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INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN MANAGEMENT  
CONSULTANCY (IWINING) <sup>1/</sup>

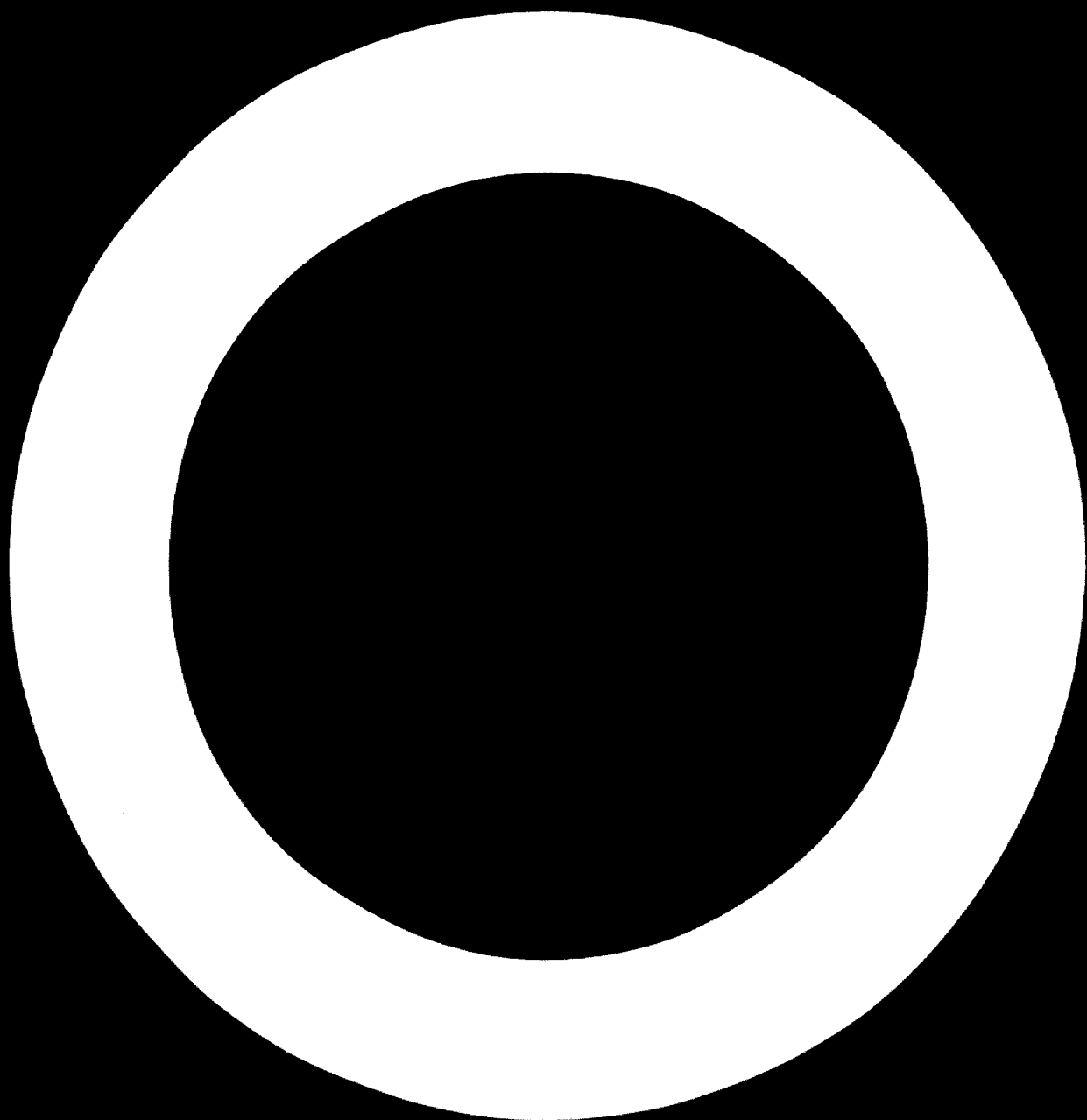
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## INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN MANAGEMENT TRAINING

During the past fifteen years or so the process of decolonization has created a new revolution of expectations. There is a growing realization that political independence is meaningless unless it leads to satisfactions of basic needs and the liberation of man on the basis of self-reliance at all levels.

This revolution of expectations has, in recent months, found clear expression in the demand for a New International Economic Order. One of the major planks concerns the demand for increasing developing world's share of manufacturing industry which has been limited to about 7%, without any appreciable increasing during the last three decades. The Second General Conference of UNIDO adopted a Declaration and a Plan of Action on Industrial Development and Co-operation which could increase the share of the developing countries to 25% of world industrial production by the year 2000.

This poses an immense challenge to African countries in the face of obstacles which must be overcome on their way to becoming self-reliant in industrial production.

One of the main constraints impeding the industrialization process is the paucity of technically trained and professionally qualified personnel to manage industrial enterprises. Several reasons have accounted for this situation:

- (1) As we are all aware, during the pre-independence era

there were little or no opportunities for indigenous people to participate in the upper echelons of management and other professional activities. Therefore, serious manpower gaps existed in every sphere of professional and technical skills at the time of independence.

(2) Inappropriate and inadequate educational systems in most developing countries were simply not geared to prepare graduates for the world of work. This separation of learning from action was reflected in the under-utilization of several university-trained graduates who held credentials of little relevance to both the maintenance and development needs of their countries.

(3) Insufficient attention was paid to vocational, technical and scientific training and upgrading of skills of the workforce, through any system of continuing and adult education.

As African nations became independent it became awkwardly evident that most countries lacked suitably qualified nationals to take over from the outgoing expatriate personnel. Efforts that were made to retrieve the situation have proven to be neither sufficient nor appropriate. Institutes of management and administration which have emerged have largely devoted their energies in achieving academic excellence and have not paid much attention to developing need-oriented programs. Few institutes, if any, have taken initiatives in providing continuing education programs for the skill needs of the adult workforce.

The challenge facing the African countries is immense. Quite clearly formal systems of management education simply do not have

the resources to cater for even the present needs let alone coping with the increasing training needs implicit in any major programs of industrialization. In the face of these conditions, it is imperative that alternative means of training and up-grading be explored.

It appears to me that there is a spectrum of possibilities which could complement the ongoing endeavours. These could take many forms such as:

- (a) Training of managers and technologists through apprenticeship programs and in-service training in industry;
- (b) Soliciting the support of successful industries to make a contribution to national needs by opening their training facilities for the use of promising adults at-large;
- (c) Seeking international co-operation with training institutions overseas through twinning arrangements.

Concept of twinning is relatively new and holds substantial opportunities for augmenting the slender resources of many developing countries. Simply put, it is an arrangement between two institutions which recognize the value of mutual co-operation towards common goals. It is founded on the philosophy of "parity of esteem" - a recognition of equality between two partners in every sense of the word.

Twinning offers great opportunities for liaison between training institutes or industry associations in developing and developed

countries to cooperate by assisting the needy partner to strengthen its resources and services to industry. In the final analysis the effectiveness of such relations very much depend on the moral commitments the partners make to consummate the relationship, for there is usually no set formal arrangement that characterizes these liaisons.

Let me describe to you the general elements of twinning before I proceed to demonstrate its value in the field of management consultancy.

There is a variety of circumstances by which two institutions might develop a cordial association between each other. Invariably this results from personal contacts being made at international meetings such as this or when one party has a chance of working at another's institution on assignment of some sort. This provides an opportunity to evaluate and compare notes on the strengths and weaknesses of each other's programs and often creates the climate for mutual co-operation. When one examines the history of some of on-going twinning programs it becomes abundantly clear, that these situations arose quite randomly. As far as I can tell there are no international agencies (including UNIDO) actively promoting and supporting such association.

In many cases where institutions have sought mutual relationships the staff of the stronger partner would make its resources available to the other, usually for no charge, in helping adapt a curriculum or training program abroad and would also provide some resource personnel to launch the program. There would be some provision to train counterpart resource staff as well so that the programs of the



institution receiving assistance can become self-sufficient in due course. The most important element in all this is the continuing informal association which provides the essential fraternal bond.

Similar relationships could also prove very fruitful among trade or industry associations whereby an association in one country would offer to make a fund of knowledge and know how available to another simply as a gesture of goodwill by helping to strengthen a budding industry organization in another country. I am personally not aware of such ties other than services which are provided to member bodies through such international associations as the International Chamber of Commerce. But I believe there are meaningful opportunities for one-to-one relationships for the express purpose of helping the junior partner acquire some strength to service its members.

At Seneca College with which I am associated, we have established a framework to make our experience available to others on a non-profit basis. Through its Centre for International Programs, the college is attempting to respond to the needs of the developing countries by providing consultants on short-term assignments, particularly in the field of management development.

We have developed a sort of twinning relationship with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). From time to time ECA identifies for us certain institutes or associations which could profit from professional assistance in either developing their own programs or offering services to their clientele. Upon evaluating these requests we have, in some cases, been able to send teams of experts on short-term

assignments to offer the necessary consulting services. In many cases we have also been successful in finding some financial resources towards these programs.

Let me give you two examples to illustrate how this type of co-operation works. Two years ago we were approached by ECA with a request that we consider helping the Institute of Management (IMT) and Technology, at Ibadan in Nigeria, develop and offer a short-cycle intensive training course to develop management skills of senior engineers. Responding to this request we tailor made a seven week residential course working closely with IMT staff. Three objectives were clearly established:

- (a) To help develop a management training program relevant for the needs of engineers in Nigeria;
- (b) To train counterparts so that in three years the local staff could take over the program completely;
- (c) To establish a mechanism for continuing consultation between Seneca and IMT so that IMT could profit from our experience.

Since the inception of this liaison, eight faculty members have participated in the course over two years. The cost of the program was borne by IMT and by the Canadian International Development Agency.

In another instance we were able to provide consultants to ECA for a meeting in Addis Ababa which led to the formation of the African Association for Training and Development (AATD). And now as a follow-up we are currently engaged in planning nine workshops across

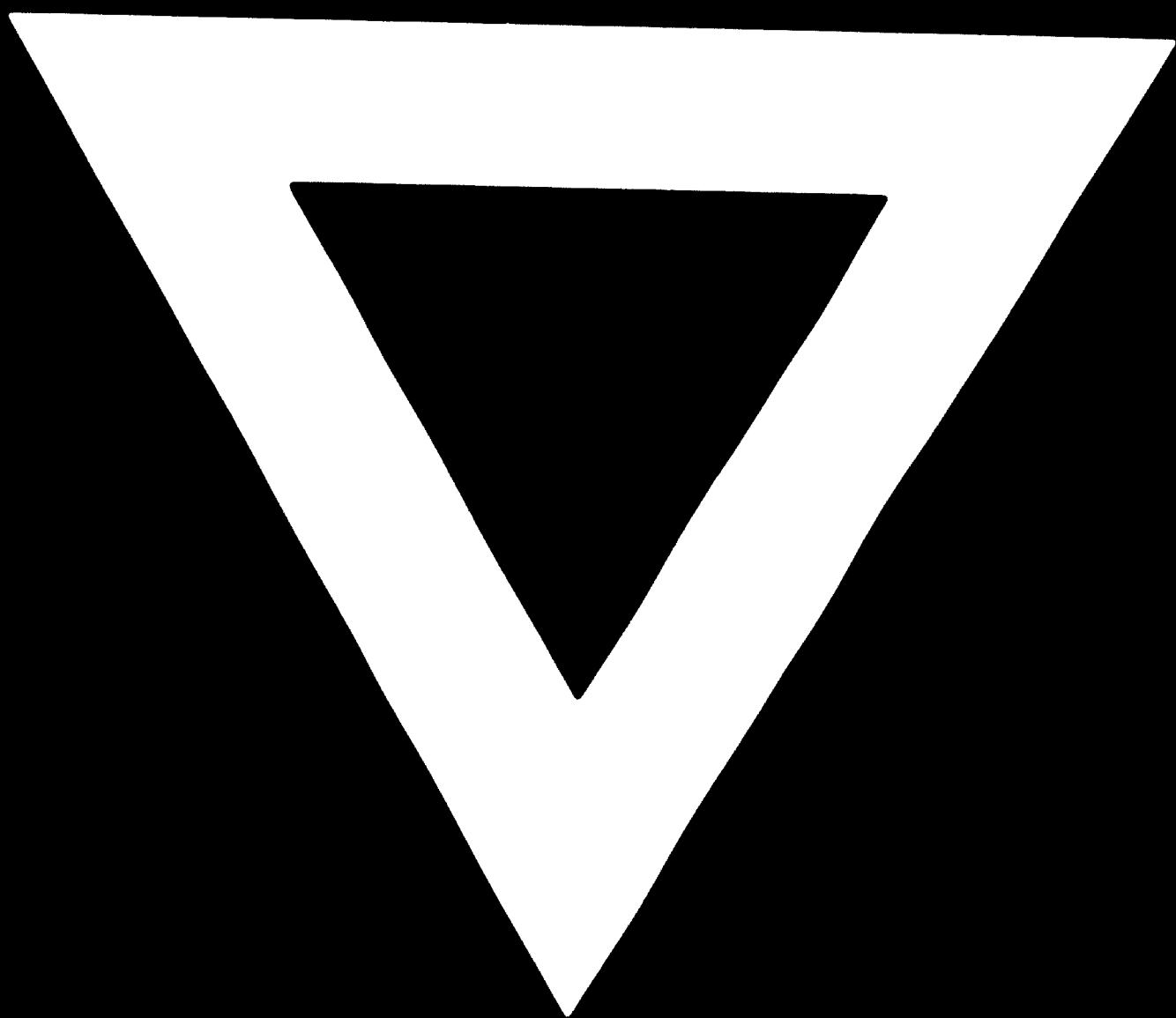
Africa where we will provide consultants for seminars to train trainers. These series are jointly sponsored by AATD, ECA and Seneca. A rather fruitful association is developing, whereby Seneca staff hope to make a contribution in the training of counterparts for AATD.

During the past decade or so developing nations have made valiant efforts to develop systems of formal education to ensure a supply of suitably trained professional corps for their future needs. Future generations will, no doubt, reap the benefits of these initiatives. For the present generation foisted with the responsibility of managing the nation's enterprises the only alternative lies in upgrading their skills and knowledge through special non-formal programs specifically designed for their needs. These needs can be best met by providing management consulting services. Since these specialists are extremely scarce in Africa it is imperative that African institutes and trade associations seek such services through the agency of twinning arrangements to supplement other efforts. I should, however, hasten to add that twinning must not be looked upon as a panacea for all the inadequacies but it should certainly contribute to alleviating the problem somewhat.

There is little doubt in my mind that, given the will to collaborate, many institutions in the industrialized countries could play a role in this process of transfer of knowledge and skills. Several agencies of the UN as well as many other international and professional associations could and must also make it their business to foster informal linkages between like institutions in developed and developing countries. It is my hope that enlightened self-interest

will distill the information that leads to further your education so  
that you will be able to use your skills and experience and put your  
intellectual work to productive use.





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