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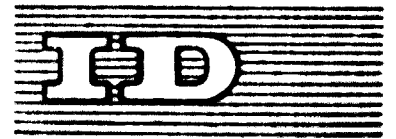
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Working Group of Experts on
Industrial Project Planning

Beirut, Lebanon, 27 April - 1 May 1970

REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP OF EXPERTS
ON INDUSTRIAL PROJECT PLANNING^{1/}

(DRAFT)

^{1/} This report has been written jointly by the UNIDO secretariat and UNESOB on the basis of the preliminary drafts produced at the meeting, but it shall not be considered as the final report of the Group until it has been cleared by all the participants. This paper has been reproduced without formal editing.

We regret that some of the pages in the microfiche copy of this report may not be up to the proper legibility standards, even though the best possible copy was used for preparing the master fiche.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Working Group of Experts on Industrial Project Planning met in Beirut from 27 April to 1 May, 1970 under the sponsorship of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. The programme for the meeting was developed jointly by the Industrial Policies and Programming Division of UNIDO and the Industrial Development Unit of the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut (UNESCOB). The Industrial Development Centre for Arab States (IDCAS) co-operated in matters relating to the meeting organization.
2. The purpose of the meeting was to bring together senior officials of developing countries, in particular those in the Middle East and North Africa, in order to exchange their professional views and experiences in regard to the various technical aspects of industrial project planning. The Working Group was thus requested to review the effectiveness of the working systems, procedures and techniques of industrial project development, evaluation and follow-up as currently practised by the various institutions from which the participants in the Group were drawn.
3. The Group was composed of 26 officials from national industrial development institutions in 12 countries, seven officials/experts from international organizations including United Nations/Special Fund-assisted centres in Algeria, Libya and Jordan, and eight substantive officers of the meeting secretariat from UNIDO and UNESCOB, including two consultants. The list of participants is given in Annex I of this report.
4. The meeting was opened on 27 April 1970 by Mr. Jean-Pierre Martin, Director of UNESCOB, on behalf of the Executive Director of UNIDO. In his opening remarks, Mr. Martin dwelt on the terms of reference given to the Group.^{2/} It was noted that the national officials participating in the Group would act in their capacities as experts in the substantive matters under consideration rather than official representatives of their organizations. However, it was emphasized that the Group should direct its deliberations taking into full account the problems and potentialities which were relevant for their own organizations and countries.

^{2/} ID/WG.55/2 "Objectives, background and proposed agenda".

5. Messrs. M. Hani (UNIDO) and S. Jewhari (UNESOB) were then appointed to be co-directors of the meeting. They chaired the five-day sessions alternately. At a later stage, Messrs. A.M. El Morshedi (United Arab Republic), M. Badani (Syrian Arab Republic) and S.A. Al-Shaikhli (Iraq) were elected as rapporteurs.
6. The Group adopted the following as the agenda for the five-day sessions:
 - 1st day Industrial planning "system" on the national level, with particular reference to major participating institutions and their distinctive functions.
 - 2nd day Industrial project preparation, with particular attention to the problem of organizing pre-investment studies: opportunity studies, pre-feasibility studies, feasibility studies, etc.
 - 3rd day Industrial project evaluation, with focus on the concept and measurement of "national parameters" for priority considerations.
 - 4th day Project implementation and follow-up, with particular reference to supervisory tasks assigned to national development authorities.
 - 5th day Recapitulation and preparation of a report.
7. The meeting had before it a number of working documents, mostly prepared in advance but some prepared as in-session working notes. They are listed in Annex II in relation to the specific agenda items as mentioned above.
8. On each day except the last, those documents which were considered as particularly relevant for the agenda of the day were briefly introduced by the officers responsible for their presentation. Round-table discussions then dwelt on various specific issues of interest to the Group. On the final day, the Group had before it a set of summary notes of the discussions during the previous four days, which had been prepared by the rapporteurs in co-operation with the meeting secretariat. These notes were read by all the participants and there were further debates on part of their contents. The draft, accordingly modified, was thus adopted as the main body of this report.
9. In closing the meeting, the Group expressed its appreciation to the administration staff of UNESOB for the excellent conference services it provided and to those UNIDO and UNESOB officials who served as the technical secretariat of the meeting.

INDUSTRIAL PLANNING "SYSTEMS" ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL

10. Several participants gave a descriptive account of the systems of industrial planning in their respective countries (Syrian Arab Republic, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Jordan, Southern Yemen and Sudan).^{3/} In the course of the discussion, the Group drew attention to the manners in which the authorities at the various levels within the hierarchy of national development administration are related to distinctive stages in the functional systems of planning, such as the conception of project ideas, the various stages in project preparation, the evaluation and screening of projects in relation to development plans, and their implementation and follow-up.

11. In this connexion, a technical paper was read, which made distinction between the "organization" viewed conceptually as a self-contained action process that moves through the various phases of the project preparation and execution life cycle, on the one hand, and the organization in its actual, conventional form which takes the form of hierarchical structure on the other.^{4/} In fact, different phases of the project cycle tend to call for different authorities and agents, e.g. a number of departments in different Ministries, international agencies, contractors, etc. who may or may not be closely related functionally. The organization of a planning process is thus to be "superimposed" on existing functional structures, demanding a voluntary association or coalition of different autonomous entities to deal with each project. To question the effectiveness of the existing machinery for development administration in regard to project planning and execution would thus often imply a tremendous challenge to the formal hierarchical structure of the machinery.

12. It was pointed out, however, that the project planning/management system is itself part of larger systems, such as, on the national levels, the system concerned with the formulation and implementation of national over-all development programmes and budget. The latter normally accounts for those patterns of authority and responsibility which are observed in the actual organizational set-up of the governmental machinery, and which often prove, quite ironically, conflicting with the theoretical requirements of the project planning/management system.

^{3/} See Annex II, documents Nos. 2 and 7.

^{4/} ID/WG.55/5 "Development project planning and administration."
(by A. J. Creshkoff)

13. Some participants further noted that every level of authority in the hierarchy of national development administration usually operates with its own cycle of formulation, implementation and follow-up in regard to its activities: the difficulty of establishing an efficient planning and management cycle for an individual project is thus enhanced, for it has to cut across those other cycles or sub-systems of national development administration.

14. Mention was made that "planning" is frequently understood to be limited to the role of evaluating and screening given proposals in relation to available resources. However, it was pointed out that this type of planning is rather typical of a Central Planning Organization or equivalent high-level authorities, for which the planning process should be defined in terms of inter-ministry co-ordination for over-all plan formulation and follow-up. In contrast, Ministries of Industry or similar authorities would generally be more directly concerned with the planning cycles of various specific development programmes and projects, including the development and elaboration of investment proposals. In some countries, especially where the public sector plays a dominant role in industrial development, there is a set of sub-authorities more immediately responsible for the planning and management of industrial enterprises in various branches.

15. It is thus difficult to conceive any self-contained and autonomous authority that is entrusted to handle all the stages in project planning and implementation from start to finish. By way of improving the over-all effectiveness of project development and execution, some countries have experimented with a different approach whereby specialized organizations are established to deal with certain specific phases of the project cycle in a collective manner. The "General Organization for Industrial Project Study and Engineering Design", which has recently been created in the Syrian Arab Republic, was cited as one of such examples. In regard to the project implementation phase, there has been a move towards creating a special autonomous authority that can supervise and assist in the implementation phase of all the projects included in a development plan.

16. One might expect on an a priori basis that the project cycle in the private sector would be subject to a somewhat lesser degree of organizational complication than that in the public sector. It was noted, however,

that in some countries the projects committed for financing and execution in the private sector are often under-prepared; project ideas tend to evolve under motivations that may not necessarily fit the national development objectives; their implementation goes through various phases involving various agencies. The group noted that, in the mixed economy, proper measures should be taken to facilitate the participation of the private sector in the planning process on the national level, and that efforts should be made to streamline the licensing and other administrative procedures which often impede the implementation phase of the private sector projects.

17. Mention was frequently made of the inadequacy of management, technical expertise, statistics, etc. These difficulties are indeed a common feature in developing countries, but they should be taken as a challenge to development efforts and not simply as a discouragement, some participants noted.

18. The Group made an attempt to seek a common framework that might facilitate a comparative analysis of the project planning systems underlying the various existing organizational set-up in individual countries. A proposal was made that every participant might wish to fill out a matrix form^{5/} in which the responsibilities and technical capacities of specific organizations within the government hierarchy of each country could be related to the distinctive stages in the project planning and management cycle (development of project ideas, market and technical requirement studies, project authorization in terms of national plans, implementation planning and budgeting, investment promotion, licensing and investment incentives, project contracting, follow-up, etc.). However, the suggested form was considered as being too rudimentary to cope with the diverse vantage points which individual participants could command relative to their official routines in their respective countries. In view of the shortage of time allotted to this agenda item during the session, the Group decided not to venture on this kind of exercise at this stage, and suggested that the UNIDO secretariat might first undertake to accumulate detailed country studies on industrial project planning systems and organizations and elaborate further an analytical framework for inter-country comparison in this subject area.

^{5/} In-session working note, entitled "Organizations-Functions Matrix for Industrial Project Planning and Implementation".

INDUSTRIAL PROJECT PREPARATION

19. While the process of project preparation can have a varying number of distinctive stages depending on circumstances, an effort was made to distinguish between a few stages which are particularly relevant to project development administration.

20. Many participants noticed terminological confusions with respect to various stages of project preparation. They suggested that an organization like UNIDO would continue its efforts to clarify and standardize the key terminology in this respect. This would be particularly helpful in establishing clear terms of reference for those who are concerned with project preparation.

21. It was suggested that clear distinction be made between "opportunity studies" and the subsequent stages referred to as "feasibility studies". This distinction was considered to be pertinent in view of the difference in the nature and intensity of staff work required. Opportunity studies are to be so distinguished and carried out as a kind of "pre-planning" or "pre-project" stage. The UNIDO documents dealing with this subject^{6/} appeared to be sufficient to define the scope of opportunity studies.

22. The content and depth of "feasibility studies" can greatly vary from a relatively preliminary study to a more advanced analysis covering all the important factors relevant to final investment decision. It will be difficult and perhaps unnecessary to elaborate on various sub-stages in the preparation of feasibility studies in general terms. The degree of refinement of feasibility studies will differ according to the size of project, its importance in the national plan and other considerations.

23. However, some distinguishing features between more (or less) advanced stages in the preparation of feasibility studies might be established with a view to demonstrating the extent to which different terms of reference influence consultant fees. The Group welcomed UNIDO's further effort to compile an elaborate manual on job specifications for consultants carrying out feasibility studies.

^{6/} (a) ID/WG.55/1 "Stages of project preparation: introductory study" by D. Slimak, and (b) ID/WG.55/3 "Checklists for individual studies and planning stages as used in project screening operation" by E.G. Bröder.

24. Some participants felt that, along with such a manual on how to use consultant services for industrial feasibility studies, a technical information service providing a continually up-dated list of "minimum economical plant sizes" for as many product lines as possible in various branches of industry should be greatly appreciated by the technical personnel in developing countries, including foreign experts.

25. The Group felt that the proposed UNIDO project Extracts of Industrial Feasibility Studies^{7/} would be very useful as a reference material for pre-feasibility assessment of project ideas, in particular of medium- to small-scale industrial projects, and also as a checklist for evaluating the substantive contents of industrial studies and offers from potential suppliers. However, it should be borne in mind that the feasibility studies contained in the "Extract" series should not be used under any circumstances as a substitute for ad hoc project studies required for investment decision making.

26. It was noted that the preparation of the "Extracts" would lead to a broader and practical utilization of those feasibility studies which, once used, have since been hoarded in a growing number in various development institutions in the world. The actual process of their preparation would be meaningfully linked to training of the personnel for project formulation and evaluation.

27. Some participants voiced the opinion that the form of compilation used in the "Extracts" would also be useful for the purpose of digesting and evaluating feasibility studies which are often too voluminous to allow a quick and thorough scrutiny by high level committees.

INDUSTRIAL PROJECT EVALUATION

28. The basic approach taken in the forthcoming UNIDO Manual for industrial project evaluation^{8/} was briefly described with particular reference to three important "national parameters"; namely, the shadow prices of

7/ ID/WG.52/2 "EXTRACTS OF INDUSTRIAL FEASIBILITY STUDIES - Introductory note and examples" (UNIDO)

8/ Now available in the form of working draft (1 May 1970): "GUIDELINES FOR PROJECT EVALUATION". This supersedes the earlier mimeograph (ID/WG.31/1): "Economics of project formulation and evaluation".

savings, foreign exchange and unskilled labour. The concept of national parameters and a general procedure for evaluating them were discussed.^{2/}

29. The Group agreed that it is important to ensure the application of certain national parameters in a standardized manner by all agents concerned with project evaluation in a given country. Although it would be difficult to estimate these parameters precisely in quantitative terms, efforts should be made to establish such parameters on the basis of well-informed and consistent approximation.

30. The magnitude of these basic national parameters would be subject to revisions in time as the underlying economic conditions change. Some parameters are also relatively sensitive to the characteristics of the group of projects being considered for evaluation. By way of caution, mention was made of the fact that the national parameters and their key components such as the social rate of return and the marginal rate of savings tend to be more unstable in developing countries than in developed countries. Discount rates are often subject to social and political pressure so that the very economics of evaluation underlying such method might be obscured in the actual decision-making process.

31. Several participants referred to the issue of "choice of technologies" (old or new, labour or capital intensive, etc.) in connexion with the criteria for project selection. It was pointed out that this issue should not be dealt with as an additional national parameter, nor as a matter of national prejudice. But, in fact, the criteria for economic evaluation of projects are designed to take care of this issue in terms of the shadow prices of capital and labour: namely, in terms of national economic values of these respective components of project cost.

32. It was recognized that certain developing countries are not currently experiencing any acute shortage of foreign exchange. Nor do they regard total savings to be sub-optimal. In such countries the practice is often one in which priority is accorded to the diversification of industry and to bear in mind the various linkages.

33. A clarification was given to the effect that the benefits arising from "inter-industry linkage" and "diversification" are to be taken into account

^{2/} ID/WG.55/7 "On the concept and measurement of national parameters" by Partha Dasgupta.

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in calculating the gross benefits of a project. It was admitted, however, that project selection is itself a complex process of which the national profitability analysis constitutes only a part. The proper calculation of benefits and costs associated with a given project constitutes an important task of project preparation on which project evaluation is based. It was suggested that detailed practical guidelines be elaborated to facilitate the standardization of project formulation as well as of evaluation techniques. The close inter-relation between project preparation and project evaluation was thus noted.

34. The "utilization of local raw materials" was often mentioned as one of the main national development objectives. In this connexion, attention was drawn to the fact that domestic raw materials for manufacturing industries may not necessarily be cheaper than imported ones and that priority is nevertheless accorded to the projects that exploit domestic raw materials. In terms of project evaluation techniques, this priority should be scrutinized taking into account the following three basic benefits to be associated with the use of domestic raw materials:

- (a) Saving of foreign exchanges;
- (b) Additional income to be derived from other projects supplying the raw materials in question; and
- (c) The reliability of the source of supply.

35. Of these three elements, the first one is readily taken care of by the shadow price of foreign exchange. The second one relates to the issue of inter-industry linkages which should be duly taken into account when a development "programme" is formulated referring to two or more inter-linked projects. The third element, i.e. reliability of the source of supply involves a factor of uncertainty.

36. The method of economic evaluation can theoretically allow for market and environmental uncertainties in connexion with the estimation of benefits and costs of projects. Doubt was cast as to whether this methodological clarification would actually be helpful in eliminating many dynamic elements reflecting national aspirations from the issue of project evaluation criteria. The Group noted, however, that a profuse reference to these latter (political) factors ought not over-shadow the importance of resorting to sound economic calculations in the process of project selection.

37. It was noted that national planning is always faced with a complexity of various objectives that are often mutually contradictory. Not all these objectives may easily be translated into "national parameters" and fitted into a consistent formula of project evaluation. It was also noted that "priorities" representing the various national objectives are to guide not only the evaluation phase of projects but also the various preceding stages of project planning: conception of project ideas and designing of projects, i.e. formulation of the alternatives from which evaluators are allowed to choose.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

38. A broad range of causes of delays in project implementation were cited by many participants. The causes mentioned in the UNIDO country study,^{10/} which was introduced at the beginning of the session, proved to be rather representative of those frequently observed in participants' own countries. Attention was drawn to the need to distinguish between "causes" and "excuses", i.e. between the factors external to those who are responsible for project management and the tasks which ought to have been fulfilled by them. In this connexion the important role of human elements was noted.

39. Delays in project implementation are frequently caused by the involvement of various contractors in a single project. Mention was made that in many instances "turn-key" contracts circumvented such difficulties. It was pointed out, however, that a turn-key contract tends to have some drawbacks: in particular, not providing the opportunity of training local cadres for project implementation, even if the training of local operatives is often taken into account in such contracts. It was suggested, therefore, that a device should be developed to incorporate in a turn-key contract an arrangement suitable for training local staff in project implementation.

40. Inadequacy of project preparation in the pre-contracting phase was noted as one of the most important factors accounting for implementation difficulties. Very often considerable gaps in cost estimates occur between consultants' project studies and contractors' offers. Choosing the

^{10/} ID/WG.55/4 "Implementation of industrial investment projects: a study on the experience in Yugoslavia" by D. Vrcelj.

right contractors is time-consuming. Some participants felt, therefore, that it would be advisable to get acquainted with prospective contractors even in the phase of pre-feasibility assessment, although caution should be taken lest this should introduce a bias in project planning.

41. In order to ensure continuity of management at innumerable stages of project implementation, it was suggested that the execution of each project, especially within the public sector, be put under the direct responsibility of a project manager or management team who is empowered to handle all the implementation stages ranging from the elaboration of project studies to the experimental operation of plants.

42. The lack of co-ordination and sometimes even conflicting objectives between different ministries and departments supervising and controlling the execution of various projects are frequently cited as a major obstacle. A few countries in the region have experimented, with positive results, on the approach whereby all stages of project implementation (including sometimes operation) are entrusted to a specialized organization independent of the traditional administrative machinery of the government.

43. Under-fulfilment of the terms on the part of contractors was frequently mentioned as an important cause of implementation delays. In some cases penalizing or arbitrating such contractors might result in better performances. But most contractors might readily incorporate anticipated penalties in their contract prices; besides, arbitrations more often contribute to than reduce the delay in implementation. Penalty and arbitrations are only a matter of legal protection. One could not over-emphasize the importance of (a) selecting good contractors and (b) properly attending to their work for successful implementation.

44. It was recommended that UNIDO attempt to compile an index of contractors, with up-to-date information on the field of specialization and capability of each contractor, with a view to facilitating the selection of contractors for project execution in developing countries. Moreover, in view of the increasing need for resorting to computerized techniques of project follow-up, it was suggested that a detailed manual on the follow-up methods would be very useful.

45. Attention was paid to some distinctive features of the project implementation in the private sector in several countries. It was noted that, whatever a definition may apply to the "private sector", it would be an important duty of the government to provide assistance to this sector in facilitating its project planning and implementation process, in such a way as to ensure the fulfilment of the national development objectives.

46. In some countries a number of cases were reported where licenses granted to private entrepreneurs were not utilized. The revoking of such licenses after certain grace periods often helped in achieving a higher rate of implementation. Where private entrepreneurs are incapable of taking the initiative in industries designated for them, the government may take positive steps towards joint-ventures and actively engage in the preparation of feasibility studies and contracting. Such a task may be played in some countries by governmental industrial banks and similar institutions.

ANNEX I

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ANNEX II

LIST OF TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS
AND RELATED AGENDA ITEMSAGENDA

1. ID/WG.55/2 - Objectives, background and proposed agenda (UNIDO/UNESOB)

I. INDUSTRIAL PLANNING "SYSTEM" ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL

2. ID/WG.55/5 - Development project planning and administration
(by A. J. Greshkoff/UNIDO)
3. ID/WG.55/6 - Industrial project planning in the Syrian Arab Republic:
an introductory review (by A. Allaf/UNIDO-UNESOB)
4. ID/WG.55/8 - Industrial planning in Saudi Arabia: an introductory
review (by M. E. Jallal/UNIDO-UNESOB)
5. ID/WG.55/9 - Industrial project planning and implementation in Iraq:
an introductory review (by T. Al Khudayri/UNIDO-UNESOB)
6. ID/WG.55/10 - Industrial planning in Jordan: an introductory review
(UNESOB)
7. In-session working notes:
 - (a) ID/WG.55/CP.1* - A note on industrial development planning in the
Democratic Republic of the Sudan (by M. Mohamed Babiker)
 - (b) ID/WG.55/CP.2* - A note on industrial development in the People's
Republic of Southern Yemen (by S. Taj Mohamed and
H. Hamadani)
 - (c) ID/WG.55/CP.3* - An excerpt from the Four-Year Plan (1970-1973) of
the Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria
(by M. A. Isli)

II. INDUSTRIAL PROJECT PREPARATION

8. ID/WG.55/1 - Stages of project preparation: introductory study
(by D. Slimak/UNIDO)
9. ID/WG.55/3 - Checklists for individual studies and planning stages as
used in project screening operation (by E. G. Bröder/UNIDO)
10. ID/WG.52/2 - EXTRACTS OF INDUSTRIAL FEASIBILITY STUDIES: Introductory
note and examples (UNIDO)

III. INDUSTRIAL PROJECT EVALUATION

11. ID/WG.31/1 - Economics of project formulation and evaluation
(S. A. Marglin and T. E. Weisskopf/UNIDO)
12. ID/WG.55/7 - Concept and measurement of national parameters
(by P. Dasgupta/UNIDO)
13. ID/SER.II/1 - EVALUATION OF INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS (UNIDO publication)

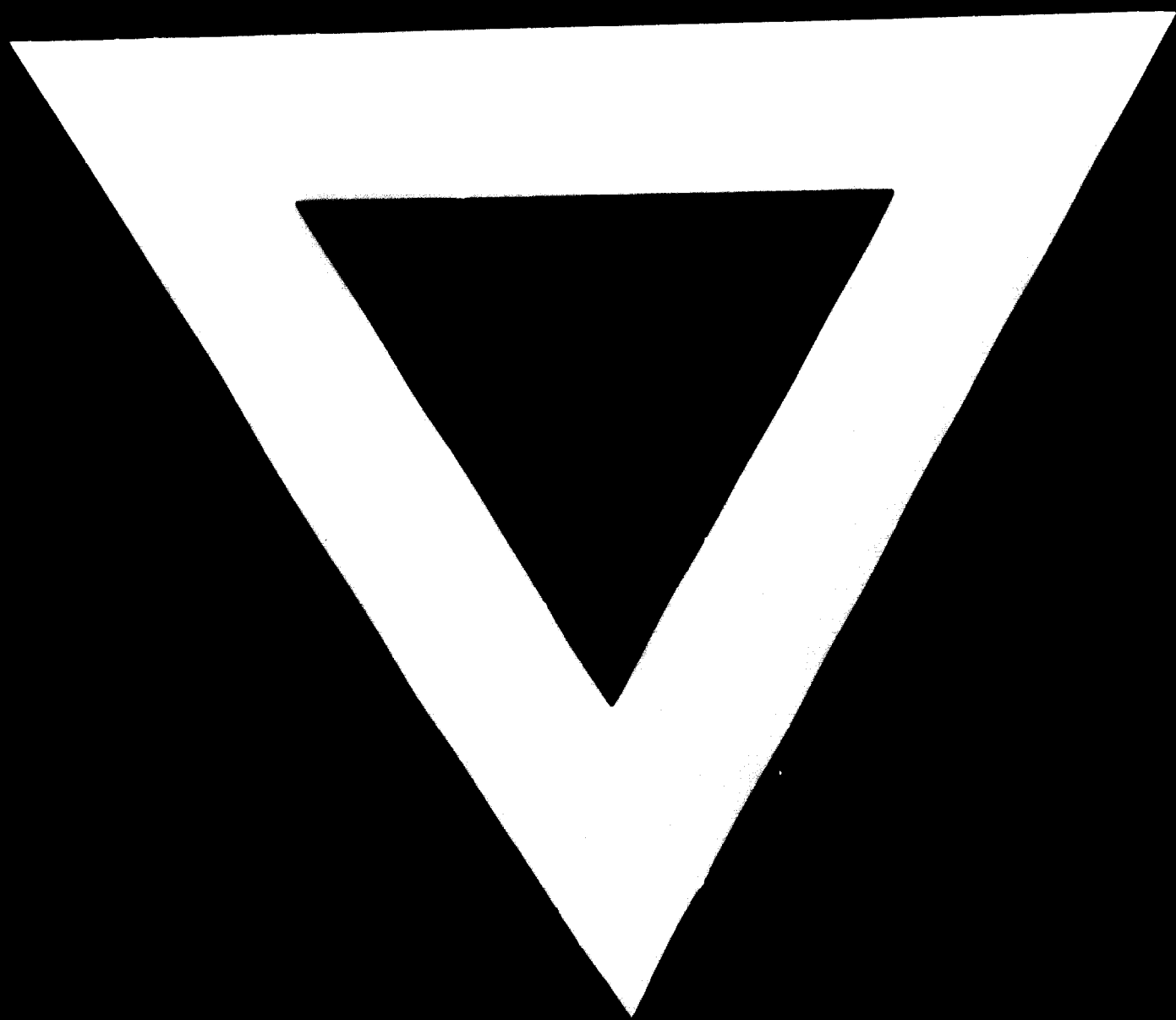
* For participants only

IV. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP

14. ID/CONF.1/3 - Implementation of industrial projects (UNIDO)
15. ID/WG.55/4 - Implementation of investment projects: a study on the experience in Yugoslavia (by D. Vrcelj/UNIDO)

V. BACKGROUND READING MATERIALS

16. id 70-1336 - The Industry File System: Draft report of the East African Working Party on Industrial Programming Data (UNIDO)
17. ID/42 - INDUSTRIAL PROGRAMMING DATA - Report of the First Session of the International Working Party on Industrial Programming Data, Vienna, November 1968 (UNIDO)
18. ID/WG.23/4 - Data requirements for industry analysis and programming (by T. Victorisz/UNIDO)
19. "Project Information Form", being used for the UNIDO/ECAFE Meeting on Industrial Project Promotion in Asian Countries (UNIDO)



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