appears to be under-rated and it will be necessary to find ways of providing adequately for it.

Could technical co-operation contribute to the objective of “respect for the freedoms and rights of association and collective bargaining”? This contribution has been small in the past, but it may well be necessary and possible to increase it in the future. If it has been limited in the past, this is no doubt so largely because of the political importance and sensitivity of the issues involved. Furthermore, the main reliance for international promotion of these basic rights has been on other means of ILO action, on the general procedures for supervision of the application of international labour standards and on the special procedures for dealing with complaints about violation of freedom of association. In other words, the main concern has been a quasi-judicial one. Technical co-operation projects in the fields of industrial relations, including workers’ education and assistance to labour administration agencies and to employers’ organisations have, of course, had an impact on the thinking and practice concerning these matters in the country concerned, but such projects have been small in number and scope. Moreover, all experts serving on ILO technical co-operation projects are under standing instructions from the Director-General to formulate their advice in accordance with the ILO’s human rights Conventions, whether the countries in which they work have ratified the instruments or not.

There are several reasons for thinking that certain forms of technical co-operation might in future play a more important role in this field. The first is that our standards concerning these matters have always been basic to the Organisation. However, their practical importance will increase immensely if the Programme of Action adopted by the World Employment Conference with its emphasis on workers’ organisation and participation is implemented. A further reason is that the practical implementation of these standards in developing countries is often extremely difficult. Finally, the way for certain types of technical co-operation in this area has been paved to at least some extent by the establishment of “direct contacts” between the Office and governments encountering major and long-standing difficulties in the implementation of ratified Conventions, including those concerning freedom of association and collective bargaining. Occasionally, these direct contacts have, in fact, taken the form of technical advice on the alignment of national legislation with the instruments concerned.

There can be no doubt that a development approach relying on the active involvement and more productive employment of rural and urban poverty
groups immensely increases the scope and importance of the right of freedom of association. The approach implies that these groups are organised, at local and higher levels, for the purpose of representing their members and negotiating for them with landowners, employers and government agencies, and to provide a basis for common work projects and for the arrangement of common services and training schemes. The functions of representation and negotiation, in particular, require conditions in which peasants and self-employed craftsmen as well as wage-earners can establish and join independent organisations of their own choosing through which they can influence the improvement of their social and economic situation. This is basically what our standards concerning freedom of association and collective bargaining for wage-paid workers are about and what the standards adopted in 1975 seek to achieve for rural workers, whether they are wage-earners or not. In some respects, the new standards go even further than Convention No. 87, as in making it “an objective of national policy concerning rural development to facilitate the establishment and growth, on a voluntary basis, of strong and independent organisations of rural workers”.

The difficulties of achieving this objective are not only those, mainly political, which have always impeded full application of the rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining. For the urban and rural poor, the first typical problem is that of short-term survival, which they must tackle in conditions of ignorance and poor health. To them, the right to adequate food, clothing, housing, medical care and work may appear more pressing than the right to organise and to bargain. In any case, the ability to organise for purposes going beyond the next few months requires a degree of perception and awareness of the possibility of self-improvement that is often lacking among these groups. Our workers’ education programme should be capable of making important contributions to creating this awareness.

But at the same time, there can be no doubt that the growth (let alone the “policy of active encouragement” required by the new standards) of rural workers’ organisations and of similar organisations for the urban poor will encounter the political resistance and difficulties that have made the ILO’s work to preserve freedom of association so necessary and important. Such resistance is not necessarily of ill-intent and many of the difficulties are quite genuine, for in countries where levels of general education are still low and modern notions of nationhood and government not yet widely understood political stability may be vulnerable and the margin of economic manoeuvre and acceptable risk extremely narrow. But this would seem to make it all the more necessary to confirm, and to reconfirm, that freedom of association is a fundamental ILO aim and that, as an Organisation, we cannot rest until the aim is universally achieved.

Invariably, the issues involved are delicate and there is at times a wish on the part of some governments to keep these issues to themselves, without

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1 Rural Workers’ Organisations Convention, 1975 (No. 141), Article 4.
Table 2. Distribution of total expenditure on ILO technical co-operation programmes, by major
(In thousands of US dollars, not including administrative expenditure)

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<td>$</td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass poverty, employment and training ¹</td>
<td>1,439</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>1,675</td>
<td>8.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>12,585</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>14,678</td>
<td>70.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18,532</td>
<td>74.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14,024</td>
<td>78.4</td>
<td>16,353</td>
<td>78.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working conditions and environment</td>
<td>373</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tripartism, industrial relations and participation ²</td>
<td>2,678</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>3,071</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning, performance and evaluation of social security</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>538</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous ³</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17,878</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>20,803</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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</table>

¹ Including the sub-programme "Seafarers", certain activities of which also relate to "Working conditions and environment".
² Including labour administration, workers' education, assistance to employers' organisations and the development of co-operative, rural and similar institutions.
³ Including labour statistics, international labour standards.

...
The scope and general direction of over-all ILO action to deal with these major aspects of the development problem are set out in the Medium-Term Plan for the period 1976 to 1981, which the Declaration of the Government Group of 77 Developing Countries asked to be reoriented so as to provide, by the end of this period, resources for more direct assistance in the areas of main emphasis covered by the Plan. The Draft Programme and Budget for 1978-79, which is before the present session of the Conference, represents a first step towards such reorientation. When the next programme budget is prepared, substantial further progress in this direction will be proposed.

Table 2 gives an interesting picture of how the total resources for ILO technical co-operation were distributed among the areas of emphasis of the Medium-Term Plan during the past ten years. This distribution has persistently been tilted heavily towards the area of employment and training which, throughout the period, accounted for about four-fifths of total annual expenditure. Within this area, training has taken a declining share since 1969, but even at its lowest point this share was more than half of the total expenditure on all
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ILO technical co-operation, while this total itself was constantly rising. Since training work in this area means essentially training (including management training) for the production of marketable goods and services, the figures should dispel any fear that the ILO, in its concern for the improvement of conditions of employment and work, may have overlooked the need for rising productivity and economic growth. At the same time, it is gratifying to note how, since the launching of the World Employment Programme in 1969, the volume and share of activities for increasing employment have been rising rapidly and now account for a good quarter of the total expenditure on ILO technical co-operation.

The reverse of the medal is, of course, the small proportions of resources that have been devoted to the other areas of emphasis and, especially, the minute share taken by work for the improvement of working conditions and the working environment. The volume of technical co-operation in these other areas, which reflect the Organisation's concern with social progress in developing countries, seems unduly modest. This cannot simply be regarded as the result of interest in social progress on the part of governments when they draw up their country programmes of technical co-operation. Some governments may well be pursuing very enlightened social policies without needing a great deal of international assistance in their implementation. Undoubtedly, there are also cases in which a country's economic condition is so desperate that the government genuinely hesitates to devote substantial resources to social programmes which it might be unable to maintain in the long run, even though it is convinced of the importance and high priority that such programmes ought to have. Moreover, the volume of financial expenditure is often an inadequate reflection of the volume of real work done. ILO action in fields of social policies does not require the same type of costly input as in the fields of training or employment promotion, for example. Qualified personnel are generally available locally and can be more easily mobilised as soon as the government has expressed its interest. Moreover, the advice of short-term consultants or the upgrading of a national technician through a fellowship abroad may have a considerable effect.

Nevertheless, it is difficult not to regard the picture given in table 2 as lopsided, showing a need for a shift in the over-all balance of effort among the various areas of emphasis of the Medium-Term Plan. This major question is elaborated on in the following chapters of this Report.

The ILO's role in the future development of technical co-operation must reflect the evolution of means and methods that is embodied in the UNDP's "new dimensions". For one aspect of this question, table 3 shows the continuing preponderance of expert costs in the total expenditure for ILO technical co-operation, a tendency which is no longer considered appropriate.

More generally, the work of the ILO must genuinely promote the quest for self-reliance. Technical co-operation among developing countries and the
establishment of regional "centres of excellence" may remain empty concepts unless the Office, government services, national employers' and workers' organisations, and UNDP resident representatives show courage and imagination in identifying those areas in which beneficial exchanges could take place between developing countries. Promoting exchanges of information, experience and personnel in relatively non-controversial areas such as training, institution-building in the field of labour policy, the organisation of labour-intensive public works in rural areas, etc., is a fairly obvious choice (even though requiring a great deal of investigation since developing countries differ and one cannot assume that an experiment that has proved successful in one country will have similar success in another). Co-operative arrangements for research and development in the design and diffusion of improved technologies for rural and urban informal-sector activities would pose a greater challenge, but they would be a very important component in any strategy designed to further the adoption and achievement of basic-needs objectives. The ILO's technical co-operation work could also seek to strengthen regional and sub-regional economic groupings by helping to overcome those problems, often stumbling-blocks on the road to economic co-operation, which fall within its competence. Examples are identification of the likely repercussions on employment in individual countries of proposed measures regarding trade liberalisation, the direction and location of new investment, etc.; the design of appropriate adjustment policies, or modifications of the measures envisaged, to avoid unnecessary social costs; and better organisation of migratory movements between countries.

Regional and sub-regional co-operation to strengthen collective self-sufficiency was discussed at length during the recent conferences of Labour Ministers of Asia, the South Pacific and of countries belonging to the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), as well as in the African Advisory Committee and in the Inter-American Advisory Committee. The ILO has in fact already taken a number of steps in this direction and the results are encouraging. One of the first projects of this kind in which the ILO was closely involved was the creation of the Inter-American Vocational Training Research and Documentation Centre (CINTERFOR); a similar operation is being set up in Asia. The request which the ILO has received from the Fifth Conference of Asian Labour Ministers (Melbourne, April 1975) to organise a study mission with a view to identifying priority areas for promoting regional co-operation activities in labour and related fields and to making concrete proposals for the extension of such regional co-operation is a clear indication of the will to take action in this field. There are plenty of examples of projects along similar lines: to mention but a few, there are the Asian Regional Project for Strengthening Labour and Manpower Administration (ARPLA), the African Regional Centre for Labour Administration (CRADAT) and the Inter-American Centre for Labour Administration (CIAT) in the field of labour administration and the Asian Regional Team for Employment Promotion (ARTEP), the Jobs and Skills Programme for Africa (JASPA) and the
Regional Employment Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (PREALC) in the field of employment.

Parallel to these developments, there has been a steady increase in the number of experts recruited, the number of fellowships offered and the volume of equipment ordered in developing countries. In 1976, 23 per cent of the experts were recruited in developing countries, compared with 21 per cent in 1975 and 22 per cent in 1974. As to fellowship holders, over 30 per cent attended study and training courses in developing countries in 1976, compared with 28 per cent in 1975, 23 per cent in 1974 and 10 per cent in 1970. Finally, almost 29 per cent of all orders for equipment were placed in developing countries in 1976, compared with 23 per cent in 1975. These trends of recent years are very likely to be further accentuated in the future, considering the efforts that are being made to encourage every conceivable form of cooperation between developing countries.

At the regional level, special attention has also been given to strengthening links with economic commissions, regional political institutions and specialised bodies and with economic integration organisations. In the two latter cases the main objective, pursued through close collaboration, is to raise the technical potential of the region and thereby increase the credibility of the bodies concerned.

It is impossible to think of future technical co-operation without considering the changes that will take place or are already taking place in terms of the size of the projects and the consequences entailed. By and large, there will be fewer long-term projects involving a large number of experts; on the other hand, the number of short-term technical missions is likely to increase considerably. This means that there will probably not be any substantial increase in total expenditure on technical co-operation over the next few years, because of the fewer number of expensive projects. Moreover, the increase in the number of ad hoc and short-term consultations will have very definite
repercussions on ILO programmes, which will automatically have to set aside a larger share of their technical resources for this purpose; in particular, they will have to provide member States with technical advisory services, capable of responding immediately to the questions and problems raised.

Finally, since the real development problems have to be solved by the individual countries themselves, the conception, planning and monitoring of technical co-operation activities by the governments concerned will also have to be at the national level, in collaboration with the experts and representatives of the Organisation.
TRENDS IN MAJOR TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AREAS

We have seen that technical co-operation is a dynamic concept. Its form, its content, its objectives and its systems of delivery are continually evolving to meet changing needs and priorities. Cumulative experience suggests ways and means of adapting it to make it still more effective. This chapter will highlight the major developments in the principal fields of ILO technical co-operation.

To understand these changes it is desirable to put ILO activities into the broad perspective of trends within the United Nations family as a whole. Ideally, the ILO’s technical co-operation should fit into a coherent, interrelated, United Nations-wide programme. Each organisation should provide complementary inputs (individually or jointly) which draw upon its particular expertise. Each should contribute to consistent goals in ways which reinforce each other. Such an objective, however, is sometimes difficult to achieve and demarcation lines between agency spheres of competence are not always easy to draw.

The search for mutually supporting approaches is going on under the Administrative Committee for Co-ordination, which is responsible for ensuring a proper co-ordination of activities among the agencies which are part of the United Nations system. For example, an ACC Task Force is currently tackling the problem of the way the United Nations system will approach the problem of rural development and has already reached a consensus on the over-all objectives and strategy to be pursued. The manner in which the conclusions of the World Employment Conference concerning employment and basic-needs objectives can be best incorporated into the planning and policy advice of the United Nations system is the subject of another ACC Task Force. Simultaneously, inter-agency working parties are ensuring proper co-ordination of the work among the headquarters of the agencies: the FAO, UNESCO and the ILO are currently discussing their operations in the training field; the ILO and UNIDO are holding a working party on industrial development operations. A similar working party exists between the ILO and UNICEF. Finally, an agreement is in force between the ILO and IMCO.
Technical co-operation

Table 4. Summary of UNDP-approved projects by sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Estimated cost in US$ millions</th>
<th>Percentage of sector in total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>UNDP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry and fisheries</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture and social and human sciences</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General economic and social policy and planning</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human rights</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International trade</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour, management and employment</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Natural resources</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relief activities</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science and technology</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social security and other social services</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and communications</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5 109</td>
<td>2 216</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ILO share in US$ millions

| ILO share in US$ millions | 464 | 176 | 288 |
| ILO percentage share      | 9.1 | 7.9 | 9.9 |

1 Figures rounded to the nearest million (which explains the slight inaccuracy of the totals).

Two important sources of information on the over-all technical co-operation picture are the annual Report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and its annual Compendium of Approved Projects. The UNDP still provides the bulk of the finance for technical co-operation within the United Nations family, although its share is declining with the increasing flow from regular budget allocations and multi-bilateral, trust-fund and other multilateral sources of finance for this purpose.

Table 4 provides a breakdown, by sector of activity, of the projects approved by the UNDP up to mid-1976 (the latest figures available). It also shows the share of the ILO in these UNDP-financed projects, distinguishing between the amount provided by the UNDP itself and government counterpart contributions. The figures cover past and planned expenditure over a period stretching from the late 1960s up to four or five years from now. The UNDP Compendium does not provide a global breakdown of each category by participating agency.
Various comments can be made on this table viewed from the ILO standpoint. The group of activities which constitutes the main core of the ILO's programmes, i.e. labour, management and employment, has received only a small share (3 per cent) of total UNDP allocations. This category includes such subclassifications as increasing productive employment; employment and manpower planning; guidance and employment services; management training and development; clerical, commercial and service training; migration for employment; labour law; industrial relations; workers' education; general conditions of work, and remuneration, wages and incomes policies.

However, this finding needs to be qualified by two points. First, some aspects of social and labour policy are very sensitive political issues, which, although of considerable importance at the national level, are not the kinds of problem which can easily be tackled through international technical cooperation projects. The obstacles to the implementation of such policies may reflect a lack of political consensus rather than of technical "know-how" on the particular instruments to be used.

Second, many of the social objectives of the ILO and its member States can be furthered by a variety of means which are classified under various categories in table 4. Indeed, this is apparent when one compares the share of the labour, management and employment category (3 per cent) with the share of the ILO in total UNDP programmes (9.1 per cent). The ILO is the executing agency for, or provides a component of, UNDP-financed projects in several other fields as well. The most important in monetary terms is the industrial sector, where the ILO is engaged in industrial vocational training and small industry and handicraft development projects.

In any case, the ILO's contribution to technical co-operation should not be measured simply by its share of total funds devoted to field activities. It can also influence the technical co-operation programmes of other organisations in various indirect ways, such as by wider dissemination of its research findings; joint seminars; improvement of the statistical base on employment, income distribution, skill requirements, etc., for planning purposes; improvement of planning methodology (e.g. social weighting of economic indicators); extension of existing development models within the United Nations system to incorporate social dimensions and to simulate alternative scenarios with social consequences; and development of labour standards to be followed in technical co-operation programmes generally. Its roles in these areas may become as important in a coherent United Nations family effort in the field as its role as an executor of projects falling within its exclusive mandate.

The second implication is that to use its comparative advantage to the full, the ILO needs more financial resources to be concentrated on those activities in which it has clearly demonstrated its superiority in terms of its experience, expertise and follow-up capacity. One of the important responsibilities of the ILO is therefore to help its own constituency—labour administrations concerned with ILO objectives such as co-operatives, rural associations, etc.—to play fully and competently their role at the level of the central government.
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authorities so that their needs and approaches in economic and social development are duly recognised. But to justify that support, we must also ensure that our own projects have a sharp focus and delineation so that they complement the work of other organisations to the maximum extent. Let us therefore examine in more detail the trends in those fields that are likely to remain the prime responsibility of the ILO.

MASS POVERTY AND EMPLOYMENT

The comprehensive and exploratory employment missions requested by various countries enabled the Organisation to make great strides in its understanding of the employment-poverty problem and to focus interest on it both in the countries concerned and in the world at large. Further requests for comprehensive missions can be expected and the ILO should be ready to accept. Indeed, the recent meeting on global evaluation of World Employment Programme (WEP) research agreed that organising a comprehensive basic-needs strategy mission would be an extremely useful way of giving content to the concept and of testing how it would differ from either an employment strategy or a conventional growth strategy. However, the interest shown recently by a number of governments seems to indicate that the future of technical co-operation in the field of employment and basic needs will be different from that in the early 1970s and that new types of activities can already be envisaged.

First, certain governments are interested in finding out more about the basic-needs approach. National and sub-regional seminars have been proposed to enable discussion of the concept and of the policy implications of the approach. One was held at the end of 1976 in Bangladesh and another took place in Indonesia recently. The preparation of a sub-regional or regional seminar is being negotiated in Latin America. These seminars would aim at answering questions such as how to define basic needs in the national context; how to identify those groups which fall below minimum levels of basic needs; how to integrate needs objectives in national plans with due regard to development objectives and constraints. All these are developments on which the ILO is beginning to receive requests for advice. The assistance must, however, be seen to be in support of on-going national activities and not as external directing of national policy. In many cases it could probably take the form of helping countries to provide the qualitative evaluation of basic needs for the lowest income groups in their population together with the description of policies to implement the basic-needs strategy which they have been asked by the World Employment Conference to supply to the ILO before the end of the decade. Requests for reorienting existing country projects in this direction have already been received, in particular from Asia, and three missions following a basic-needs approach were recently carried out in Africa (Somalia, Swaziland and Zambia). These projects aim at analysing the basic-needs
concept within a particular national context; they also help in defining and developing a methodology in this field.

Second, the ILO will in all probability find that increasing calls are made for its assistance in the field of rural development, since this will in most cases be the main focus of basic-needs-oriented development strategies. For instance, requests have been received from Africa and from Latin America for country missions on anti-poverty and basic-needs rural development programmes; the work of such missions is primarily geared to the identification of low-income target groups and basic needs of the rural population while assessing rural development programmes and policies within a comprehensive framework.

The in-depth review on rural development listed four main substantive areas for ILO action: training; rural women; organisation of rural workers, including co-operatives; and the organisation of labour-intensive public works. While it is easy to list the areas on which the ILO should concentrate, many problems of implementation remain. How can aid be channelled so that it benefits the poorest people in the rural sector? How can the people themselves be involved in development and in the selection of their own development priorities? How are rural workers' organisations to be promoted in a non-receptive climate?

Third, the World Employment Conference implicitly recognised that the lack of relevant information could be a major obstacle to the design of basic-needs strategies when it called on the ILO to consider, both with other United Nations bodies and with interested national governments, the feasibility of initiating a world-wide programme in support of household surveys to map the nature, extent and causes of poverty, to assist countries to set up the necessary statistical and monitoring services, and to measure progress towards the satisfaction of basic needs. Similarly, the in-depth review stressed the collection and analysis of information among the essential activities which the ILO must promote. While major responsibility for the organisation of household surveys rests with the United Nations, the ILO will be called upon to co-operate and must, in particular, ensure that at the country level the programme yields the kind of information suggested by the World Employment Conference. It must also be ready to help countries in analysing this information for basic-needs planning.

Latin American and Caribbean countries have recently entrusted to the Regional Employment Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (PREALC), in co-operation with national statistical offices and with the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), the establishment of a data bank on employment in the region, compiling information such as structure of employment according to sector; economic activity and technological strata; prevailing productivity levels; and evolution of employment and productivity in the past 10 or 15 years. The project also aims at establishing the methodology and mechanism for the updating of the information registered in the data bank and ascertaining the requirements regarding information which should be included in the national statistical system on employment matters.
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Certain major areas are thus emerging from the World Employment Conference as areas in which the ILO can expect requests for technical co-operation from countries genuinely concerned that: “Strategies and national development plans and policies should include explicitly as a priority objective the promotion of employment and the satisfaction of the basic needs of each country’s population” (Programme of Action, paragraph 1).

However, in carrying out the mandate received from the World Employment Conference, the ILO will be in largely uncharted territory. Much research will therefore be called for in support of such a programme and indeed it will be closely integrated with it since, as pointed out, data collection and analysis should themselves constitute a major area for technical co-operation.

In the past, WEP research has helped to create a new awareness of certain problems and possibilities such as: a worsening income distribution and, in particular, poverty in rural areas in most developing countries; the possibilities that exist for a genuine choice of techniques in many sectors of activity; the economic and social role of the informal sector. By increasing understanding of such major issues and providing the basis for discussion of certain policies, it has created an interest in the use of technical co-operation to find practical solutions, therefore making its mark on the direction of technical co-operation efforts. In future, the WEP research must concentrate on drawing from past fact-finding and analytical work the policy conclusions that policymakers are looking for. It must also use terms that can be easily understood and used by planners and decision-makers. It must give greater attention to identifying and reaching its target audiences. Conversely, to the extent that they offer the possibility of testing new ideas or proposals emerging from the research, technical co-operation activities should be designed so as to have clearly spelt-out targets and monitoring possibilities. They will often need to have built-in, fact-finding activities, particularly in areas such as organising the rural poor or assistance to rural women, where pioneering work needs to be done.

TRAINING

Several trends which will have important effects on technical co-operation can be discerned in the training field. Without attempting to list them in order of importance, they can be identified as follows. First, there is a shift to what might be termed the “learner-centred approach”, where much of the stimulus for learning comes from the learner himself; the trainer helps by explaining the need for training and creating conditions propitious to learning. In short, greater use is made of discovery-based, experimental and self-development methods.

Planned-experience approaches will help to improve intellectual skills, especially those of the problem-seeking and solving, creative, critical, analytical and synthesising kind. Such emphases reflect not only the concern with promoting and fostering self-reliance but also the concept of the “whole person” for whom learning is both a training and a developmental action. The
ILO is well placed to facilitate this development, having pioneered the use of "programmed-learning" techniques in technical co-operation with such publications as *How to read a balance sheet* and *Promoting sales*. It is currently experimenting with group learning methods for small-scale entrepreneurs in which the participants learn more from each other's knowledge and experience rather than from outsiders. Such groups may be drawn from the tenants of an industrial estate, for example. They meet periodically to discuss common problems and to suggest solutions which, as individual businessmen, they try out in their own enterprises. This method brings peer-group pressure to bear on individual entrepreneurs to improve their management techniques without reducing the individual's independence or requiring him to "open his accounts books" to his fellows or to government.

A second trend is the desire to carry the training to where the majority of the people live, i.e. in rural areas, thus helping to alleviate poverty. This takes a variety of forms such as: training of workers and supervisors taking part in labour-intensive construction projects; provision of mobile training units to be used in provincial towns and villages; establishment of a pilot production-cum-training unit for wool washing and spinning as a common facility for household carpet weavers; setting up a model tannery to raise the quality and lower the price of the leather used by small-scale footwear and leather products manufacturers; assistance in the running of village polytechnics; training of extension personnel and rural promoters to widen the dissemination of improved techniques; and advisory services to the indigenous small and medium engineering firms which produce much of the intermediate technology required to raise productivity levels of small farmers and artisans in the ways which they can afford.

Third, member States are asking for special efforts to be made to strengthen and extend the ILO's skill-formation activities on behalf of disadvantaged groups such as the disabled, the illiterate, women and girls, school drop-outs, nomads, migrants, etc. To be successful, such programmes will need to be accompanied by changes in social attitudes, encouraged if necessary by legal instruments and economic incentives, to allow these disadvantaged groups better access to employment opportunities where their newly acquired skills can be productively utilised.

Fourth, there is growing concern about the management/organisational problems of public enterprises, which are the preferred instrument of development in some developing countries and exist in almost all. For a variety of reasons, public enterprises tend to run into teething problems. They may have been set up on a large scale from the beginning so that the managers have not had the opportunity of gradually acquiring experience in tackling marketing, production or personnel problems. ILO management development projects are increasingly being requested to provide consultancy advice and run training courses for public-sector managers. In Tanzania, for example, ILO experts and national staff of the National Institute of Productivity have undertaken consultancy assignments in such para-statal organisations as the Tanzania Tea
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Authority, Tanzania Tobacco Processing Corporation and the Pyrethrum Authority of Tanzania. In Algeria the National Productivity and Industrial Development Institute has helped to introduce an accounting system for a state sugar company (SOGEDIS) and has studied the market and distribution system for a state food processing organisation (SEMPAC).

A fifth area which is likely to assume greater importance in the future is the training of personnel needed to promote the development and diffusion of appropriate technology. The ILO could respond in a variety of ways: (a) by training machinery designers and draughtsmen at the Turin Centre; (b) by upgrading the skills of village blacksmiths and carpenters who could then produce much-improved equipment for small-scale farmers and artisans; (c) by strengthening the research and development and product/material testing capacity of small-industry institutions; and (d) by preparing manuals setting out the operational, servicing, repair and management requirements of appropriate technologies which have been used successfully in developing countries.

Lastly, in all training programmes there is a growing need to enhance the multiplier effects of a given activity. Various approaches are being tried. Task forces will be utilised more frequently to encourage group involvement, to provide job variety, to break down organisational barriers and to widen the impact of new ideas. A successful Swedish programme called "Look After Your Firm" is being adapted to developing-country requirements. The training materials are focused on the small-business consultant rather than on the ultimate user. They make extensive use of visual aids—cartoons, diagrams, pictures—to portray the situation as it is in real life rather than "what it ought to be".

A major new approach for which there is an increasing demand is the ILO system of training using modules of employable skills (MES). The content of a job is broken down into a number of self-contained (or modular) "learning units" which can be grouped together into sets which form a group of employable (or marketable) skills. Provided as a training programme to the individual worker, the units will give him combinations or clusters of skills which are directly employable. This approach has advantages over earlier systems. The main advantage is its flexibility and adaptability to any kind of employment situation. A special feature is the complete interchangeability of self-contained units which can be grouped or clustered to form any pattern of employable skills designed to meet specific needs. This encourages job mobility and the interchange of skills across occupational boundaries and other formal limitations. Another feature is that it can provide either basic entry training or further training built upon existing skills. Essentially, it is designed to give the worker the skills he actually needs at a given time. As technology develops, as the content of occupations changes, as social and economic patterns shift, so appropriate learning units can be designed that will provide the specific new skills that are called for.

Vocational training through the MES system can be applied within the framework of existing training facilities. The training modules can be given
anywhere, at any time and to any age group, and can be used for a wide range of semi-skilled and skilled jobs. Modules can be constructed for illiterates. The system is totally open-ended. Finally, with this system the costs of training can be reduced and the speed of learning increased.

Also in increasing demand are short-term technical advisory services from headquarters. The full spectrum of in-depth technical expertise cannot be maintained economically within individual countries but it could be provided at short notice and for short periods by an advisory group, which would need to be kept free of day-to-day programme activities and be able to renew its expertise periodically by an appropriate personnel policy. A permanent advisory service could be given greater versatility and flexibility by the use of a panel of consultants who could bring independent thinking to the programme.

In conclusion of this review of major new developments in the training field, reference should be made to the “twinning” of training institutions in different countries to foster the exchange of experience and personnel, to provide continuity of employment for seconded staff and to place the accumulated and collective “know-how” of such institutions at the disposal of their “twins” in other countries. These twinning arrangements could be between institutions in developed and developing countries. Increasingly, however, they are likely to be promoted within the Third World as one manifestation of the trend towards “collective self-reliance”. Techniques, materials and “know-how” may be exchanged in this way at less cost and with greater immediate relevance.

WORKING CONDITIONS AND ENVIRONMENT

The conditions under which workers perform their daily work are at the heart of the ILO’s mandate. In response to the demand for a strengthening and greater co-ordination of our efforts in this field, the International Programme for the Improvement of Working Conditions and Environment (PIACT) was launched in 1976. The Programme aims at encouraging member States to set definite objectives to improve working conditions and environment and at providing governments, employers’ and workers’ organisations, as well as research and training institutions, with the necessary assistance for the preparation and implementation of programmes for the improvement of working conditions and environment corresponding to their potential. The fact that more than 30 developing countries have already asked for a mission by PIACT multi-disciplinary teams reflects the growing conviction that national policies to improve working conditions and environment are a necessary integral part of any well designed development policy. It also shows that development is not simply a question of macro-economic policy but needs to be accompanied by down-to-earth measures to improve the quality of working life, and especially to protect the workers’ life and health.

These measures must be applied in factories, in offices and shops, on farms and construction sites, on board ships and in all the other workplaces where
the average man and woman spend more than half of their waking hours. The need to make the working environment less dangerous, less hostile and less stress-provoking is being recognised as one of the fundamental non-material needs of mankind.

Environmental protection and improvement at the place of work is not a luxury which only the rich countries can afford. It should accompany and not follow the modernisation process. In the words of the Zambian Minister of Labour and Social Services at the 60th (1975) Session of the International Labour Conference: “Turning a blind eye to poor conditions of work merely because the country is in an economic strait-jacket is to condone conditions of semi-slavery.”

PIACT field activities would concentrate on the following areas:

(a) assisting member States—mainly through multidisciplinary team missions—in the establishment of national policies and in the preparation and carrying out of national programmes for the improvement of working conditions and environment;

(b) developing operational activities in the rural sector, including pilot experiments concerning the improvement of working conditions and environment in rural areas;

(c) ensuring that factors of safety and health and conditions of work are taken into consideration in the choice of technology and more particularly in the preparation and carrying out of industrialisation projects;

(d) organising training activities.

In comparison with earlier technical co-operation activities, the new PIACT approach will attempt to link more closely the traditionally separate activities in the field of occupational safety and health and conditions of work and life. Nevertheless, the individual strands can be distinguished. Their main features are indicated below.

Occupational safety and health

The high incidence and severity of occupational accidents and diseases all over the world remains disturbing, causing considerable personal suffering and deprivation as well as loss of output. There is a wide variety of adverse physical, chemical and biological agents which a worker may encounter in his work environment. Physical agents include unguarded machinery and falling objects, heat and humidity, noise and vibration, inadequate lighting and radiation. There are about 2 million known chemical compounds of which some 15,000 are widely used in industry, agriculture and commerce. Only a small fraction have been thoroughly investigated regarding their effects on human health.

There are several reasons why workers in developing countries are subject to excessive exposure to such hazards. First, there is simply ignorance of available protective or preventive measures. A second reason is the lack of
appropriate national legislation incorporating the technical standards and inspection and control systems laid down in international labour Conventions and other instruments. A third is the absence of a comprehensive enforcement machinery when conflicts of interest or monetary gain arise, as, for example, in the case of a safety and health programme which may be found costly in terms of short-term profits. A fourth reason is the multitude of small, informal enterprises which face severe economic constraints and because of ignorance and lack of resources are unable, by themselves, to keep in touch with progress in the safety and health fields.

Technical co-operation programmes will assist in tackling these obstacles in numerous ways. Assistance will be provided in the preparation or revision of legislation and in the reinforcement of national administrative structures, particularly as regards inspection services, the creation of safety and health committees (with workers' representation) at the level of the enterprise, and the establishment of safety and health institutes including industrial-hygiene laboratories. Instructional programmes will be designed in collaboration with national occupational safety and health authorities and will include the organisation of seminars and workshops to provide basic safety training.

Another means of extending protection to personnel in small enterprises which will be explored is co-operation with financing institutions (such as the World Bank) in the design of industrial estates and the selection of the plant and equipment to ensure that they meet minimum safety and health standards and conform to ergonomic principles.

Working conditions and work organisation

This part of the Programme will aim at adapting working conditions and work organisation to local climatic, cultural and social characteristics, at preventing excessive stress due to long hours and the pace and monotony of work, and at humanising work while creating conditions conducive to increased productivity.

A rapidly growing segment of the labour force in the developing countries has to accept employment which imposes excessive stress on workers and does not allow full use of abilities and qualifications. Many jobs exist which are dirty, noisy, arduous, tedious or otherwise unpleasant. In many occupations an ever-widening gap is being created between the higher level of education and the fact that certain forms of work have become more and more limited and uninteresting (repetitive, fragmented and monotonous tasks).

Offsetting this situation, there is a growing awareness among practitioners and policy-makers of the negative social side-effects of the indiscriminate introduction of modern methods of production. Though different in scope and nature, some analyses put forward in developing countries share their view of technology, as not so much an unchangeable fact to which the workers must submit, but rather as a variable capable of being managed for the optimisation of work organisation to provide for the human factor without endangering the economic efficiency of the enterprise.
Technical co-operation

Since most developing countries want to modernise their production system but have a limited capacity for machine building, few design skills and insufficient capital, they have often to rely on the importation of technology from advanced countries. It is known that the indiscriminate importation of technology has led to "turn-key" factories, longer hours of work, increased fatigue, mental stress, increased occupational hazards and accidents and social strain. Of course, the difficulty lies not in technology per se but in the adaptation of technology to each society's unique climatic, cultural and social characteristics, which may prove as important as economic and employment considerations, as is increasingly being realised.

This is a very promising area for ILO technical co-operation activities in the years to come, since assistance will be needed, when industrialisation contracts are signed, in the formulation of specifications relating to occupational safety and health, working conditions and environment.

The contribution of ergonomics to the solution of the problems outlined above will be of great value. Ergonomics is gaining recognition as an effective method of reducing workload, fatigue and stress, and of increasing the safety and comfort of people at work. To the man-machine relationship it is necessary to add environmental factors and work organisation, which in turn become important elements for consideration in the context of system ergonomics.

Practical action in this field would take a number of forms and involve activities in research and the dissemination of information. It is particularly important that appropriate specifications be widely disseminated, and emphasis placed on the negative effects of poor ergonomic design, especially among production and design engineers and management responsible for work organisation, job content and work pace.

Technical co-operation could facilitate the introduction of these considerations into the organisation of undertakings at several levels. There will be, above all, the introduction of elements relating to the improvement of conditions of work in various national and regional training projects under way (vocational training, management development training, training of labour administrators or workers' education). In this connection, use will be made of the ILO regional centres (such as the Inter-American Centre for Labour Administration (CIAT), the African Regional Centre for Labour Administration (CRADAT) and the Inter-American Vocational Training, Research and Documentation Centre (CINTERFOR)) and of the Turin Centre which is at present preparing, under subcontract, a first handbook on working conditions. After the completion of this handbook, a few experimental seminars will be organised in co-operation with some of the above-mentioned regional centres and the Turin Centre.

In view of the decisive role that education and training could play in promoting better conditions of work and environment, the preparation of instruction manuals, practical guides and easy-to-understand brochures on specific aspects of this area of concern, for the use of educators, managers,
foremen, trade unionists and workers, should be systematically expanded in the coming years.

Fellowship programmes in conjunction with courses at the Turin Centre could enable labour administrators, personnel managers and trade union officials from developing countries to learn of the experience acquired with production systems adapted to local needs which have been developed elsewhere. Specialists in work organisation and incentive-remuneration systems could be attached to management training institutions. In particular, they could be asked to address themselves to certain dilemmas facing many developing countries, such as: How to reconcile the needs for greater efficiency in the use of resources with traditional social systems. How to restrict the length and frequency of shift work, with all its adverse social consequences, and yet at the same time raise the level of capacity utilisation which is so desirable in capital-scarce economies. How to encourage a participative style of management with greater delegation of responsibility in societies where the power structures were traditionally hierarchical or inherited.

TRIPARTISM, INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND PARTICIPATION

Tripartism is the cornerstone of the ILO. It constitutes the major strength and unique feature which differentiates the ILO from other United Nations organisations. The ILO draws from the combined experience of the three social partners: governments, employers and workers. In turn, it seeks to promote their active participation in the development process at the national and international levels. Technical co-operation is a vital means of providing direct assistance and advice for the development of competent and effective institutions for each of the three parties in the social dialogue. Work to assist in the strengthening of government machinery for labour administration, of employers' organisations and of workers' organisations will continue to be high among the ILO's priorities for a long time to come.

The ways in which this broad approach will be translated into specific activities are indicated below.

Industrial relations

There is an increasing demand for greater ILO involvement in some of the issues that now arise in industrial relations. These are complex and controversial issues on which the different parties in industrial relations have different views, and where the experience of different countries varies greatly. But this is precisely the kind of problem where technical co-operation, as practised in its latest form, has a key contribution to make. It would not espouse any one point of view or hold up any one national experience as a model. Its role would be to step up exchanges of views and experience and to stimulate the cross-fertilisation of ideas on the institutions and procedures for the conduct of sound industrial relations which have worked successfully in different parts of the world.
Technical co-operation

ILO assistance in the review or formulation of industrial relations policies is likely to concentrate on several areas of varying importance depending on the level of development and priorities of the countries concerned. Some countries request ILO advice in the course of reviewing their labour legislation to meet new economic and social conditions or because they wish to codify their labour laws into one body of legislation. Other countries consult the ILO on the development of collective bargaining and other forms of participation regarding wage determination or on how to promote payment systems that link reward with good performance.

In all of these areas the studies will be undertaken in close co-operation with national institutes for labour studies, wherever they exist. This will be achieved through the design of joint ventures between the institutes and the ILO, taking the form of research-cum-training projects. The emphasis of such co-operation would be on relating problems of development to their particular context and on promoting self-reliance. Key institutes in developing countries would be encouraged to undertake practical research in industrial relations, at the same time they would have an opportunity to broaden their scope and influence. The ILO is increasingly being called upon to assist in the organisation of short training courses for senior industrial relations officers on such subjects as collective bargaining, grievance procedures and workers’ participation. In these cases, attention will be given to the development of training material based on a better understanding of local conditions and requirements.

Labour administration

Adoption by the 1978 Session of the Conference of international standards on labour administration would lead the Office to review and reorientate the programme of technical co-operation in this field. In the light of recent experience, the programme will probably stress four main activities.

The first is to establish the permanence and viability of the regional and sub-regional labour administrations which have been successfully developed in CIAT, CRADAT, ARPLA (the Asian Regional Project for Strengthening Labour and Manpower Administration) and ARLAC (the African Regional Labour Administration Centre) and to extend this type of measure to other areas such as the Middle East and the Caribbean. These centres will concentrate on support of all training programmes for labour administrators. Their contributions will range from brief sessions on specialised topics, such as labour inspection or social security inspection, to long-term courses lasting several months and providing the basic tools needed for the administration of governments’ labour policy and to the further training of senior officials of these administrations. They will also promote the development of mutual assistance in these matters between States of the same region, providing the organisation or advisers that may be needed.

The second is the organisation of national seminars and symposia, as well as of consultative missions, devoted particularly to the problem of widening the scope of labour administration to encompass the outlying, rural areas.
A third response to the needs expressed by member States in this field is the provision of expert advisory services to help strengthen the role of labour administrations in national planning mechanisms and to help them organise their national employment services.

The fourth development to which I would like to draw attention in this brief review is closer collaboration with regional organisations such as the Central African Customs and Economic Union (UDEAC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), to the extent that realisation of their objectives entails operational improvements in national labour administrations, or the creation of a specialised agency within such a community (as occurred, for example, within the framework of UDEAC).

Workers’ organisations

The origin and the nature of technical co-operation requests made by workers’ organisations are very varied.

Workers’ education needs vary according to different categories of persons, their educational background and functions exercised, the duration and frequency of training, the educational facilities and resources available, as well as the trade union situation, public policies and political, social and economic conditions.

In terms of target groups and the nature of programmes, there is every likelihood that the situation will not change considerably and that workers and their representatives will continue to assume and seek increasing rights and responsibilities, to expand the base of their organisation and improve the effectiveness of its administrative structure and to acquire greater skill in negotiation, consultation and participation in social and economic development. Consequently, they will continue to need and organise education and training programmes of various kinds, some of increasing complexity and sophistication, designed for different categories of their organisations.

Action within this particular area is providing an initial impetus or an additional stimulus to programmes of that nature. Furthermore, requests for technical co-operation, mainly from developing countries, will be related to those types of activities which past experience has proved to be particularly suited to the Organisation’s mandate and objectives. Moreover, work which could be considered to be of a continuing nature will expand. Thus, increased attention will be paid to instructor training; to strengthening the education, research and documentation services of trade unions; to establishing and reinforcing permanent institutions of workers’ education for all forms of participation in development; and to teaching workers about the ILO and its work.

In some developing countries, workers’ education, either union-based, or in combination with government-sponsored institutions, is already strongly
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rooted. In these cases, the largest part of union effort is directed to securing better working and living conditions, to promoting and improving social legislation, to the establishment of appropriate machinery for participation in civic, social and political affairs at all levels and to fostering union-based cooperative-type enterprises. Trade unionists with specialised functions will therefore require practical knowledge in these areas. As union affairs become more and more complex, union treasurers and other officers dealing with financial and non-bargaining union activities will need assistance and training in such areas as co-operatives and credit unions, vocational training and literacy schemes, union health and welfare services, workers’ housing schemes, accounting, banking and investment practice, as well as the relevant elements of commercial and labour law. Other union officers will need to increase their skills in order to discharge their research functions, while others, again, will need training in management techniques.

Requests for technical co-operation in these areas will require a new multi-disciplinary approach and the development of adequate ILO supporting technical infrastructures and services. These services may include the provision of short-term experts to develop skill training programmes; fellowships for in-service training of trade unionists from developing countries studying operational projects of the type described above in other developing countries; studies and research in support of operational activities; feasibility studies; and specialised courses, possibly in the Turin Centre, for trade union and cooperative administrators.

In other developing countries, where the labour movement is emerging or in the formative stage, it is anticipated that assistance would include, in addition to experts, the provision of teaching materials and other training inputs. A very useful and relatively inexpensive method particularly suited to meeting the demand for instructor training and the creation of basic workers’ education infrastructures is the provision of study and travel grants. Indeed, requests in this area are expected to increase considerably.

The organised workers in developing countries constitute a strategic but numerical minority. Trade unions in most countries are aware of this limitation and seek to broaden their base through paying special attention to the rural masses. Action in this area will include an increasing number of studies on the educational requirements of self-employed rural workers conducted in several countries of the developing regions and, also, increased support to national, regional and international trade union organisations, in particular those whose members are mainly plantation and agricultural workers.

Differences in social systems account to a large extent for differences in social organisations and, consequently, in educational needs. In several developing countries the trend towards involving workers’ organisations in development and towards encouraging new types of industrial relations and workers’ participation has created new educational requirements. In some countries, workers’ representatives sit on the board of directors of nationalised or mixed undertakings and supervise the functioning of social institutions. Works
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councils and workers' committees participate in management. Workers' repre­
sentatives operating at the shop-floor level are involved with, and need to 
specialise in, grievance procedures, incentive schemes and industrial engineer­
ing techniques. The ILO is expected to make a major contribution in the 
setting up of labour institutes including a large workers' education segment to 
train these representatives. Work in these areas would include teacher training, 
the preparation of study materials, and curricula design.

Employers' organisations

Employers' organisations in developing countries are becoming increas­
ingly aware of their role in the development process. They have acquired a 
clear perception of what they should do to strengthen and streamline their 
structure in order to provide more effective services to their members, 
particularly in the field of industrial relations and for the prevention and 
settlement of labour disputes. They are also taking a more active interest in 
programmes concerning employment creation, improvement of conditions of 
work, work remuneration, and improvement of productivity.

This is clearly reflected in the requests for co-operation received from 
employers' organisations, which include in many cases enterprises from the 
public sector. These requests cover a wide range of questions concerning 
membership qualifications, structure, organisation services, subscriptions, role 
in national planning and labour relations practices in other countries.

An example of this kind of technical co-operation is the advice provided to 
the employers' organisations in Mauritania and in Thailand with regard to the 
setting up of a central "umbrella" type of organisation.

The support given by some employers' organisations in developed countries 
to ILO programmes of co-operation with employers' organisations in develop­
ing countries represents a special feature of these programmes. For instance, 
the Australian Council of Employers' Federations has offered to sponsor 
senior Federation staff to advise organisations in developing countries. The 
Konrad Adenauer Foundation has agreed to provide financial support for 
training purposes such as regional or sub-regional seminars for executives of 
employers' organisations. A Regional Seminar was recently held in Jakarta on 
the theme "business and culture in South and South-East Asia", with special 
reference to labour relations, management and leadership. The increased 
availability of such financial resources would open up promising new channels 
of assistance to employers' organisations.

Co-operatives

In the co-operative field the ILO is requested to respond to the needs not 
only of co-operatives in the traditional sense but also of all those self-help 
groups which work towards similar socio-economic objectives in a less formal 
framework. The ILO programme endeavours to help the people concerned to 
improve their income through group action, to find new job opportunities, to
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develop their own material and human resources and to share the benefits of
economic and social progress to a greater extent. In line with its mandate, ILO
assistance in the co-operative field is “people-oriented”, aimed at creating
institutions which combine economic activities, social benefits and popular
participation.

In the African region south of the Sahara, where income differentials in
rural areas are less pronounced than in other regions, these self-help groups
have been able to reach large numbers of rural people in the lower-income
brackets and have helped to bring subsistence farmers into the modern
economy. In other regions, such as Asia or the Middle East, co-operative self-
help has so far played only a limited role in improving the lot of the poorest
sectors of rural and urban populations, for whom the lack of a minimum of
resources is a barrier to their participating in co-operative activities, unless a
comprehensive state reform programme provides them with such resources.

In line with general policy decisions on help to the rural poor, the ILO is
now working on new orientations for its co-operative technical assistance
programme which would lead to more effective help for these disadvantaged
groups. Research planned for the coming biennium comprises studies on such
matters as: employment creation through labour co-operatives; co-operative,
social and provident services for rural populations; linking the promotion of
collective groups to other forms of aid; and creating co-operative work
programmes for women and young workers.

Major problems facing co-operatives in developing countries include the
continued shortage of managers and the fact that the members are not always
properly motivated. The ILO helps to solve these problems through its own
programme and, increasingly, through its role as a catalyst attracting other
sources of aid.

It is expected that the present level of activities will not only be maintained
but will increase by some 10 per cent per year during the period 1977-81. The
programme covers a series of training courses for co-operative staff and
regional consultancy services for the promotion and strengthening of inter-
cooperative trade, for the modernisation of training institutions and pro-
grammes, and for the development of co-operatives for the rural and urban
poor and other vulnerable groups, such as women, and handicapped and young
persons. Emphasis on the use of local “know-how” will be increased through-
out. Regional projects in these categories will provide scope for technical co-
operation between developing countries.

ILO support, requested in order to strengthen co-operative staff training
and members’ education programmes at the national level, will continue to be
given as in the past. Attention will increasingly focus on the needs of small and
medium-sized rural co-operatives, which constitute the bulk of such enterprises
in developing countries, and on the training of competent, reliable managers,
with roots in the local community. This development of local talent and
initiative could significantly reduce the present demands on government
support. A new trend is the increasing demand on ILO consultancy services in
the co-operative field by bilateral agencies which invite the ILO to provide specific inputs in large scale bilateral projects, mainly in rural areas. It is also anticipated that stronger links will be developed between co-operative projects and food aid.

The ILO will continue to collaborate with strong co-operative movements in industrialised countries and to rely heavily on their support. It will also maintain close relations with the International Co-operative Alliance. The interest shown by multi-bilateral sources of financing in ILO co-operative projects may in part be ascribed to support from co-operative movements in donor countries.

Some 75 per cent of co-operative technical assistance will probably concern the rural sector, with emphasis on decentralised programmes carried out at the village level. In many countries non-farm activities (crafts, small industries and public works) must provide incomes for large groups of rural people who cannot make a decent living from agriculture alone. The ILO will increasingly seek to support such developments in its co-operative programmes. Inflationary pressures and urban unemployment in developing countries will also demand more attention for urban types of co-operative services (consumer goods distribution, low-cost housing, co-operative work programmes) and the share of technical assistance oriented towards helping the urban poor may well grow because of increasing government demands.

Technical assistance in the co-operative field is becoming more and more flexible as regards the organisation and working methods of the institutions assisted by the ILO, and is benefiting a wide variety of self-help groups which fulfil the basic conditions regarding economically viable activities, social impact and popular participation. The formal co-operative structure and “movement” approach, characteristic of industrialised countries, may at the present time be of doubtful practical value in developing countries where the scope of such institutions for autonomous activities may be limited.

PLANNING, PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY

In many countries far-reaching social changes are the inevitable concomitant of rapid industrialisation. Workers and their dependants, who are no longer protected by the traditional environment of extended family and community, are caught in the upheaval which stems from the fast pace of social and economic change. The ensuing insecurity can have serious consequences on social welfare unless appropriate remedial steps are taken.

In this situation a formalised system of social security can be of great benefit. Governments have become increasingly aware that the worst excesses of such changes can be eradicated or alleviated by controlled development of social security programmes. Most countries have made a start in this direction, either through government programmes or occupational benefit schemes introduced by employers. But the approach is sometimes unplanned or piecemeal.
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Moreover, benefit schemes are often introduced for urban and industrial workers only, leaving the rural workers unprotected.

This explains why the ILO is continuously called upon to make its standards, knowledge and experience available to developing countries through technical co-operation. Social security legislation is a powerful tool in the hands of governments striving to achieve social development goals. Positive results can be obtained, however, only by careful planning and the adaptation of social security schemes to local needs, available resources and objectively assessed priorities. The ILO, with its ability to give impartial advice, can provide a unique and appreciated service. It can help to identify goals which can effectively be achieved in the light of available resources and a realistic assessment of constraints.

Once a scheme is set in motion in a particular country, the urge to seek extensions and improvements becomes almost irresistible as long as resources permit. The ILO's technical programme therefore takes the form—and will continue to take the form—of providing assistance by way of feasibility studies, planning, the formulation of legislation and institutional development leading to the implementation of suitable systems of social security or helping in the transformation or extension of existing schemes.

A forecast of the requirements of technical co-operation in social security in Africa must be based upon the fact that in many countries the bulk of the population, particularly those living in rural areas, remain untouched by social security protection. Rural areas will increasingly be given the priority attention they deserve. With regard to the urban workers who enjoy minimum protection, not always suited to local conditions and needs, the transition to more suitable schemes is contemplated.

In Latin America medical care under social security schemes has benefited many millions of workers and their dependants. As a result of social security development, schemes for income protection have been a feature of numerous countries on the continent for many years. The technical co-operation needs expressed now concern, first, co-ordination of medical-care programmes both within the social security framework and between social security institutions and public health agencies and, second, extension of the scope of income protection. Much remains to be done to incorporate the rural population and to raise the quality of administration. In the Caribbean co-ordination of existing schemes on a multilateral basis, the extension of schemes to develop medical-care programmes and the transformation of social security systems of a provident-fund type are the particular developments foreseen over the next five years. The ILO has been asked to become associated with all these developments.

In Asia the extension of social security schemes to a significant section of the working population remains difficult to resolve but is increasingly occupying the attention of authorities. The ILO is being drawn more and more into the discussions designed to find appropriate solutions. The move away from provident-fund type schemes to pension insurance is increasingly in the
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forefront of government preoccupation, as is the plan to change over from employer-liability schemes to social security programmes. Here, again, requests for ILO involvement are likely to be made on a continuing basis and indeed to increase.

Since the sound financing of schemes and their periodical evaluation are of paramount importance in all these regions, a great deal of effort will be given to the provision of suitable actuarial services for which the ILO is particularly competent.

With the moves towards closer economic integration between developing countries, there is a growing tendency to look at the feasibility of co-ordinating or harmonising social security schemes. In this area the ILO has set useful standards and has developed special skills to advise governments.

There is increasing recognition that the savings which accrue from social security can be an instrument for ensuring greater and more effective protection to the poorer section of the community, if such savings are prudently invested and there is proper appreciation of the consequences. The ILO is likely to be more concerned in the next decade with technical assistance to help countries to produce actuarial evaluations of their existing schemes and to provide advice on financial and investment policies generally. This could be achieved through development of its International Actuarial Services, so long as financial support is forthcoming.

Another form of action, although not entirely new but of burgeoning importance, is the provision of co-ordination and technical advisory services from headquarters which have helped to conclude multilateral social security agreements designed specifically to deal with the complex social security problems posed by migration of workers. Economic integration efforts in developing countries are leading to requests for technical support in the preparation of instruments of a similar nature; for example, the Caribbean Community Secretariat recently asked for ILO technical support in evolving a multilateral social security convention for the independent countries in the Caribbean. Member States of the Arab Labour Organisation have also indicated their desire to seek ILO assistance in the preparation of such a convention among Arab States.

In conclusion, it is worth reiterating that the ILO technical co-operation programme in the field of social security is governed by the principle that the best foundation for the successful spread of social security is one based on the mutual support of the social partners, the workers, their employers and governments.

THE TURIN CENTRE'S CONTRIBUTION TO TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION

The ILO's Turin Centre provides a range of training services which complement the technical co-operation activities of the Office. These services include: training courses (usually of 12 weeks' duration) and seminars in
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Turin; short courses (2 to 3 weeks) and seminars in the field; the administration and technical monitoring of fellowships (including those for intern instructors at Turin); the provision of technical advisory services; and the production of training materials, generally in audio-visual package form.

Training courses in Turin and the production there of training materials constitute the bulk of the Centre’s activities although the other services continue to be in steady demand. The fields of competence in which the Centre provides the majority of its services are those of manager training, the training of technical and vocational instructors and trainers and the training of trade unionist trainers. In the field of manager training there is a continuing strong demand for co-operative managers and for the training of managers for hotels and tourism. Other fields in which need and interest are currently being explored include national planning and programming of training and labour administration.

The important characteristics of the training courses conducted in Turin (the major activity by far) are that they are designed to complement the training which is available at national and regional levels; they are in most cases specially designed—or “tailor-made”—to fit the needs of the countries being served and the financial sponsors of the courses; the training given is different from that available in other advanced institutions in ways which are of special benefit to participants from developing countries; the training given aims at improving participants’ job performance in ways which will be demonstrable in their jobs on their return home; the quality of the courses and of the participants’ performance is kept under continuous testing, evaluation and control; and the courses are fully residential (thus providing an environment for living which is conducive to intensive learning and also to reviewing, and when necessary revising, those attitudes and aspirations which restrict the ability to improve one’s learning and job performance).

The differences in the ways the training courses are conducted (curricula, training materials, training methods) can be seen from the emphasis given to:

(a) the orientation of all subject-matter to the working and learning conditions existing in developing countries and to the approach most likely to be effective there;
(b) conservation and maintenance practices as these relate to all resources (equipment, materials, finances);
(c) adaptation, redesign and innovation; and the techniques, procedures and attitudes through which these are achieved;
(d) human resources conservation and development, with particular concern being given to labour-management relations, job design, job and work satisfaction, workers’ safety and health, vocational guidance and career development;
(e) the social challenges to which society and employees expect, or are likely to expect, positive responses from trained personnel and the organisations they work for.
The advantages of the Centre’s courses as compared with other alternatives available in training arise from many sources and conditions and vary according to specific situations in countries. In some cases the advantages result from the Centre’s location in Europe, combined with its resources and expertise; in some others it results from the Centre’s being able to respond to urgent demands or short-term demands; in others it results from the level and quality of the services provided; and in yet others it is because of the Centre’s capacity to handle the training of large numbers of participants (in courses) as well as small numbers (as interns or study groups) and even individual fellowships. The Centre has a flexibility in its response (with courses and other services) which extends and reinforces the total training service of the ILO.

To a number of countries—particularly those with more advanced levels of development—Turin’s location in Europe has considerable advantages. For them Turin is able to provide training in fields which it would be difficult to deal with in their own countries or regions. By virtue of its location in industrialised Europe, the Turin Centre has access to resources, expertise and the demonstration of systems in practice which are not available elsewhere outside Europe. Fields where this is particularly important include: group production methods and new forms of work organisation; export marketing in Europe; management of public enterprises; industrial information systems and the management of computer installations; management of tourism enterprises; hotel management and operations; modern and adaptive training methods and the production and use of audio-visual training materials; financial management and management accounting.

For countries with lower levels of development, and particularly those where the training systems and institutions are still in the early stages of establishment, there are even further advantages stemming from the location in Europe. These additional advantages relate to the potential provided for the up-dating and up-grading of technical instructors and trainers in a range of technologies: mechanical technology; preventive maintenance; automobile maintenance and service; electrical installation and maintenance; construction technology; industrial electronics; television and radio installation and maintenance; audio-visual aids technology.

In addition, the Centre’s location in Northern Italy has advantages for the training of managers of co-operative enterprises (particularly agricultural co-operatives) and for the training of managers of large farms. The Centre has now successfully conducted several courses for co-operative managers (in conjunction with the ILO), taking advantage of the availability of the large number of well established agricultural co-operative enterprises in Northern Italy and also in countries in Europe; it has also conducted several courses for farm managers (in conjunction with the FAO).

The advantage of quick and ready response is proving to be of increasing value, as illustrated in the following examples:

(a) Countries often have, within their national training plans, needs to be satisfied on an immediate or short-term basis (as well as on a medium to
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long-term basis) for which they want training started in three to six months’ time.

(b) Countries which have suffered some national disaster generally have some urgent needs which cannot be totally dealt with locally or regionally.

(c) Countries sometimes have a unique and urgent training need, such as: hotel training for Nigeria because of the Arts Festival; hotel training for Uganda because of the Conference of the Organisation of Africa Unity.

In addition, the Centre can provide a time advantage for the financial sponsors of development since through the Centre they can initiate training actions which will lead to similar training later in the countries themselves. Such initiatives have already taken place in the training of vocational trainers and of trade unionist trainers, and it is planned to take such an initiative in the training of national planners. To try to undertake these initiatives in regions or countries would result in long and wasteful delays running into years.

For some countries a further advantage is that the Centre is an integral part of the ILO and of the United Nations system. For this reason it is able to operate in a non-political and non-commercial atmosphere.

The advantage of the Centre so far as the number of participants is concerned is clearly limited but so far this limit has never been fully taxed. This quantitative advantage was of particular importance to the “crash” Iranian project (where the training requirement is for 600 participants a year in three-month courses) and could be of importance to several other countries where the number of trainers or managers to be trained is large and greater than their own institutions and systems can handle in the time available.

From the point of view of financial sponsors or clients who are paying for the training or using their foreign aid quotas for this purpose, the professional and human benefits of the Centre must be weighed against costs. A very large number of countries have considered them to be more important than any disadvantage as regards costs.

In this respect it is interesting to note that on present fellowship rates the Centre can train 25 participants in an intensive, quality-controlled fully residential three-month course for between US$100,000 and US$125,000. To provide the same type of training in a country or region, using short-term experts, would cost at least this figure and probably considerably more. To provide it elsewhere in Europe or in North America would certainly not cost any less.

In its other major activity the production, adaptation, storage and supply of training materials, the Centre enjoys similar comparative advantages to those which it has for courses conducted in Turin. These advantages derive, not only from its expertise, experience and facilities, but also from its location, its ready response, its quality control and its volume capacities.

It operates as an international hub for all of the training projects being executed by the ILO in developing countries and provides a centralised international resource for all the training institutions in developing countries.
for which the ILO provides a continuing training service. In addition, its position within the ILO and the United Nations enables it to operate as a centralised service for a number of United Nations agencies. In this connection it is noteworthy that the ACC Sub-Committee on Education and Training has established the Turin Centre as a focal point for educational technology within the United Nations system.

Moreover, its situation in Europe enables the Turin Centre to have access to the range of highly specialised expertise necessary for the total production of such training materials. This expertise covers not only the full pedagogical range using modern teaching media, but also the substantive technical expertise required in the development of the knowledge, skills and attitudes which are to be learned through the use of the materials themselves.

For many countries the availability of the Turin Centre as an institution able to respond quickly with the production and supply of training materials is a further decided advantage, the extent of which is becoming very clear now as countries move forward in the production, for instance, of MES (modules of employable skills) materials. Although the countries can produce such materials, their ability to do so within reasonable time-limits is proving to be extremely difficult for a variety of reasons, including deficiencies in resources, experience and expertise as well as in organisational capacity.

A further advantage for the developing countries being served lies in the fact that the Centre can provide standardisation and a systematic adaptation of materials which is not yet possible in many developing countries and is not expected to be available for some years.

In addition to this the Centre has a quantitative advantage in that it has an under-utilised capacity for the production of training materials. Such a capacity will be of advantage in the coming years as the ILO Training Department, for instance, moves from its research and development on the MES system into the production of the full occupational range required. This is planned to be a large production activity for which the major action would be taken through the Turin Centre.

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR LABOUR STUDIES

Several of the fields of activity referred to in this chapter are also of concern to the International Institute for Labour Studies. The Institute was set up as a centre of advanced study rather than as a provider of technical co-operation. Nevertheless, it has occasionally engaged in technical co-operation projects and it would seem that the opportunities for its doing so will be enhanced as a result of the evolution of technical co-operation described elsewhere in this Report. This evolution has been marked by a shift from the paternalistic approach to the recognition that the technical co-operation partners are equal; that the concept of self-reliance and solidarity should provide the framework for the technical co-operation activities of the ILO; and that emphasis should be placed on the continued development and strengthening of national institutions.
Technical co-operation

Within this new framework the Institute has its role to play and its contribution to make. It is a central point of impetus and a source of new ideas for the ILO’s world-wide educational work and effort. To this centre come workers, managers and government servants who have already acquired a certain experience in their work and whose careers may lead them to positions of greater responsibility in the future. At the Institute, they can mingle for a time with students of social affairs and, in an atmosphere of academic freedom, have every opportunity for discussion and exchanges of experience in regard to social questions, including in particular labour-management relations.

The Institute can build on its existing contacts with a variety of national institutes for labour studies where there are common concerns and objectives. The multiplier principle which has long guided the selection of Institute activities and contacts would be given even greater emphasis with the new premises of technical co-operation.

THE VARIETY OF COUNTRY NEEDS

The preceding pages review the range of areas of ILO responsibility for dealing with the development problem through technical co-operation. Such a brief survey is inevitably in general terms, whereas practical action, although based on certain common principles and approaches, must be in the highly specific terms of individual projects meeting the needs and circumstances of individual countries. The need for technical co-operation work to be developed in full awareness of the immense variety of practical problems and opportunities encountered in member countries is all the greater, because this variety itself tends to increase and to become more clearly structured. In particular, by the criteria of economic advancement and technological capability, and quite apart from individual differences of a geographical and socio-cultural nature among individual countries, different groups of developing countries have emerged with quite different expectations of technical co-operation.

Least developed countries

The group of least developed countries naturally includes the 25 countries designated as such by the United Nations; it can also be broadly extended to include all countries faced with the problem of the actual survival of all or part of their population. Most of the least developed countries are in Africa. In almost every sphere of development their requirements are vast and have steadily increased as a result both of the growing awareness of all that needs to be done and of the urgency of finding solutions on which, in some cases, their very survival depends. Nowadays the international community is giving more and more attention to these countries, as can be seen from the fact that a larger share of UNDP funds has been earmarked for them.

The areas where the need for technical co-operation is particularly strongly felt include employment, manpower planning and development, rural develop-
Trends in major areas

ment, co-operatives, vocational and management training. The shortage of skilled manpower is still one of the most serious obstacles to development. In the least developed countries existing programmes continue to be geared essentially to the training of instructors, so as to develop the national potential for training. In future, priority will be devoted to training intended for rural areas, where the demand is increasing as rural development activities are intensified. Requests are also very often received for co-operation in the training of executives in the public sector.

The least developed countries also need continuing technical co-operation in the fields of labour administration and industrial relations; here more than elsewhere, however, meeting requirements is often a question not just of creating the necessary structures, training manpower and preparing legislation, etc., but of providing the actual means for the system to operate properly. International co-operation should therefore be geared as far as possible to satisfying real needs.

The least developed countries also include the countries that have recently obtained their independence, which face the inevitable problems that any young emerging State encounters; but in this case the problems are aggravated by the situation that existed prior to or immediately after independence. In such countries, technical co-operation is urgently needed in all the spheres that come within the jurisdiction of the ILO. Training in all disciplines is always in short supply, particularly since there is such a shortage of supervisory staff that, once the future instructors have received their training, they are rapidly given responsibilities that are beyond the normal scope of their original training. This is not meant as an implicit criticism of the training activities; on the contrary, since the training provided is being used at a higher level of decision-making, whether in administration, management or political institutions, than that for which it was intended. The fact remains, however, that trained individuals who are taken away to fulfil new tasks must be constantly replaced by newly trained human resources. The only way of doing this is to develop existing specialised institutions whose potential is as yet very limited or to create new institutions where none exist.

As regards countries which have not yet obtained their independence, the most urgent task in assisting liberation movements, particularly in southern Africa, is, on the one hand, to help the refugee population to meet its own needs without overburdening the host countries (which in many cases are also poor) and, on the other, to prepare and train supervisory personnel to take over the running of their administration.

Developing countries with substantial financial resources but a limited domestic technical potential

In the past two or three years, a lot of these countries have stepped up their development goals considerably. In doing so they have put more pressure on the existing infrastructure than they are able to cope with; consequently, the infrastructure needs to be modernised and adapted to the requirements of the
particular development strategy they have chosen. Technical co-operation with
the ILO will be concerned mainly with the identification of such pressures and
with the formulation of policies that can ease the situation and can increase
the countries' capacity to push through a process of rapid development
while avoiding the socio-economic and cultural upsets that might ensue.

More and more often, these countries are now net contributors to interna­
tional technical co-operation programmes. They are definitely showing a
growing desire to increase their financial participation in development activities
in less privileged countries, but they are frustrated by the lack of a suitable
institutional and technical framework for doing so.

In situations of this kind, there are a great many ways in which the ILO can
act as the catalyst, if not as the instigator, in encouraging technical co-operation
activities between developing countries. Several examples already exist where
the ILO's contribution has been to collaborate with a beneficiary and a donor
country in the preparation of technically sound projects that were subsequently
carried out with or without ILO participation. This kind of activity is still
fairly limited but it is expected to become much more common.

Middle-income countries and developing countries
with major technical capacity

This group includes a number of Latin American and Asian countries as
well as several countries from the Middle East and Africa. Broadly speaking,
the level of development does not appear to have any decisive effect on the
volume of technical co-operation requested; on the other hand, it does have a
substantial influence on the nature and form of such co-operation. In practice,
although the requests still concern the major areas of ILO action and in more
or less the same proportions, they usually tend to be for short-term missions in
more specific fields for the purpose of providing the countries' own human
resources with suitable guidelines and "know-how" so that they can apply the
appropriate solutions themselves.

Naturally, this type of activity involves a much higher degree of technical
specialisation, which in turn means that the ILO must adapt its co-operation
to the particular requirements of the countries concerned.

It would be wrong, however, to think that this evident trend towards more
short-term, more highly specialised missions is likely to exclude the carrying
out of long-term projects along traditional lines (experts, fellowships and
equipment). In point of fact the new forms of co-operation take place more and
more often side by side with the old forms; for example, medium or long-term
projects nowadays involve far more "consultation" components than in
the past.

In many of these countries the new International Programme for the
Improvement of Working Conditions and Environment (PIACT) has been
particularly well received. They have also demonstrated a very definite desire
to ensure that the development effort should be much more widely shared and
be geared increasingly to aspects that are more closely related to the problems and aspirations of the rural population and informal sectors of the economy.

This is because, in recent years, these countries have experienced high and sustained annual economic growth rates, thanks to the concentration of a major development effort in several sectors, particularly that of industrial development. This has affected the internal migration situation, which in turn has had certain repercussions on food production, employment, etc., or on the state of internal political stability, owing to the consequent redistribution of income and improvement in living and working conditions.

In this group of middle-income countries the developing countries with a substantial technical capacity fall into a special category, not only because of their specific technical co-operation requirements but above all because of the increasingly important role they play in the application of new systems of technical co-operation among developing countries or in institutions created to promote regional or sub-regional integration.

International technical co-operation will, above all, give these countries an opportunity to compare experiences and exchange information with industrialised countries and to bring about the ideal conditions for passing on technical "know-how" which they have acquired in similar conditions to those prevailing in other developing countries and which is therefore liable to be easier to adapt.
In the light of the preceding survey of needs and prospects for technical co-operation in the fields of ILO responsibility, how do we, as an organisation, ensure that these needs are properly met?

The first major task that seems to emerge from the survey is that of giving proper priority to ILO concerns in the programming of technical co-operation. The survey suggests that, for various reasons, the priority at present given to these concerns is too low. This raises the question as to why this should be so, in what ways and what can be done to remedy the situation. The survey further suggests that, in examining this question, a distinction should be made between the two categories into which ILO technical co-operation projects can be divided. Some are part and parcel of the over-all United Nations Development Programme and are therefore eligible for implementation with UNDP funds. Others, however, especially those deriving from our tripartite structure, are considered more or less unique to the ILO and, therefore, eligible for UNDP financing to a limited extent only, or not at all. Proper alternative financial and organisational arrangements should thus be made for technical co-operation in respect of the latter category.

The second major task would seem to be that of maintaining and, when necessary, strengthening the ILO's capacity to provide the technical services needed for international co-operation for development. Like other organisations of the United Nations system, the ILO is a major executing agency in the UNDP, because it has a more comprehensive and reliable repository of existing knowledge and is a more powerful source of new knowledge and experience in the fields of its responsibility than any other body. It is imperative to maintain this technical competence and this calls for a proper balance in the ILO's programmes and budgets between technical co-operation on the one hand and the traditional or "constitutional" functions of standard-setting and research on the other. It also calls for systematic and objective evaluation.

Third, the effectiveness of ILO action depends on proper organisation, on the decentralisation of policy discussion (through regional meetings) and of the secretariat staff. Also needed are effective arrangements for participation by our
tripartite constituency and by the Office field structure in the country programming of technical co-operation.

It is with these various matters that the present chapter is concerned.

THE PRIORITY OF ILO OBJECTIVES IN TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION

The bluntest way of stating the question of priority would be in these terms: why is it that, while countries meeting in the International Labour Conference adopt every year principles of social policy for development, these principles are rarely prominent in their national plans and in the country programmes of technical co-operation and external assistance which are based on these plans? The question has been raised both in ILO meetings and in discussions between the Office and the UNDP. It has become more acute as a result of the financial crisis which struck the UNDP late in 1975; in many cases, in the revision of country programmes that became necessary, projects with predominantly “social” objectives of interest to the ILO tended to be the first to be suspended or reduced in size.

The bluntest way of answering the question of priority has been in these terms: the principles and objectives adopted at the “global” level of conferences of the ILO and of other specialised agencies are not necessarily relevant to the current needs and objectives of individual countries. In other words, there is often a divergence between these global objectives and national priorities.

Obviously, if this were so, we would have a basic problem on our hands. The question deserves further consideration and it is best to consider it in the first instance with regard to technical co-operation under the UNDP, because it is for this important component of ILO activities that clear general principles and rules were established in the Resolution (2688 (XXV)) adopted by the General Assembly in December 1970, concerning the capacity of the United Nations development system; the Annex to this resolution is the well known “Consensus”.

The dominant feature of this “Consensus” has been described as its “country orientation”. Thus, one basic principle is that “the Government of the country concerned has the exclusive responsibility for formulating its national development plan or priorities and objectives”. Countries may request assistance in planning (from the United Nations in general planning and from the specialised agencies in sectoral planning) but this does not in any way reduce their full responsibility and sovereignty in determining their development priorities and the best ways of achieving them. The second basic principle is that country programmes of UNDP assistance are to be formulated by the governments of the recipient countries “in co-operation, at an appropriate stage, with representatives of the United Nations system, the latter under the leadership of the resident representative of the Programme”. Other aspects of the country orientation are government participation in the formulation, execution, evaluation and follow-up of technical co-operation projects.
The primacy of national objectives and plans, and the countries' own determination of what they need from or wish to contribute to any source of external assistance or co-operation in dealing with the problems of poverty and underdevelopment is clear and indisputable.

In the circumstances, is there a separate role for "global" objectives, of the ILO and other agencies, for the attainment of which technical co-operation is one of the means of action? For instance, to what extent can, or should, the ILO objectives of full employment, decent working conditions and respect for human rights in the labour field be reflected in country programmes?

This consideration leads to the question of the desirable nature and extent of participation by the ILO and other international agencies in the co-operation which the United Nations system is to provide, under the leadership of the UNDP resident representatives, when governments formulate their country programmes. It has been asked whether the apparent neglect of social aspects in the preparation of country programmes does not, to at least some extent, result from an inadequate part played in this process by the international agencies that are responsible for social affairs. More active participation by the ILO and other agencies in country programming might well result in a more thorough examination of the possible need for projects in their fields of responsibility. But this must not be the main or only purpose. The fact is that social goals are not achieved by projects especially designed for the purpose alone and that these goals may well be frustrated by projects in entirely different fields if social aspects are overlooked in the preparation and implementation of such projects. Most major development projects have a bearing on such matters as employment, training needs and conditions of work. For instance, the construction of a large irrigation dam is bound to affect the whole economic and social structure of the area concerned, and to neglect consideration of the social aspects involved may mean that major results expected from the project are not achieved, that, for instance, opportunities for employment creation are missed, and that unintended negative effects occur which further reduce the net benefits of a possibly very costly investment effort.

In asking for better arrangements for the participation by agencies in the process of country programming we must, of course, be realistic. The UNDP resident representative must play the leading role and there are limits to the nature and extent of the consultations he can undertake without this role becoming impossible or ineffective. But it should be a cause of considerable concern when we learn from an objective source that in country programming the role of the specialised agencies would appear to be reduced to a minimum and that "The agencies of the United Nations system are for the most part kept out of the preparations for the country programming exercise both at the headquarters and at the local level".1

1 United Nations Joint Inspection Unit: Report on country programming as an instrument for co-ordination and co-operation at the country level (Geneva, Oct. 1976; document JIU/ REP/76/10), paras. 42 and 46.
Technical co-operation

The reply given to these various questions has been to the effect that governments are solely responsible for the formulation of national development policies and of the country programmes based on them, and that governments are therefore the best, indeed the only, judges of priority as between matters that may seem important to international agencies and those that are of direct national concern. From this point of view it will seem neither necessary nor, indeed, wholly appropriate for the agencies to be closely associated with country programming; their association might merely tend to distort the relative priorities to be given to global visions and true national needs or, in some cases, degenerate into a form of salesmanship which is calculated to further the bureaucratic interests of the agencies themselves rather than the well-being of the countries to which they proffer their services.

To any such beliefs we should oppose two major objections. The first is that in the ILO we do not believe that decisions should be taken by the government alone. Participation by those whom the decisions will affect and their involvement in implementing the decisions, are the themes running throughout the Organisation's work, as well as being reflected in its tripartite structure. It is on this basis that in recent years efforts have been made to persuade the UNDP and governments that representatives of employers' and workers' organisations should be associated with various phases of technical co-operation work in their countries. As we shall see below, these efforts have by no means been universally successful and they should no doubt be renewed with increased vigour.

It should perhaps be stressed that if in the ILO the demand has been made for participation by employers and workers, this is so merely because these groups form an integral part of this Organisation. The principle of popular participation and involvement, as distinct from government management from above, is much broader; it applies to other non-governmental groups as well as to any country's citizens as such. Moreover, in the specific field of technical co-operation the principle need not be limited to drawing up and monitoring country programmes; excellent arguments have often been advanced also for using a substantial proportion of the resources available for technical co-operation for the direct benefit of non-governmental bodies rather than for the exclusive use of government agencies. This idea again is of special interest to the ILO, and we shall return to it below.

The second objection that we must make, however, is against the sharp distinction that is sometimes made between the global objectives and principles of international organisations, on the one hand, and the national needs and priorities of member States on the other. Occasionally, an impression appears to prevail that specialised agencies are powers, actors or interest groups in their own right, quite distinct from the countries which are their members and from these countries' own interests. From such a point of view, active participation by the agencies in country programming may easily appear to be in the nature of unwarranted international sectional interference with the over-all planning by central national authorities which are supposed to be
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guided by criteria of general, national interest. It may then seem that such participation is better not encouraged.

However, the premise of a contrast or even conflict between principles and objectives of international organisations and the national interest must in most cases be false. International organisations cannot be divorced from the member States whose instruments they are. In the words of the Joint Inspection Unit: "... to decide that the work done by Governments in the governing bodies of the specialised agencies was unusable by those same Governments at the level of designing and preparing the country programme would be to condemn the entire United Nations system."¹

All this does not imply pre-empting any government's own sovereignty to determine its own development priorities and the best ways of achieving them. It only implies that governments should not be expected to conclude lightly that their countries' interests are best served by policies substantially different from the standards and recommendations adopted by the majority of the membership of the United Nations system. Moreover, if a government nevertheless came to any such conclusion, it should perhaps not expect to be able to rely on the United Nations system for assistance in the implementation of policies differing from those which the majority of the system considered to be the right ones.

In conclusion, mere consistency of member countries' action through their international organisations and at the national level would seem to imply that in domestic policy-making in general, and in country programming in particular, serious consideration should be given to conclusions and recommendations that have been formulated at the international or "global" level. In its turn, this would seem to imply, again in the words of the Joint Inspection Unit, that "the agencies of the United Nations system should be associated with the design and preparation of the country programme instead of being kept out of it, as seems to be the effect of the present UNDP regulations."²

But a further conclusion may be drawn regarding the countries that provide most of the financial resources for ILO technical co-operation. Without exception, these countries also render international assistance, including technical co-operation to developing countries, directly or through regional organisations, such as the European Economic Community and various regional development banks. In many cases these bilateral or regional activities are on a substantially larger scale than the participation of these countries in the United Nations system. For instance, annual disbursements for "technical assistance" under bilateral programmes of Official Development Assistance (ODA) by members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) are nearly three times as large as these countries' disbursements on behalf of United Nations

¹ United Nations Joint Inspection Unit, op. cit., para. 55.
² ibid., para. 54.
Technical co-operation

programmes. In 1976 member countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) were providing assistance to 64 developing countries in fields such as industrialisation, energy and the expansion and consolidation of the public sector. It is estimated that direct bilateral co-operation programmes between member countries and developing countries are nine times as large as those member countries’ participation in United Nations multilateral programmes. Relatively large bilateral programmes of technical assistance are also maintained by India, Israel and Yugoslavia.¹

Even when multi-bilateral arrangements cannot be made, the ILO organises increasingly wide-ranging exchanges of information with the regional or national institutions involved in technical co-operation activities in the developing countries. The object of these contacts is not just to create conditions that are conducive to better co-ordination between the institutions and the ILO in the fields of the ILO’s competence but to make sure as far as possible that the methodology and general approach to assistance are in line with the principles laid down by the constituent bodies of the ILO.

This attempt at co-ordination has already had a number of very definite results. In Malaysia, for example, the cost of financing a group of vocational training experts under an ILO project to improve the technical capability of the country’s electricity training institute is being paid for directly out of British bilateral assistance. In Africa the French and Belgian Governments have agreed to finance the participation of professors and lecturers at the African Regional Labour Administration Centre (CRADAT) in Yaoundé. One of the most typical examples of this kind of collaboration is the project for a National Vocational Training Institute in Haiti which has just been set up with the joint assistance of the ILO and the French Government; the preparatory work on this project was carried out in collaboration with French bilateral assistance from the very earliest stage. There has also been very close collaboration between the ILO and a number of bilateral assistance programmes, and particularly with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), in connection with the programme of assistance to the Sahel region. In the same spirit, extensive preliminary discussions have also been carried out between the ILO and the European Development Fund.

TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION IN FIELDS OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE TO TRIPARTISM

More effective participation by the ILO and other specialised agencies in UNDP country programming would undoubtedly help in improving the

¹ OECD: Development co-operation, 1976 review (Paris, 1976), pp. 64 and 84. In 1974 OPEC countries became the second largest group of aid donors, working through several bilateral and multi-bilateral funds. This involves large sums which are almost entirely devoted to general economic support and to the financing of investment projects in poor countries; hitherto, technical co-operation has been a small component of this aid.
process of priority determination. For instance, it might well result in a better balance between conventional projects, aiming directly at increased production and growth of GNP per se, and the probably more time-consuming and technically more difficult projects needed to achieve satisfaction of the basic needs of the poorest sections of the population.

Such participation would help, but for at least three reasons it would not suffice. One of these is that technical co-operation in pursuit of some of the ILO's most important universal or "global" objectives is more or less clearly outside the UNDP's mandate. The objectives concerned have come to be described as unique or peculiar to the ILO. They include our objectives regarding the promotion of tripartite machinery at the national level, industrial relations, vocational rehabilitation and the improvement of conditions of work. The second reason is that in many member countries the absence of effective non-governmental organisations prevents important social issues from receiving proper priority in national development plans, and in the UNDP country programmes. The third reason is that it is difficult to correct this weakness of non-governmental groups through technical co-operation because, in principle, the UNDP limits its assistance almost exclusively to governments.

To note that some basic ILO objectives are outside the UNDP's mandate does not imply that its activities exclude all concern for social and labour aspects of development. On the contrary, the UNDP is called upon to give particular attention to the development of human resources through activities in social fields such as health, nutrition and education as well as through training; on this basis it has financed the ILO's quite large training programmes in developing countries. More tentatively (i.e. limited to the "execution of pioneering programmes embodying innovative inter-disciplinary projects and popular participation" and "the diffusion of the experience gained in such programmes") the UNDP can also work towards the solution of problems of mass poverty and unemployment.\(^1\) This has also been immensely useful to the ILO's work, but projects in pursuit of the "unique" ILO objectives mentioned above have generally not been found eligible for UNDP financing.

This is the factual situation. Is it the right situation? In a general way it might be thought that it was not. For again, consistency of thinking and action would seem to imply that member governments which have underwritten the ILO's global objectives in the field of social policy do not, as members of the UNDP Governing Council, want these matters to be virtually excluded from that Programme. Certainly no objectives adopted by the ILO's membership can be unique or peculiar to the ILO in the sense that they are of no concern to the rest of the United Nations system. They can be peculiar to the ILO only in the sense that our Organisation has a primary responsibility for seeking to attain them. Perhaps the only valid reason for excluding them from the

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1 UNDP: *The country programme cycle*, Policies and procedures manual, 1 Dec. 1975, Ch. 3201, para. 7(f).
UNDP would be the belief that these fields are of such basic importance as to require funding from the ILO's assessed budget rather than from the more uncertain voluntary pledges to the UNDP. If this were indeed the reason, perhaps a parallel might be drawn with the large provision for technical co-operation (about 50 per cent) in the regular budget of the World Health Organisation. But perhaps a more likely explanation of the UNDP's reluctance to finance projects in some of the fields of ILO concern is to be found in a lingering of conventional development theory, whereby the only condition of progress is growth, "trickling down" to the poor, without requiring great special efforts to ensure that the poverty groups are directly involved in development and its planning, and that they properly share in its fruits.

However this may be, it has always been recognised that it is necessary for operational activities which help to attain priority objectives in the fields of ILO responsibility to be financed from the regular budget, as was confirmed by the Governing Body at its 173rd (November 1968) Session. Of course, such activities should meet the requirement in the "Consensus" of 1970 that: "In the process of country programming, efforts should be made at all levels to co-ordinate all sources of assistance in the United Nations system, with a view to achieving integration of the assistance at the country level". No duplication or competition between projects financed from the regular budget, the UNDP and other United Nations sources should be tolerated.

It would further seem clear that in ILO technical co-operation special priority should be given to projects that strengthen tripartite machinery in member countries. The main reason is, of course, one of principle. The work of the ILO is based on the assumption that free and independent organisations of workers and employers exist in the member States. This assumption is the basis of tripartite discussion and decision-taking in the ILO itself. It also underlies the requirement in many international labour standards that such organisations should be involved in their implementation, if only through effective consultation. In actual fact, however, for all sorts of reasons—and even when the principle of freedom of association is observed—in many member States such organisations as exist are weak and ineffective in the definition and execution of the policies that affect them. As we shall see, in developing countries this is the principal reason given for the failure of employers' and workers' organisations to be involved in the activities of the UNDP. But this failure is only a symptom of the basic difficulty that countries experience in building strong and representative organisations. This difficulty, added to the continued influence of conventional thinking about development in terms of economic growth alone, provides a further explanation of the relatively low priority accorded in most country programmes to matters of concern to the ILO. It is compounded by the technical and political weakness, within the government machinery of most developing countries, of ministries or departments responsible for social and labour affairs.

1 Annex to United Nations Resolution 2688 (XXV) concerning the capacity of the United Nations development system, para. 9.
Hence, it should be a major purpose of ILO technical co-operation to correct these weaknesses. The need to do so has immensely increased as a result of the adoption by the 60th (1975) Session of the International Labour Conference of the Rural Workers’ Organisations Convention and Recommendation. These instruments apply to rural wage-earners as well as to self-employed workers who, in many developing countries, not only constitute the bulk of the active population but whose effective organisation has also proved intractable.

Another reason for giving more attention to the strengthening of employers’ and workers’ organisations is, of course, the adoption by the 1976 Session of the Conference of the Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention and the Tripartite Consultation (Activities of the International Labour Organisation) Recommendation. Obviously, the objective of promoting the implementation of these standards is, in itself, essential to the ILO and its achievement presupposes the existence of representative and independent employers’ and workers’ organisations. In addition, however, the Recommendation provides that the procedures for consultation on the implementation of standards may be extended to other fields, which include explicitly “the preparation, implementation and evaluation of technical co-operation activities in which the International Labour Organisation participates”. This additional function is a further reason for increasing ILO assistance in efforts to build up free and strong national organisations.

In this connection, an important feature of the rules concerning ILO regular budget technical co-operation is that they explicitly envisage projects undertaken at the request of a workers’ or employers’ organisation. This provision clearly reflects the tripartite structure of the Organisation. No similar arrangement exists in the rules of the UNDP and it has, indeed, often been suggested that, as a result, technical co-operation under this and other international programmes is almost exclusively an intergovernmental affair. To a large extent this is inevitable and desirable. In developing host countries, governments must play a relatively active role, while in the donor countries governments are better able than any private groups to mobilise resources for international development assistance. What is less desirable is that, in practice if not intent, government control of resources for technical co-operation in the developing countries should lead to their almost exclusive use by government departments for their own purposes. Thus, the needs of non-governmental groups for the international exchange of knowledge and experience tend to be under-rated and the contributions which such groups and their organisations can make to national development tend to be under-utilised. These results are in contradiction with the notion of popular participation.

1 Moreover, in the evaluation of government requests, special consideration is to be given to projects on the submission of which workers’ and employers’ organisations have been consulted.

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in development, and the effectiveness of technical co-operation is therefore less than it could have been with more involvement by non-governmental groups.

While the ILO's regular budget provides clear and explicit opportunities to involve non-governmental groups in technical co-operation, we cannot yet say that these opportunities are fully used. Except in certain programme areas (for instance, workers' education) the bulk of the available resources goes to governmental services. Again, to some extent this is inevitable and desirable. But it would seem that greater efforts could be made to channel rather more of these resources to non-governmental groups. The basic-needs approach, with its strong emphasis on the development of the informal and rural sectors, creates great new needs for technical co-operation on behalf of all kinds of self-help institutions and "grass-root" organisations. Ways should be found, both within member countries and through the ILO field structure, of identifying and meeting these needs and thus more fully exploiting the advantages of the ILO's regular budget.

In this connection, it may be useful to recall that the purpose is to make available the knowledge and experience which the ILO has accumulated and continues to acquire in the fields of its responsibility. The aim is not simply to subsidise the current work of the organisations that benefit from technical co-operation. Nor can it be assumed that those with financial means of their own could find this accumulated knowledge and experience outside the ILO. Therefore, all groups of ILO constituents, including, for instance, employers' organisations, should have full access to the facilities of technical co-operation that can be provided through the ILO's regular budget.

The rules governing the regular budget activities require that requests by employers' or workers' organisations be submitted in association with and through their governments.

The problem is to combine government responsibility for the economic and political life of the country with sensitivity to its people's needs and with awareness of their potential for self-help and self-direction. Organisation at the country level, in the spirit of the ILO's tripartism, is the best means of tackling this problem; technical co-operation involving major groups of the active population can be an important way of creating this means. Therefore, while respecting any government's wish to remain the arbiter in the decision as to which projects can be organised on behalf of groups and institutions other than its own, one would expect it to be rare for governments to oppose requests by such groups for ILO technical co-operation. Normally, such requests will reflect faith in the principles which the government of a member country of the ILO itself should share. They should not therefore normally involve the risk of political disruption even if they do not coincide with the government's current policy preferences. Nor should such requests normally involve painful priority choices concerning the utilisation of scarce resources for technical co-operation. The amounts involved will usually be small compared with the cost of major economic projects, while the need for progress in
establishing non-governmental organisations, as we have seen, is often very great.

Finally, non-governmental organisations have a role to play in the industrial countries as well as in the developing countries. Perhaps their main function in the former is to arouse public support for the cause of far-reaching international co-operation for development and thus help to create the political will on which such co-operation depends and which eventually must involve the will of the people in the countries concerned. As the 56th Session of the International Labour Conference concluded in 1971, following a discussion of the World Employment Programme, employers’ and workers’ organisations have an important role to play in this regard. According to an OECD report, “While the large international federations of trade unions have several times analysed development problems, passing very generous and liberal resolutions and recommendations, there are few signs of such support, or even interest, in the rank and file at national level”.1 The question arises whether and how the ILO, perhaps through its industrial activities programme, could be instrumental in strengthening such support, among employers’ organisations as well as trade unions.

Certain important non-governmental organisations in industrial countries also have their own technical co-operation programmes in developing countries. Many of these are of special interest to the basic-needs approach and to the ILO’s objectives generally, because they work at the grass-root level and have made some quite important contributions to development. In such cases, as in that of bilateral government programmes of international development assistance mentioned above, it is desirable for the ILO to establish working contacts with these organisations.

In some fields such working contacts already exist; for instance, vocational rehabilitation programmes are planned and developed, at the international level, through the ad hoc inter-agency meetings on rehabilitation of the disabled; leading non-governmental organisations are represented at these meetings through their membership in the Council of World Organisations Interested in the Handicapped. At the national level, non-governmental organisations in developing countries often initiate programmes for the rehabilitation of the disabled. The International Institute for Rehabilitation in Developing Countries in Teheran is a good example of a project in which such organisations were involved from the planning stage.

In the field of co-operatives the ILO maintains close relations with the International Co-operative Alliance, the International Federation of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers and the International Federation of Agricultural Producers. The co-ordination of technical co-operation activities between international institutions (United Nations, FAO and ILO) and these non-governmental organisations takes place within the framework of the Joint Committee for the Promotion of Aid to Co-operatives (COPAC).

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There have also been cases of co-operation with churches and church-related organisations. The Government of Fiji for instance requested the ILO, in collaboration with the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), to assist in tackling urban unemployment and checking the drift to towns through vocational training and the development of home industries for young girl school drop-outs and for women without access to education, training facilities or employment. A project to provide vocational training and home industries for women was implemented by the ILO with a view to strengthening the training work of YWCA staff and others who later organised courses for community leaders and young people in the skills of manufacturing saleable products from raw materials available in the villages. Many other instances of successful collaboration could be cited. There are, however, certain limitations to collaboration with non-governmental organisations, including the fact that most of the ILO’s efforts are concentrated at the level of government action while international non-governmental organisations often work at the level of their local corresponding private organisations. Others may have different objectives from those of the ILO. As a matter of policy, however, where areas of common interest are established, the ILO will continue its search for widening contacts with non-governmental organisations which, taken as a whole, are making a sizeable contribution to development.

TRIPARTITE PARTICIPATION IN TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

It is in the light of these general comments concerning the role of tripartite machinery in economic and social development that the Conference may wish to consider the present state of tripartite participation in the planning, implementation and evaluation of technical co-operation activities.

The matter is important because in the past decade the Conference called at least three times for such participation. It described it as “fundamental” in the Conclusions concerning the ILO and technical co-operation which form part of the relevant resolution adopted by the 51st Session in 1967; it invited the Governing Body to request the Director-General to study means of promoting the association of workers’ and employers’ organisations with the ILO’s technical co-operation work in a resolution on the same topic adopted by the 52nd Session in 1968; and it included similar requests in the resolution concerning the strengthening of tripartism in the over-all activities of the International Labour Organisation adopted by the 56th Session in 1971. As already noted above, the question is also mentioned in the Tripartite Consultation (Activities of the International Labour Organisation) Recommendation, 1976.

Following the adoption of these Conference resolutions, in 1972 the Governing Body made a number of recommendations on methods of securing more effective tripartite participation in the ILO’s technical co-operation
activities, including the recommendation that, at the policy level, closer links should be established between the ILO and the UNDP in order to associate the productive forces of society with the development process. On this basis, an agreement was drawn up in December 1974 between the Administrator of the UNDP and the Director-General and the Officers of the Governing Body of the ILO, on tripartite participation in UNDP-financed projects for which the ILO is the executing agency. The agreement recognises that it is “highly desirable” for governments to arrange for tripartite participation, and that this is “particularly important for questions of concern to employers’ and workers’ organisations” arising in the preparation of the country programme, in periodic project reviews, in annual reviews of the country programme and in the evaluation of selected on-going projects. Subsequently, the Administrator informed the resident representatives of this agreement, asking them to encourage its implementation in every way, and the Director-General informed member governments of the agreement, asking them to inform national organisations of employers and workers.

What is now the state of tripartite participation in the preparation of development plans, of the country programmes based on them, and in the implementation and evaluation of projects?

For the formulation of development plans in general and the definition of social and labour objectives and policy in particular, a number of countries have set up tripartite advisory bodies to advise the government. Other tripartite, but sectoral, bodies are consulted in connection with programmes that are concerned with particular sectors. Wherever tripartite advisory bodies have not been set up on a permanent basis because the volume of assistance does not justify it, consultations with employers’ and workers’ organisations take place on an ad hoc basis. Generally speaking, however, experience has shown that consultation is neither frequent nor systematic. In fact, participation by employers’ and workers’ organisations in the preparation of the country programme is virtually non-existent. As already indicated, there are several reasons for this lack of participation: many governments consider that planning the assistance and preparing the programme are their sole responsibility; the ministries or departments of labour, which are not usually highly structured, do not always have sufficient authority to impose the participation of the social partners at the appropriate levels; frequently, the employers’ and workers’ organisations themselves are not altogether representative and lack qualified supervisory staff (the existence of too many unions and inter-union rivalry could also be a serious handicap); finally, it is very difficult for the ILO to promote tripartite participation in the preparation of the country programme since its own participation in the exercise is more theoretical than real, owing to the tendency of resident representatives to negotiate direct with the national bodies responsible for planning without consulting the agencies.

As far as the execution of the projects is concerned, the situation on the whole is more satisfactory. The participation of employers’ and workers’
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organisations is almost the general rule in projects in which they are directly involved, such as those relating to workers' education, assistance to employers' organisations and labour-management relations, and also, to a certain extent, the family planning projects. Moreover, the vocational training, productivity and management development institutes that have been set up with ILO help provide numerous examples of participation in management and control bodies. However, the real effectiveness of this participation varies from case to case. Meetings are not held as frequently as planned; there is a certain amount of absenteeism; and the shortage of specialised managers often tends to detract from the technical value of the contribution made.

In the case of the evaluation of projects and country programmes, there is practically no participation by employers' and workers' organisations whatsoever, in spite of the UNDP/ILO agreement. However, evaluation is still a fairly new concept and the precise criteria on which an objective assessment of short-, medium- and long-term results should be based have by no means been clearly defined. It might be pointed out here that, since the decision taken by the Governing Body at its 191st (November 1973) Session regarding the setting up of tripartite teams within each regional advisory committee to evaluate the ILO's technical co-operation activities in a country of the region concerned, one such team was sent to Ghana (from 21 to 30 November 1975) on the occasion of the Sixth Session of the African Advisory Committee and another to Colombia (from 26 September to 1 October 1976) on the occasion of the Fifth Session of the Inter-American Advisory Committee. The employers' and workers' organisations of Ghana and Colombia took part in the work of these teams. A similar tripartite evaluation mission is to be sent to an Asian country on the occasion of the 17th Session of the Asian Advisory Committee, to be held in Pakistan in the autumn of 1977.

The participation of the employers' and workers' organisations in the ILO's technical co-operation activities is therefore, for the time being, more theoretical than real at the national level. A long and patient effort will be needed before it becomes the general rule. Eventual success will depend on the vigour and determination with which the four partners concerned—the government, the national employers' and workers' organisations, the UNDP and the ILO—make their individual contribution.

In this combined effort, the most important role is unquestionably that of the government itself. Although the formal recognition of freedom of association is naturally an essential condition for any form of tripartite participation, it must go hand in hand with a genuine desire to apply, at the national level, the principles and procedures of tripartism that the same government has approved at the international or regional level. Experience shows, moreover, that tripartite participation is more effective in countries with a firmly established labour administration that has extensive responsibility as regards both the formulation and implementation of labour policy. It is therefore desirable to strengthen the ministry—or department—of labour, extend its jurisdiction, give it a higher status than the other administrative
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bodies, including those responsible for planning, and improve its technical level and innovative capability. Substantial progress could be made at the national level if the ministry of labour and social affairs of every country where the ILO is carrying out a technical co-operation programme of some size could take the initiative of convening representatives of the employers and the workers periodically to discuss the position, problems and prospects of the programme. Some countries (such as India, Nigeria and Senegal) already have tripartite bodies that are responsible for social and labour affairs. These bodies could provide a framework for the promotion of tripartite participation in the ILO’s technical co-operation activities. The existence in certain countries of tripartite associations for the ILO could be helpful in this respect, too. Finally, the procedures provided for at the country level in the Tripartite Consultation (Activities of the International Labour Organisation) Recommendation, 1976 (No. 152), adopted by the 61st (1976) Session of the Conference, could also help to boost tripartism in the Organisation’s technical co-operation programmes.

The role that the UNDP can and must play in promoting tripartite participation is likewise essential. Since country programming is supposed to be under the care of the resident representative, it is the latter’s responsibility to convince the government authorities that it would be in their interest to encourage employers’ and workers’ organisations to take part in the various stages of the United Nations Development Co-operation Cycle in fields of the ILO’s competence. Unless he takes some action of this kind, the ILO/UNDP agreement of December 1974 may remain a dead letter. In his efforts to convince them, the resident representative must be able to rely on the effective and constant support of the ILO.

Finally, because of its unique tripartite structure, the ILO has done much to promote tripartite participation in its technical co-operation activities by helping to train supervisory staff in labour administration and in employers’ and workers’ organisations. As regards labour administration, the training is carried out in regional centres such as CRADAT and ARLAC for Africa, CIAT for Latin America and ARPLA for Asia. Part of the training is also provided by individual experts on mission. The assistance to employers’ organisations, which is implicit in the management training projects, has been backed up since 1970 by a series of round-table discussions on the role of employers’ organisations in the various regions and by the appointment of regional advisers in Asia, Latin America and Africa. However, the ILO’s efforts have been geared above all to workers’ education. The fact that, in the space of ten years, the cost of this programme has increased sixfold, from US$319,000 in 1967 to over US$1.9 million in 1976, shows how much it has expanded. Side by side with its training activities, the Office also provides information services. In accordance with the recommendations of the Governing Body, precise instructions have been circulated among external service and project personnel to the effect that the employers’ and workers’ organisations must be kept abreast of the technical co-operation activities under way in
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their particular country. This information is made known through personal contacts, publications, lectures, etc.

Although some progress has been made in the various areas mentioned above thanks to the efforts of the Office, the results on the whole have not come up to expectations.

Further progress would now seem to depend primarily on the vigour with which the principle of tripartite participation in national programmes and projects for technical co-operation is pursued by governments and by the UNDP—that is, in the latter case, by the government representatives on the UNDP Governing Council. Again, the question of consistency and intragovernmental co-ordination presents itself; since on several occasions governments have proclaimed the principle at sessions of the International Labour Conference, workers and employers in their countries may expect them to apply it both at home and when the same governments meet in other international bodies.

TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AND PROGRAMME BUDGET POLICY: THE DECLARATION OF THE GROUP OF 77

At this point it is appropriate to turn to the important Declaration of the Government Group of 77 Developing Countries concerning the Programme Budget Policy of the ILO which was submitted to the 61st Session of the Conference in June 1976. It will be recalled that the Declaration took the form of a Conference resolution but that, in view of the Governing Body’s responsibilities in regard to its subject-matter, its sponsors preferred to submit it as a statement for consideration by the Governing Body rather than as a resolution for debate and decision by the Conference.¹

It will also be recalled that the Declaration was made following consideration by the Group of 77 of the programmes and budgetary allocations of all agencies in the United Nations system, taking due account of the nature of each agency and its activities. Thus, in substance, the Declaration was very similar to a resolution on programme budget policy that had been adopted a month earlier by the World Health Assembly, also on the proposal of the Group of 77.²

In essence, the Declaration called for a reorientation of the working of the Organisation with a view to ensuring that a substantial proportion of the regular budget should be devoted to direct assistance to member countries in the areas of main emphasis as determined in the ILO’s medium-term plan. It indicated a number of ways in which this could be achieved, including

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cost reductions and other economies, the acceleration of decentralisation and the optimum use of the technical and administrative resources available in developing countries.

The Declaration was duly considered by the Governing Body, and the Draft Programme and Budget for 1978-79, which is before the Conference, takes account in various ways of the wishes expressed in the Declaration. There is no need to deal here with the budgetary aspects of the matter, but it will be worth while to examine some of the opportunities that the initiative of the Group of 77 could open up and the conditions in which these opportunities can be taken advantage of.

The first thing to be said about the Declaration is that it demonstrates a strong wish among the developing countries for technical co-operation in all the main areas of ILO activity financed from its regular budget.

There would seem to be at least three types of technical co-operation activity the need for which is indisputable but which, for one reason or another, are not easily accommodated within UNDP procedures and funds and therefore warrant financing from the regular budget. The first consists of projects for the prompt provision of ad hoc technical advice and information, on a relatively small scale and for short periods of time, although often at a high technical level. The need for such projects may arise on the part of government agencies, employers' or workers' organisations or other local non-governmental groups. As the previous chapter has shown, it may arise in a wide range of situations and in all areas of main emphasis: in the field of rural training as well as in that of labour legislation, emergency employment schemes or social security problems.

This is not the kind of need that can be foreseen four or five years ahead. And, although the "Consensus" requires country programmes to be flexible, so that unforeseen needs can be met, it is not the kind of project which the managers of other on-going projects will easily be persuaded to finance by revising their own programmes. Nor does it give rise to the kind of project that national planning authorities are likely to consider with great care and expertise when preparing their over-all development strategies. Indeed, attempts to push through the planning and implementation of small projects in the over-all process of country programming will tend to crowd these projects out since limited indicative planning figures have to be allocated among large and more impressive-looking major projects in the country programme. These smaller projects will not in themselves appear to have a great impact on a country's over-all development situation. Moreover, projects on behalf of non-governmental organisations or local groups in the informal and rural sectors may raise especially difficult questions of cost-benefit determination which there is rarely enough time or technical competence to answer. Yet, the value of such projects per dollar may very well be higher than that of the marginal dollar invested in larger projects.

One special type of short-term technical co-operation activity is co-operation with World Bank missions which, inter alia, provide advice on employment
and manpower policies, help countries to identify their investment requirements, design projects and assist in their implementation. World Bank activities are increasingly focused on objectives of particular concern to the ILO, such as raising the incomes of the poor, productivity improvement and human resources development. A growing number of requests for ILO collaboration are being received from the Bank in fields where it may lack the requisite expertise among its own staff. The World Bank generally reimburses the ILO the full costs of such co-operation. However, it would be desirable to earmark specific ILO funds for joint activities of this kind. Such funds would enable the ILO to take the initiative in proposing joint missions in certain cases, would allow the Office to plan the use of its staff resources further ahead and would demonstrate the importance it attached to ILO-World Bank co-operation. The multiplier effects of such expenditure could be very large. World Bank investment in developing countries totals more than US$6,000 million annually and the Bank maintains close relations with finance and planning ministries which are very influential in policy and programme formulation. ILO participation in Bank missions helps to disseminate its ideas and expertise to a wider audience and has already led to the ILO’s selection as the executing agency for some components (particularly training) of World Bank grants and loans and for associated UNDP-financed projects.

The second type of technical co-operation work for which it seems desirable to rely largely on regular budget funds would aim to fill the gap that now exists in procedures for UNDP country programming with regard to the participation of agencies. As was shown above, this gap exists, especially at the programming stage. In the process of determining, with the country concerned, the nature, scale and priorities of contributions by the United Nations system, the role of the agencies is extremely limited. Yet it would seem that technical competence, which is the sole basis of the role of international organisations as the executors of projects, is at least as relevant to the design of the programmes of which these projects are part.

Of course the involvement of agencies in country programming should never become an occasion for agency salesmanship and self-aggrandisement, though in the minds of some it may have. Obviously, the sectoral views of individual agencies must be made mutually consistent and co-ordinated; to this end, resident representatives would have an indispensable role to play. Above all, agency views must be a service, offered with great humility, to the country concerned, which remains entirely free to take or leave the advice that is tendered. But if all this is clearly understood and accepted, a periodic review between agency and member country, for instance on the occasion of the preparation and interim review of the country programme, would create the basis of a dialogue of immense mutual value. Such a dialogue exists already, for instance, between the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and their member governments.

Thus, in financial matters the dialogue is well established; in other areas, apart from the valuable but non-technical services provided by the UNDP’s
resident representatives, it hardly exists. In the case of the ILO this is a special handicap because, as has been pointed out above, the groups which should benefit most from its activity, i.e. ministries of labour and non-governmental organisations, are often weak and inadequately involved in national policy-making.

The comparison with the financial institutions does not imply that, in order to establish a dialogue with its member countries, the ILO should try to emulate in its fields of concern the system of relatively large economic missions and "up-dating" visits which the World Bank periodically despatches to its member countries, to provide the comprehensive reports on economic conditions and policies which serve as a basis of discussion with governments and for programming the Bank's assistance to them. For the World Bank's purposes these are no doubt indispensable; for the ILO more modest and less costly arrangements would have to suffice. At the same time, it should be understood that any country visits and discussions on matters of concern to the ILO would include employers' and workers' organisations as well as government services.

A third type of technical co-operation work for which it seems necessary to rely on the regular budget consists of inter-country projects, whether regional, sub-regional, or involving individual countries from different regions sharing common problems and interests. As is suggested below, such projects can be extremely productive—for instance, although by no means solely, as a means of fostering self-reliance and technical co-operation among developing countries.

But, again, they are not easily accommodated by UNDP programming. Under this system, for the period 1977-81, the funds allocated to regional activities will remain in real terms at the level of the previous cycle, whereas demand for regional projects, particularly for the establishment of regional technical centres, has considerably increased. On the other hand, in the allocation of their national indicative planning figures among different projects, governments will normally give priority to national projects that they can fully control and that directly and visibly serve national interests, rather than to projects shared with other countries, however deserving these may otherwise be. In other words, inter-country projects tend to get less UNDP resources than their intrinsic merits would warrant. The implication is that these activities are to be financed to at least a large extent from the agencies' own budgets.

The need to do so is all the more obvious since multi-country projects do not rank high in the priorities of bilateral aid programmes either. The countries providing these programmes tend to concentrate them on individual developing nations with which they have—or want to create—special links. From this perspective, the intrinsic value of inter-country projects is again in danger of being under-rated.

It may be useful now to consider briefly what the principal advantages of such projects are.
INTER-COUNTRY PROJECTS AND TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

At the purely technical level, certain advantages of inter-country projects are well established. First, such projects are needed to deal with matters directly arising from inter-dependency; the drawing up and implementation of agreements concerning migrant workers and the operation of an international manpower pool are obvious examples. Second, inter-country projects can reduce the average cost of expensive services that are of common interest to a number of individual countries. Examples of such services include high-level regional advisers, and the costly facilities for training small numbers of highly qualified national staff for which the phrase “centre of excellence” has been coined. In both cases, it would be too expensive to provide the services through separate country projects.

Third, inter-country projects can, of course, provide opportunities for the exchange of views and experience on important problems that are peculiar to the countries concerned and require new approaches and experiment. It is no exaggeration to say that the main aspects of the development problem fall increasingly into this category. In particular, the vast unresolved issues arising from mass poverty and from attempts at eradicating it through rural development and the revival of the informal urban sector do not exist in industrial countries and they take very different forms in countries with different economic and cultural structures and with different political systems.

The far-reaching implications of these facts are slowly beginning to be realised. Not only are developing countries wrestling with problems for which satisfactory solutions have not yet been found, so that there are no relevant precedents, but to make matters even more complicated, the ultimate aims which they can hope or wish to achieve are not yet very clear. It cannot be presumed that these aims will closely resemble the modes of life, work, production and social organisation now prevailing in the industrial countries.

The Organisation must endeavour to create an awareness of this situation among the countries that are directly affected and encourage them to seek a self-reliant style of development. This is a most important function of technical co-operation among developing countries, and it should eventually prove to be a source of enrichment to the Organisation as a whole, benefiting not only the developing countries involved in it but the industrial countries as well. In this connection, an interesting experiment was the first Symposium on Freedom of Association in Latin America, held in June 1976 in Mexico City with the co-operation of the National Institute for Labour Studies. Its purposes were to clarify the scope and nature of international labour standards in this field and to discuss problems of their application in the Latin American region. These problems are very considerable, in this as in other regions, and it is essential that they should be thoroughly examined by knowledgeable persons from countries with a wide range of experience in this regard, with a view to overcoming obstacles to the application of this basic ILO principle.
In conclusion, there appears to be a substantial need for inter-country projects and, for the reasons stated above, it seems necessary to rely on the regular budget for financing a substantial proportion of these projects. Regional advisers in individual fields of ILO responsibility are already being provided for in this way. It is becoming increasingly necessary to provide also for the financing of the regional centres for vocational training and labour administration, for the regional employment teams and for ad hoc regional technical meetings, seminars and symposia. In all these cases a main principle must be the application of technical co-operation among developing countries, through the pooling of experience and knowledge of these countries themselves as a basis for creating new approaches to the social problems confronting them.

It is evident from the experience with the regional centres and employment teams sponsored by the ILO that a solid basis already exists for such co-operation. This was confirmed last year by the findings of a regional team of experts on technical co-operation in the labour and related fields among countries in the Asian region. Nineteen countries participated in the project, which had been proposed by the 1975 Conference of Asian Labour Ministers. The team visited countries with a view to identifying training institutions, facilities and services suitable for technical co-operation among these countries themselves and to advising competent authorities on how these facilities and services could be made available for the purpose. The team was asked to pay special attention to occupational safety, social security, industrial relations, manpower services, labour statistics and the working environment, but it discovered many other areas in which fruitful technical co-operation could be developed in the countries concerned. On the basis of the team’s report the Office will present to the next Conference of Labour Ministers a project proposal for regional co-operation in Asia and the Pacific Region.

TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AND OTHER MEANS OF ILO ACTION

The idea underlying this Report is that the function of technical co-operation is to help countries, at their request, in the implementation of their own policies and programmes in fields of labour and related social affairs and to do so in the light of the ILO’s store of knowledge and experience, standards and other agreed policy conclusions such as Conference resolutions and expert recommendations endorsed by representative ILO meetings. In this sense technical co-operation is a means of pursuing the objectives that the membership has agreed to set for the Organisation. As such, technical co-operation is to be seen in the framework of over-all ILO activity, in relation to the research, information, standard-setting and other activities which make up the ILO’s programmes.

If the ILO provides for technical co-operation this is because it is assumed to be the repository of the best and widest body of technical knowledge and relevant experience in the fields of its responsibility. This places the Organisation under an obligation to maintain its technical excellence and to develop continually the body of its standards and other policy conclusions. In this sense, technical co-operation and the other activities are complementary; the former cannot be effectively sustained without the latter. The other, conventional or “constitutional” ILO activities undertaken in support of technical co-operation should be adequate for this purpose, but they should not become so abundant as to reduce the resources and talent available for technical co-operation itself to a point where no full use can be made of the information and experience accumulated through research and standard-setting. Above all, these complementary activities should be relevant to the realities and problems of developing countries.

There are immense advantages in maintaining the combination within the ILO (and, no doubt, in other United Nations specialised agencies) of responsibility for participation in technical co-operation projects with responsibility for constitutional activities. This advantage is even greater if the ILO’s technical staff are periodically shifted between duties at headquarters and in the field and between research and standard-setting work and technical co-operation projects. The experience acquired through technical co-operation should be systematically fed back into the programming of research and standard-setting work so that future field work is based on a continually broadening body of knowledge and newly arising technical problems are properly researched, while standards which, in the practice of technical co-operation, prove to be less than optimal are reviewed. For the purpose of this systematic feed-back a system of end-of-project evaluation is needed.

While there seems to be unanimity on this need for evaluation and feedback, doubts have sometimes been expressed about the wisdom of entrusting to specialised agencies—which are responsible for policy formulation and research—responsibility for the design and implementation of technical co-operation projects. It has been thought that the responsibilities of an executing agency would divert attention and talent away from the Organisation’s tasks of arranging for international discussions and undertaking research and standard-setting, thus weakening the Organisation’s capability to handle any of its functions. The conclusion has been drawn that project execution is often better left to international bodies without other major substantive responsibilities.

The risk of dilution of constitutional activities certainly exists. In the International Labour Office it has at times been feared that research work would be crowded out by preoccupation with the delivery of field projects. But the risk can be guarded against and, in fact, it does not seem to have harmed the volume and quality of either ILO research or standard-setting. The output of international labour standards has been maintained over the years at a level clearly more constrained by the limits of Conference capacity than by
any diversion of resources to technical co-operation. The volume of research work has grown to an unprecedented extent, especially under the World Employment Programme.

Thus, the greater risk now seems to lie in a divorce between technical co-operation and traditional work rather than in their combination. Without practical experience of field work at the national and regional levels there would be a definite danger of carrying out the more intellectual functions of research and standard-setting in a vacuum. At the same time, project implementation by an organisation lacking the experience of a specialised agency could hardly improve technical co-operation. The quality of the services provided depends on the amount of expertise which guides their management. If the expertise of the agencies is not used, quality will decline, or the expertise will have to be acquired elsewhere, at considerable cost.

On various occasions, Members of the ILO have commented on the balance between research and technical co-operation. Thus, in discussions of the Programme and Budget in the Governing Body, criticisms have been levelled against what was felt to be an excessive reliance on research work the relevance of which to other ILO work was not always clearly seen. During the latest session of the Advisory Committee on Rural Development it was felt that in that field the ILO had been too much concerned with research and surveys at the expense of more directly action-oriented activities. In the Declaration of the Government Group of 77 Developing Countries at the 61st (1976) Session of the Conference, "eliminating unnecessary research and publication programmes" was singled out as one way of increasing resources for technical co-operation.

It is difficult to determine with any precision the ideal balance between the two means of action. There have undoubtedly been unnecessary research projects. For instance, in an examination of ILO research in the field of rural development it was found that more rigorous determination of priorities and better co-ordination with other institutions would make it possible to reduce the volume of ILO research work.

However, while we should certainly remain alert to the risk of research being carried beyond the point of diminishing returns, it is easy to underrate its essential role as a prerequisite to and companion of technical co-operation. Some very important new ideas in the ILO's history emerged from research, not from technical co-operation. For instance, the first major study on the problems of unemployment and underemployment in relation to economic development policy in the Third World, suggesting a need for reorienting development policy, dates back to 1961. Standard-setting followed suit with the adoption of the Employment Policy Convention and Recommendation in 1964, long before the new ideas found their way into the technical co-operation programme when the first comprehensive employment strategy

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mission went to Colombia in 1970. There was thus a ten-year lag between the time when those new ideas were first aired in the meeting which gave rise to the above-mentioned study, and the moment when the technical co-operation programme became the medium for testing and spreading those new ideas.

Even though employment policy has now become a firmly established major field of national policy and international technical co-operation, many aspects of it remain uncharted territory. It was suggested above that the paucity of relevant comprehensive experience makes it an area in which the potential for technical co-operation among developing countries must be exploited to the full, in order to derive the maximum benefit from a very limited resource. At the same time, it calls for extensive research.

Indeed, at this point the sharp distinction often drawn between research and technical co-operation may become blurred. For instance, a comparative analysis of the methods, costs and results of rural works schemes in a number of countries may result in the publication of a manual which is almost as valuable to individual countries as the visits of consultants or as study trips abroad—and much cheaper. One may even go further and make the initial comparative study itself an object of technical co-operation. For instance, a project might be set up through which each participating country would receive a grant from technical co-operation funds, and technical advice if necessary, for the collection and analysis of information concerning its own rural works schemes in the framework of a common set of concepts and methods. The individual experiences could then be pooled, perhaps by one of the participating national institutions and then disseminated among all the others. In this way each country could gain a better understanding of the problems and opportunities involved in the organisation of rural works, in return for its own contribution to the project.

Similar projects might be organised, for instance, for the establishment of household surveys as an aid in assessing the nature and extent of poverty and the impact of programmes for alleviating it. Or research institutions in two or more countries, perhaps including industrial as well as developing countries, might enter into co-operative arrangements for the development of appropriate technologies for specific industrial activities.

These examples could be multiplied. They illustrate how research and technical co-operation may be two sides of the same coin, while providing great scope for technical co-operation among developing countries. The Office could play an essential role in identifying the need for projects of this kind and, depending on such circumstances as the capabilities of the participating national institutions, in their design, organisation, implementation, financing and/or in the dissemination of their results.

Finally, despite growing impatience with surveys undertaken by foreign consultants, it should not be assumed that this particular type of technical co-operation is entirely obsolete. It probably is to a large extent in the case of surveys of a purely descriptive nature. But the formulation of new policies invariably requires a solid basis of fact, suitably understood and interpreted
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in the light of the issues that the policy aims to tackle. Thus, there still is considerable scope for clearly policy-oriented surveys—in the context of a basic-needs strategy, for instance—and technical co-operation will often be helpful in undertaking them.

EVALUATION

Reference has been made above to the need for end-of-project evaluation as a basis for feedback from technical co-operation to the complementary work in the nature of research and standard-setting. The object is to ensure that this work, as well as technical co-operation itself, remains well directed and that existing policy standards are kept under constant review, in the light of the actual impact of technical co-operation on the conditions in host countries. Crucial questions to which this category of evaluation should provide answers are whether the ultimate development objectives are being achieved and whether, in light of accumulated experience with a number of projects in a particular field of ILO concern or in a particular country, different approaches should perhaps be adopted to achieve the objectives more effectively, or whether the objectives themselves should possibly be changed. An important example of the latter case has been the finding that in the ILO's co-operative management development and certain other programme areas, the objectives should be expressed more clearly in terms of increasing the productivity of poverty groups rather than of already relatively well-off categories. This kind of evaluation is primarily programme-oriented.

As commonly understood, the term “evaluation” also covers other aspects including, especially, the monitoring of individual on-going projects to see whether each one is in fact serving its own immediate purposes and to take corrective action if it fails to do so. Experience with evaluation of this kind also provides a basis for improving the mechanics of project preparation and implementation. This category of evaluation is primarily project-oriented.

In its conclusions concerning the ILO and technical co-operation in 1967, the Conference called for both types of evaluation. More recently, the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System recommended the establishment of a system of evaluation to serve yet a further purpose, namely to “reflect more fully the interrelated character of development activities”.1

In the ILO evaluation of technical co-operation has hitherto been mainly project-oriented. Such evaluation is part and parcel of the UNDP procedures and is therefore the normal practice in the case of projects for which the ILO is the executing agency. The relevant section of the UNDP Policies and Procedures Manual calls for projects to be examined de novo during their imple-

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mentation period by persons not closely associated with their formulation and implementation. According to the Manual, this examination involves a fresh and independent assessment of the project’s design, implementation, results and effectiveness, aimed not only at determining the progress made and identifying the causative factors, but also at verifying whether the project was properly conceived and designed in the first place and whether it is still so at the time of the evaluation.

One of the primary means devised to achieve these results are “tripartite” evaluation teams specifically formed for this purpose and consisting of representatives of the UNDP, the executing agency and the government. The term “tripartite” as used by the UNDP thus has a different meaning from that of the ILO and, as already noted, these evaluations have a serious drawback in that workers’ and employers’ representatives almost never participate in them. In practice, the UNDP evaluation assesses the need for and type of corrective action for projects in the course of implementation. The tendency of evaluation reports is to restate or adjust objectives in the light of the current situation and, if warranted, recommend modifications in the mix of inputs. Even though the UNDP Manual clearly describes the basic principles which should be common to all reviews, there is no uniform pattern for evaluation reports and the quality of the resulting documents depends heavily on the analytical capabilities of the author(s).

Moreover, this evaluation is project-centred and project-specific. UNDP guidelines do not provide for the aggregation of project evaluation results to form the basis of a higher-level evaluation of groups of projects (programmes) or to develop guidelines for future planning.

In addition to the UNDP “tripartite” evaluation, some evaluations are undertaken in the ILO by the project chief technical adviser, while occasionally UNDP-financed projects are also evaluated within the framework of the annual country programme review organised by the resident representative. Moreover, the Office carries out some internal reviews through technical missions or occasional visits by regional advisers. These various review and evaluation efforts differ substantially in purpose and as regards the audience to whom they are addressed. Their primary shortcoming is the basically unstructured nature of the evaluation process and the diversity of the personnel conducting them. To some evaluators, the mark of success is the timely delivery of inputs, to others the production of outputs, and, more rarely, the achievement of the stated immediate objective. Another major shortcoming of the present evaluation practice is that it does not automatically provide for the results of evaluation to be fed into the design of new projects and into the planning of technical co-operation programmes.

Today, one cannot point with confidence to the difference that many ILO technical co-operation projects have made in the lives of the intended beneficiaries. It has not been established that one approach has been more effective than another in reducing poverty, providing quality training, improving conditions of work or increasing employability. Lack of a solid information
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base about the performance of past and present projects limits the ILO’s ability to map out sound future projects reflecting the lessons learned and the experience gained.

However, a certain degree of programme-oriented tripartite evaluation regularly takes place in the Governing Body and Regional Advisory Committees. The report presented annually to the Governing Body Committee on Operational Programmes reviews the main features of the technical co-operation programme for the preceding year. It explains the main achievements of the programme in the light of the most important developments of the preceding year, and examines the difficulties encountered in the implementation of the programme, as well as the measures taken or contemplated in order to overcome these difficulties.

Similarly, Regional Advisory Committees have for some years had as a standing item on their agenda a review of ILO activities in the region in the preceding three or four years. The reports on this item examine the characteristics of ILO technical co-operation activities in the region and the needs that the ILO was called upon to satisfy. They point out the difficulties encountered in carrying out the programmes and note the trends and changes which have occurred in the nature of the ILO’s activities in the region.

Since the Governing Body Committee on Operational Programmes and the Regional Advisory Committees are tripartite bodies, their recommendations for future ILO action incorporate the views of employers’ and workers’ organisations, which thus contribute to determining the future policy of the ILO’s technical co-operation programmes.

While recognising the usefulness of these broad evaluation exercises, employers’ and workers’ organisations have long claimed that their knowledge of technical co-operation activities came about only through the Office reports and have often expressed regret that no formal mechanism existed that would allow them to get a more direct grasp of the realities of technical co-operation activities. The decision taken by the Governing Body in November 1973 to nominate, within the framework of Regional Advisory Committees, tripartite teams responsible for evaluating ILO technical co-operation activities in a particular country was taken, at least in part, in order to satisfy this need.

As already noted, two such evaluation missions have taken place so far: one in Ghana, the other in Colombia. Another mission in an Asian country has been scheduled in conjunction with the session of the Asian Advisory Committee in 1977.

The terms of reference of the tripartite teams were basically to:

(a) evaluate the ILO’s technical co-operation programme in the country, paying special attention to the principle of tripartite participation at all stages of those activities;

(b) ascertain whether on-going projects are being carried out according to plan and to what extent they reflect the preoccupations of the employers’ and workers’ organisations; and
Analyse difficulties encountered, propose solutions, prepare recommendations and report the main findings to the Advisory Committee.

The reports prepared by both teams consisted of an assessment of specific project activities, a reflection of the views expressed by national authorities, by organisations of employers and workers and by the UNDP resident representative, and a set of conclusions and recommendations. Both reports were discussed by the Regional Advisory Committee concerned and the Governing Body.

Both reports have certain elements in common:

(a) employers’ and workers’ organisations play a very limited role in the preparation of the country programme for technical co-operation and in project selection; they are frequently represented in the governing councils of national counterpart institutions, but are usually more involved in administrative matters than policy aspects; in some cases employers’ and workers’ representatives did not come from the most representative organisations;

(b) the agreement of 4 December 1974 between the ILO and the UNDP on tripartite participation in technical co-operation activities is hardly known and rarely applied on the national level;

(c) experts’ relations with employers’ and workers’ organisations are generally of an unsystematic, informal and casual nature;

(d) both missions gained the impression that project objectives were attained to a considerable degree and that the results achieved were satisfactory; however, due to the limited time at their disposal, the missions’ reports are not based on an assessment of individual project results, but are rather subjective in nature and reflect to a large extent the personal involvement and experience of individual members;

(e) the teams’ tripartite structure contributed greatly to the realistic analysis of facts and situations;

(f) in addition to their principal objective, these evaluation missions provided a valuable opportunity for members of ILO policy-making bodies to acquire first-hand experience of the functioning of technical co-operation projects in the field.

Among the questions which the Governing Body will consider when reviewing the experience of the evaluation missions, those relating to the scope and nature of the missions will certainly figure most prominently. In this connection, it will be desirable to define the relationship between tripartite evaluation missions and other evaluation activities being developed or carried out within the ILO and in the United Nations system.

There are other aspects of evaluation, such as the efficiency and effectiveness of programmes and projects, in which ILO policy-setting bodies are certainly interested. However, their responsibility probably should take the form of ensuring that such evaluation actually takes place rather than directly engaging
in it. Information about performance should regularly be provided by the Office.

If this basic distribution of responsibilities were agreed to, the approach of future tripartite evaluation missions should perhaps be modified. The evaluation system currently being developed within the Office and preparatory work by field staff should be able to provide the tripartite missions with an analysis of problems, progress and achievements of individual projects. This in turn would allow the Governing Body tripartite team to concentrate on aspects of direct interest to which it could bring its special expertise which is not otherwise available.

After the forthcoming mission in an Asian country, the Governing Body will review *in toto* the experience gained from this team effort. An up-to-date report on evaluation matters could be prepared for the Governing Body at that time.

A more systematic approach to evaluation is being devised in which evaluation will be used as a means for improving the planning and management of individual activities, ensuring that the ILO effectively discharges its responsibilities to its member States and increasing the ILO’s accountability to the Governing Body and to the funding agencies. While largely a tool of management for the ILO, any new system of evaluation should also provide for the association of the governments, employers and workers of the recipient countries. However, the new system is not expected to conflict with the current UNDP procedures or to supplant other existing evaluation exercises. It should, rather, be able to integrate these exercises into a logical sequence of steps leading to an over-all assessment of basic policies and approaches.

The UNDP’s and governments’ ability to implement the December 1974 ILO/UNDP agreement on participation of employers’ and workers’ organisations in technical co-operation will determine improvements in tripartite participation in evaluation. The ILO, for its part, will have to continue to impress upon its staff the need to involve these organisations at all stages of technical co-operation work.

Some other steps can also be taken to increase tripartite participation in current ILO evaluation work. The planning and consultative boards of many of the ILO’s regional projects such as PREALC and CINTERFOR can be encouraged to include more systematic tripartite representation. Furthermore, as indicated above, the implementation of the new evaluation system would support the work of tripartite evaluation missions by prior analysis of individual project achievements, allowing the missions to concentrate on basic issues and on the problem of tripartite involvement in technical co-operation.

DECENTRALISATION

Decisions of the International Labour Conference and the Governing Body, and conclusions of the regional conferences and other major meetings
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(including those of Industrial Committees) set the policies according to which the ILO's technical co-operation work is undertaken. Standard-setting, research, and experience, all constantly reviewed in the light of systematic evaluation, provide the Organisation's technical capability to serve its membership through technical co-operation. Proper organisation and deployment of staff and physical resources provide the mechanics of the ILO's operational activities; they raise the familiar and universal problem of finding an optimal balance between central policy control and other "overhead" activities on the one hand, and operational autonomy at the working level on the other. This is the problem of decentralisation as between work to be done at headquarters and at various levels (the region, area, country, individual project) of the ILO field structure. The problem includes important questions concerning the policy-making bodies as well as the organisation of the Office's activities, but in regard to technical co-operation the latter aspect is the more immediately relevant.

For several years now it has been recognised that a higher degree of decentralisation is needed in our operational activities. However, progress in this direction has been delayed because of the financial difficulties with which the ILO has been confronted since 1970. While these difficulties have by no means disappeared, following the Governing Body's discussion of the matter early last year, the Draft Programme and Budget now recommended by the Governing Body for adoption by the Conference reflects a determined attempt to accelerate decentralisation and to make it more effective.

The crucial importance of decentralisation follows directly from the issues raised elsewhere in this Report. In particular:

— the need for more active ILO participation in UNDP country programming as a means of improving the balance between economic and social fields implies a need for a larger network of technically qualified ILO field services;

— the difficulties encountered in implementing the principle of tripartite participation in the programming and execution of technical co-operation projects can be alleviated by the more active presence of ILO representatives in the countries and areas concerned;

— the increasing responsibilities assumed by the governments of host countries in the design and implementation of projects call for a high degree of autonomy and authority on the part of Office representatives (i.e. mainly the chief technical advisers) in their discussions with these governments;

— technical co-operation among developing countries through inter-country projects of various kinds, and a greater use in technical co-operation of the facilities and resources available in the developing countries themselves, will also be facilitated by the existence of a sound and relatively autonomous field structure, including regional centres and expert teams;

— the increase in direct assistance called for in the Declaration of the Government Group of 77 Developing Countries at last year's session of the
Conference requires a sharp increase in technical advisory services available in the field structure;

— the need for coherence among the activities of various international organisations and the increasing role of the regional commissions of the United Nations (in social as well as in economic matters) and of other regional bodies mean that the ILO’s regional machinery should be able to represent the Organisation with authority and full technical capability.

These are the considerations which inspired the provisions for accelerating decentralisation which are contained in the draft Programme and Budget for 1978-79.

At the regional level, these provisions are for a stronger policy-making role, for larger resources by way of technical expertise and for greater autonomy in using these resources. The regional offices will represent the ILO in regional bodies. They will provide technical and policy support to the ILO offices in their regions and they will be equipped with substantially increased resources for providing short-term assistance requested by countries and for helping other parts of the regional structure in their work. The budget credits for advisory services will be managed flexibly so that the regional directors can use them either for staffing their offices with technical personnel or for drawing upon short-term expertise either from outside the ILO or from technical units of the Office.

On the other hand, the regional offices will no longer supervise projects other than regional projects. More authority and responsibility for the design and execution of projects will be delegated to the chief technical advisers in charge of them; the advisers will ultimately be responsible for the performance of their projects to the local ILO office director.

At all levels, the field structure will be given greater responsibility for relations with governments and employers’ and workers’ organisations, for collaboration with the UNDP resident representatives and for programming and supervising projects. Furthermore, chains of communication will be greatly simplified and shortened.

Finally, five new field offices will be opened.

These are the lines along which the Office is to equip itself for delivering a wider range of services more promptly. But these measures can be effective only to the extent that a reinvigorated field structure is supported by the membership and used to the maximum for the purposes that it is to serve.
CONCLUSION

The discussions which bring together tripartite representatives of all the member States provide every year an outstanding opportunity for the member States to compare their points of view, and for the Office to obtain information and advice valuable for its future activities. I have no doubt that the discussions on technical co-operation will come up to these expectations. The course indicated by the Conference will be of particular importance because of the new dimensions assumed by the problems with which technical co-operation is called upon to deal. These new dimensions will no doubt involve profound changes in the general work carried out by the international community and in particular by our tripartite Organisation.

In the Introduction I have summarised the essential questions to which this Report attempts to provide the elements of an answer. Presuming—whatever the nuances and interpretations voiced in the debate—that the Conference will confirm its attachment to the work of co-operation for development, I shall conclude simply by two comments.

The first concerns the resources available for such co-operation. At present, for the ILO as for all the organisations, these resources are not commensurate with the problems of our times. The amounts released through the improvement of our methods and management will represent only a fraction of what is needed for an in-depth attack on these problems. I hope therefore that every effort will be made to mobilise the indispensable funds. How can I fail to mention here the vast resources that would be released by a slowing down of the arms race? How can I fail to emphasise the need for a considerable increase in development aid, whether within the over-all framework of the new international economic co-operation or within the bilateral or regional framework to which many States remain attached or propose to have recourse?

My second comment bears on the greater role that should be played by the ILO in the concrete tasks imposed by world development. Beyond its specific tasks of raising levels of employment, developing training in all its forms, expanding social security and improving conditions of work, our Organisation must, in its practical work, strengthen its activities designed to ensure the
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participation, in conditions of freedom, of all the elements involved in development. Here again, to achieve this, the ILO must mobilise more and more means: the resources of its regular budget, those provided by the UNDP, and those furnished by countries which are attached to its purposes and confident of its capacity to act.

In such an undertaking our Organisation, acting as link and agent between very varied partners, will confirm, as far as it is concerned, the evolution described in this Report and according to which technical co-operation, as also the development process, calls for more than the transfer of skills and specialisation of tasks. It certainly requires the co-operation of the entire world community, but also, within this vast framework, that of all those—particularly the workers and employers—engaged in the struggle, always waged but never won, against poverty, injustice and inequality—scourges to the combating of which intensified and improved technical co-operation of the International Labour Organisation should make a powerful contribution.

30 March 1977

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