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TRAINING FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED ARAB COUNTRIES ^{1/}

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter I: TRAINING PRINCIPLES	3
Chapter II: GUIDELINES FOR AN ACTION PROGRAMME	4
Chapter III: SUMMARY OF SUGGESTED PRIORITY ACTIONS AND MEANS FOR IMPLEMENTATION	9

INTRODUCTION

There is an urgent need to develop special training programmes for the Least Developed Countries. In the area covered by the activities of ECWA both Yemens, the Yemen Arab Republic and the Democratic Republic of Yemen, as well as Oman, by the definition of the United Nations fall into the category of the Least Developed Countries. These countries are characterized by few known natural resources. No minerals of commercial importance have been discovered in both Yemens until now, although there are indications that oil might be found in some areas. Oman is in a more favourable position, as commercial oil deposits have been discovered there and are now being used as major source of finance for the economy of the country. However, the industry in these countries is very weak, although some progress has taken place recently in the development of industry through bilateral assistance, but it is recognized that the establishment of new industries in these countries is difficult, due to the small size of the local market and drastic shortage of technically skilled manpower and the limitation in domestic raw materials needed for industry. The shortage of technical skills is a critical constraint. Therefore, the Governments of the Yemen Arab Republic, the Democratic Republic of Yemen and Oman as yet have to formulate a suitable industrial policy for their countries and a policy for training of skilled manpower.

The strategic human resources for industrial development include entrepreneurs, administrators, managers, engineers, economists and other technical personnel needed not only for

the planning and decision-making processes but also for the development of indigenous technology, the effective utilization of local raw materials, market research, the export of industrial products, appropriate product and plant design, management of enterprises, organization and administration of industrial services etc. Industry also requires the service of well-rounded persons who have to be concerned with finding solutions to multidisciplinary problems associated with the management of industrial enterprises.

Industrial training is therefore needed on an enlarged scale. Since the costs of training in both the industrialized and the developing countries are increasing in practically all fields of industrial activities, training activities will have to be based on well-formulated development policies and programmes that ensure maximum benefits from limited inputs.

Chapter I: TRAINING PRINCIPLES

The design of an industrial training strategy for the Least Developed Countries should take into consideration the following major principles:

- a) All training programmes must be based on well-formulated industrial training plans that have been fully integrated into the overall economic development plans of the industry.
- b) National machinery should exist to ensure that adequate financial, staff and physical resources are available and that a co-ordinated effort is underway to carry out effective training programmes at the lowest possible costs.
- c) The training offered should be geared to meeting the specific needs of industry, as identified by analyses, and carried out at a practical level within industrial enterprises, institutions, workshops and the like.
- d) The training should be carried out within the country itself; training abroad should be considered only if no suitable training facilities are locally available. In such cases, training in more advanced developing countries, preferably within the region, should be given priority and training abroad in industrialized countries should be considered only for key personnel from priority industrial areas.
- e) The training programmes should aim at providing nationals of the country with sufficient skills to occupy key positions in industry, thereby decreasing dependency on foreign personnel.
- f) The training exercise should be a continuous process - that is, not only aimed at providing new skills but at upgrading and updating acquired skills and knowledge.

Chapter II: GUIDELINES FOR AN ACTION PROGRAMME

The Yemen Arab Republic and the Democratic Republic of Yemen, as well as Oman have embarked on an important step in building an institutional framework for social and economic development in these three countries. Ministries and central planning organizations have been created in order to formulate development plans, undertake economic studies and surveys and carry out industrialization in these countries. The analysis of the institutional framework has shown that the government machinery still lacks a sufficient number of qualified experts, that a number of expatriate experts are carrying out the government functions vis-à-vis industries. Taking into consideration the existing situation in these countries with particular reference to the training problems facing these countries, the following guidelines are given for developing effective industrial training programmes. But it should be realized that two major problems face organizers of training projects for Least Developed Countries:

- a) In which specific fields do these countries have training needs that could be met by industrial training activities, and
- b) what is the level of qualification of those to be trained in such fields.

As to a), the following list may be a base for further elaboration:

- Industrial planning and programming;
- Industrial administration and legislation;
- Investment promotion;
- Techniques of small-scale industry development;
- Development of agro-based industries;
- Development of indigenous entrepreneurship.

As to b), it should be distinguished between top level decision makers (especially with regard to the first three fields of training mentioned above), and upper-middle level technical, managerial and administrative staff. In particular, the following groups should be aimed at:

- Senior administrators and decision makers from government agencies and institutions who undertake planning and programming and provide resources and services for industry;
- Organizers, managers and technical specialists who play leading roles in negotiations with foreign sources for the transfer of technologies and finance;
- Key organizers of various types of industrial associations that mobilize resources and personnel services for accelerated industrialisation;
- Key research personnel in the technological, economic and social areas who are in a position to give impulse to industrial development;
- Senior level training staff including such as university professors, training organizers and administrators, and personnel managers;
- Key technical, economic, social and multi-disciplinary personnel in already existing industries as well as in industrial services and in government agencies and institutions concerned with industrial development.

In determining the qualification of personnel to be trained due regard should be given, of course, to their educational background, however, emphasis should be put on such factors as professional functions executed and job experience gained by the candidates.

Training could be organized as follows:

- Individual fellowships. These should be carried out preferably in more advanced developing countries with economic, administrative and political structures comparable to those of the candidates' home countries (as e. g. the so-called English or French administrative systems). Fellowships in industrialized countries should be considered only for top level key personnel from priority areas. Individual fellowships should be chosen only if, owing to whatsoever reasons, group training is not applicable. Possibilities for grouping individual fellows to meaningful fellowship group training programmes should be carefully examined.
- Special training courses similar to the in-plant or in-service type of training programmes. Such courses should as far as possible be carried out on a regional basis according to language and field of training. Use could be made of existing training centres or so to host such courses, provided that the available facilities suit to this purpose. This may also lead to a better utilization of such centres, which sometimes might be desirable. The training staff should be hired to the extent possible from the respective region. Training staff from outside that region should be engaged only if such staff is not available within the region or, on a short term basis, complementary to the regional staff. The programmes of such courses should be designed in a way that the theoretical (class room) part is as comprehensive and intensive as needed with regard to the educational background of the participants, while the practical (in-plant or in-service) part should be as extensive as possible. The duration of such training courses should depend on the level of the participants: the higher the level the shorter the duration.

- Group study tours. This type of training activities could be envisaged in particular for high level staff. There are different possibilities where group study tours would be suitable. They can be organized for teams working together in the same project, agency or institution (package training), or for homogenous groups recruited from several countries just for this purpose, or for participants in seminars, workshops or other types of substantive conferences. It can also be that such a group study tour starts with a short introductory and ends with a short evaluation seminar either in the respective home country or on a regional basis or in one of the host countries to be visited. In the majority of cases the host countries of such group study tours will be industrialized countries without, however, excluding advanced developing countries generally. Group study tours should be as intensive and as short as possible: their duration should not exceed a maximum of three weeks with regard to both the limited time of the high level participants and their absorptive capacity.
- Regional training centres. This is the most ambitious type of training activities, and it should only be taken into consideration after very thorough preparatory investigations. One could, for instance, visualize a type of training centre covering the fields of industrial planning and programming, industrial administration and legislation, and industrial promotion; or another type of training centre dealing with small-scale industries development, agro-based industries, and entrepreneurial development. With regard to the conditions in Western Asia, such training centres could work either in English or in Arabic. The scope of such centres could also be extended beyond the mere realm of training to such areas as consultancy, extension services, research and co-ordination within the respective fields of interest.

It cannot be overemphasized that the success of this proposal as a whole depends largely on the availability of a sufficient number of highly qualified substantive field staff in the respective regions or areas at least for the preparatory and launching period of such training activities. This field staff, in our opinion, has to consist first of all of a permanent regional industrial training adviser and experts as need may be. Among the preparatory work to be done are such tasks as:

- Identification of the detailed training needs in the various countries and within these countries in the various areas of interest taking into consideration the criteria of functions to be carried out, level of qualification needed, number of individuals to be trained and time available;
- Identification of existing educational background and skills that could serve as a basis for further training;
- Identification of existing resources and facilities that could be mobilized for training activities;
- Advice to governments and other pertinent bodies as to how to make the best use of international assistance in the field of industrial and related training;
- Co-ordination of efforts in the field of industrial and related training undertaken by whom-so-ever;
- Assistance to governments in selecting and pre-informing suitable candidates for participation in training activities.

Chapter III: SUMMARY OF SUGGESTED PRIORITY ACTIONS AND MEANS
FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- I. Assign priority to industrial training in national economic development plan
- a) Take legal steps as necessary.
 - b) Establish system of co-operation between planners of industrial training and of national economic development.
- II. Set up adequate national administrative and legal machinery for industrial training
- a) Obtain expert assistance in establishing new/strengthening existing national administrative machinery.
 - b) Obtain expert assistance in designing industrial training legislation.
- III. Determine specific training needs of industry for skilled personnel
- a) Undertake, with expert assistance as needed, surveys of industrial training needs on national and regional levels.
 - b) Establish system of continuous co-operation between industry and industrial training officials.
- IV. Make optimal use of existing industrial training facilities/increase the number of training facilities
- a) Undertake, with expert assistance as needed, surveys to determine:
 - i) capacity (quantitative and qualitative) of existing training facilities;
 - ii) ways and means of strengthening the capacity of existing facilities;
 - iii) ways and means of establishing new training facilities.

- b) Establish system of co-operation among the region/sub-regions for setting up training programmes carried out jointly in existing facilities.
 - c) Make optimal use of international co-operation/assistance in the field of industrial training.
- V. Undertake various supporting activities
- a) Undertake research in such areas as appropriate training techniques and training schemes, techniques of evaluation, etc.
 - b) Provide means (meetings, joint consultations, workshops) for establishing dialogues among those concerned with industrial training on the national, regional and sub-regional levels.
 - c) Strengthen the national information effort for collecting/disseminating pertinent industrial training information.

Realizing the fact that the drastic shortage of qualified manpower will continue to affect the development of industries in the above mentioned countries and that this problem is not only limited to the operation of existing industries but also affects the government institutions related to industry in the form of a shortage of high level administrators and all kinds of clerical staff, it is proposed, that, as a first practical step in initiating and carrying

out the suggested priority actions an industrial adviser for the duration of 3 to 5 years should be attached to the appropriate government organization in Oman, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Yemen Arab Republic. The functions of the industrial training advisers should be as follows:

Oman

1. To assist the advisory group in identifying training needs (both existing and in terms of future development plans) and resources both within the country and outside and to recommend appropriate training programmes.
2. Working with the appropriate government officials to identify specific positions within the government structure currently occupied by expatriates which should be "Omanised" within a given period of time; to devise training and development plans and to permit these posts to be "Omanised" according to schedule; advise and assist in the selection of candidates for such posts; and monitor the effective implementation of such training programmes, recommending modification/refinement as and when the need becomes apparent.
3. Working with and through the appropriate government officials and appropriate personnel in selected industries, identify specific positions within the enterprises presently occupied by expatriates; to review the enterprises' training programmes which would permit these posts to be "Omanised" according to schedule; advise and assist in the selection of candidates for such posts; and monitor the effective implementation of such training programmes, recommending modification/refinements as and when the need becomes apparent.
4. Design and implement a training programme for Omani counterparts to equip them to assume these functions in the future.

As for the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and the Arab Republic of Yemen, realizing the fact that there is no need to "Yemenize" the governments of these two countries, it is proposed that the activities of the training advisers for these two countries should be as follows:

1. To assist the advisory group in identifying training needs (both existing and in terms of future development plans) and resources both within the countries and outside and to recommend appropriate training programmes.
2. Working with the appropriate government officials to design training programmes for selected civil servants to better equip them to discharge their responsibilities; see to it that such programmes are implemented according to schedule; and monitor these programmes, recommending refinements/modifications as and when the need for these becomes apparent.
3. Working with and through the appropriate government officials and appropriate personnel in selected industries, identify specific positions within the enterprises presently occupied by expatriates; to review the enterprises' training programmes which would permit these posts to be "Yemenized" according to schedule; advise and assist in the selection of candidates for such posts; and monitor the effective implementation of such training programmes, recommending modification/refinements as and when the need becomes apparent.
4. Design and implement a training programme for Yemeni counterparts to equip them to assume these functions in the future.

The responsibilities of the regional training adviser, if assigned to ECWA, would be to assist ECWA in the design and development of a regional training programme. It is assumed that, once ECWA's regional training programme is established, it will become a major source to be utilized by the Least Developed Countries in this region.

Description of Inputs

	Duration of assignment (m/m)
1. Assignment of international staff	
a) Industrial training adviser for Oman	36
b) Industrial training adviser for Arab Republic of Yemen	36
c) Industrial training adviser for People's Democratic Republic of Yemen	36
d) Regional industrial training adviser	36
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Total	144
Cost in US\$	360,000
2. 3 vehicles for industrial training advisers at US\$ 3,500 each	10,500
3. Transport within the countries for 3 industrial training advisers at US\$ 2,000 per year	18,000
4. Transport for regional adviser at US\$ 4,000 per year	12,000
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Total	US\$ 400,500
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