



**TOGETHER**  
*for a sustainable future*

## OCCASION

This publication has been made available to the public on the occasion of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation.



**TOGETHER**  
*for a sustainable future*

## DISCLAIMER

This document has been produced without formal United Nations editing. The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries, or its economic system or degree of development. Designations such as “developed”, “industrialized” and “developing” are intended for statistical convenience and do not necessarily express a judgment about the stage reached by a particular country or area in the development process. Mention of firm names or commercial products does not constitute an endorsement by UNIDO.

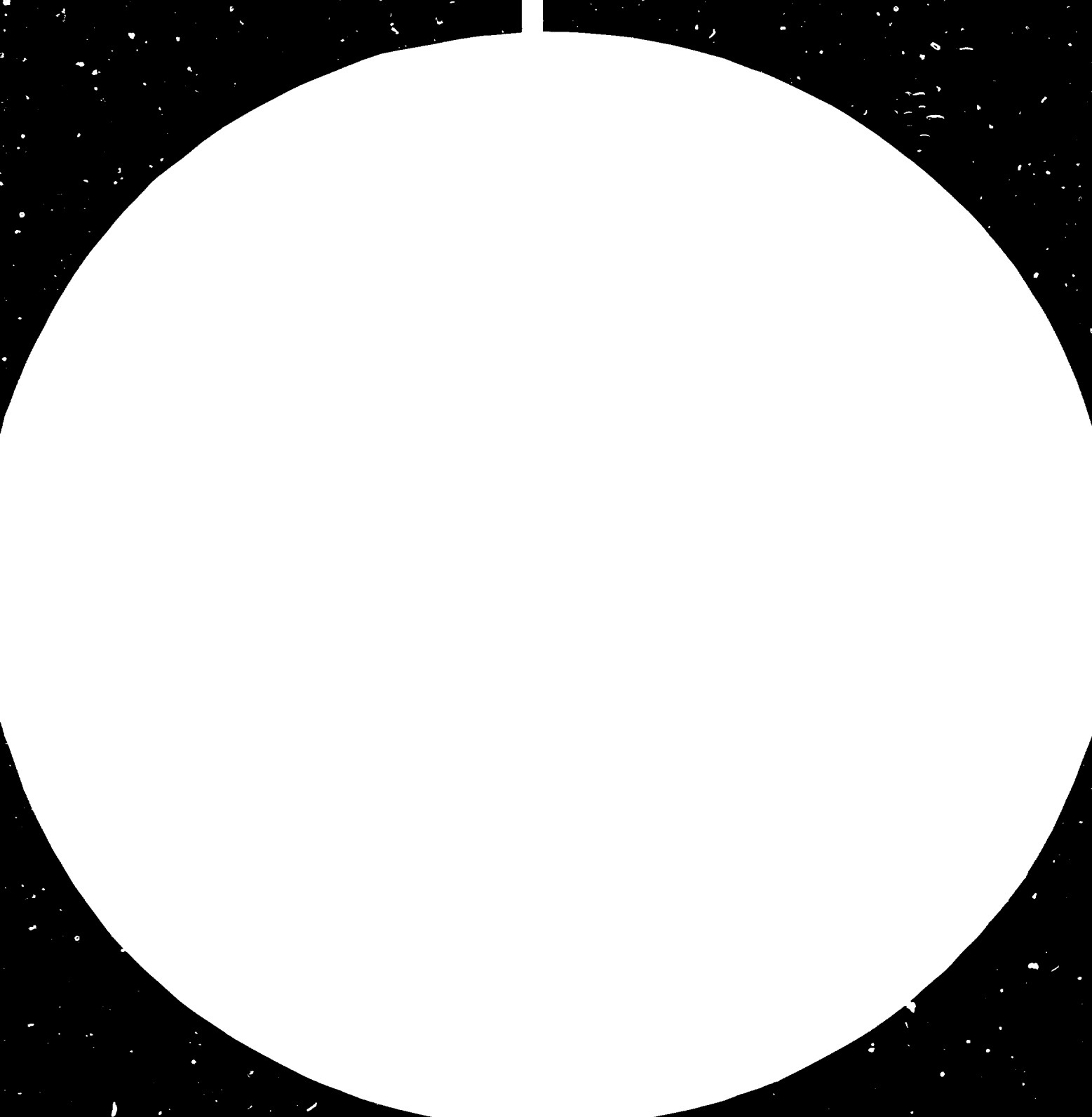
## FAIR USE POLICY

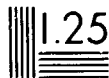
Any part of this publication may be quoted and referenced for educational and research purposes without additional permission from UNIDO. However, those who make use of quoting and referencing this publication are requested to follow the Fair Use Policy of giving due credit to UNIDO.

## CONTACT

Please contact [publications@unido.org](mailto:publications@unido.org) for further information concerning UNIDO publications.

For more information about UNIDO, please visit us at [www.unido.org](http://www.unido.org)





2.8



3.2



Resolution Test Chart  
1.0 1.1 1.25 1.4 1.6 1.8 2.0 2.2 2.5 2.8 3.2



10225



United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Distr.  
LIMITED

ID/WG.320/11  
7 January 1981

ENGLISH

---

Technical Course on Criteria for the  
Selection of Woodworking Machines

Milan, Italy, 5 - 21 May 1980

THE WOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES SECTOR IN BANGLADESH\*

by

Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhry\*\*

000.

---

\* The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the secretariat of UNIDO. This document has been reproduced without formal editing.

\*\* Assistant Supervisor of Production, Star Particle Board Mills

Since the war of liberation in 1971, no development has been made in the wood-working industry. At present our Government is studying how to utilize our forest resources through modern woodworking industries.

(1) present situation of the wood-working industries:

In Bangladesh 90 percent of the population is living in village areas and their living standard is very low. We have only one modern furniture industry and one particle board, veneered particle board and flush door plant. A rapid development is foreseen in the five years' plan for the construction of offices and buildings. The woodworking industry is therefore called upon to play a very essential role to solve the acute shelter problem.

At present, we have many small cottage scale wood-working industries, most of which are old and use exclusively manual labour. In order to achieve a rapid progress it is essential to create modern wood-working industry.

At present the wood working industry is not yet completely developed, however, somehow it is maintaining production and sales. Bangladesh has not exported particle board since a long time, but there is a big potential export market for solid timber, and some solid timber has been exported to Middle Eastern countries.

There is no incentive system for industrialization of the wood processing sector.

Due to the shortage of timber and extraction problems the veneering plant, the door plant and some wood-working industries are facing many difficulties. Because of that the production target could not be met and marketing problems arose. The plant also has insufficient modern machinery mainly the drying system is very poor, and the drying is completely dependant on the climate.

The distribution of timber by the Forest Department is poor, mainly

due to their formalities. Because of this the wood-working industry has been suffering a lot. Another major problem is the scarcity of imported spare parts for the machinery.

(ii) Timber resources:

Bangladesh has some 50,000 acres of forest land, situated mainly in the Chittagong, Hill Tracts, Sondarban, Sylhet and the Mymensingh district area. We have lot of good quality timbers: hardwoods and softwoods are available abundantly, but due to their hilly position the extraction of these timbers is difficult. Extraction is by manpower. Thus it takes three to four years for the timber in the main forest depot to reach the road side communication depot, which is about 250 miles away.

Upto 1971 some percentage of Teak timber was imported from Burma and these were mainly used for veneering and the furniture industries. Since liberation, the Government has restricted imports of all sorts of timber, except for plywood which has been imported for making tea-chests.

Timber is neither air dried nor kiln dried. Only B.F.I.D.C.'s lumber processing complex has got a modern air drying process which is mainly producing railway sleepers. Other wood-working industries and furniture plants have no drying systems at all, they do a limited amount of air drying.

Since the timber used in joinery and furniture making is not properly dried, the products deteriorate within a very short period. Carpenters do not know wood manufacturing techniques and a good deal of publicity or training is needed. To this effect an institute should be created to train them.

Primary wood processing industries: (Sawnwood and wood based panels)

The only wood based panel industries are Star Particle Board Mills (producing particle board from jute sticks) into a capacity of 6,000 tons per annum and Khulna Hard Board Mills with a capacity of 12,000 tons per annum. However, due to economic problems and lack of proper planning

these wood based panel industries are running at only 40 percent of their capacity. Moreover emphasis has been given by the Ministry of Industries to export rather than to produce for local consumption.

Both mills employ about 1,000 persons and their turn-over and value of production is about 8 million taka. <sup>1/</sup>

There is a big potential to build-up the sawn wood and wood based panel industry. In doing so, the machinery and equipment should be labour intensive and modern automatic plants like in European countries are not required. Because abundant manpower is available these should be small scale industries.

Secondary wood processing industries (furniture, joinery, etc...):

Bangladesh is an under developed country and we cannot fulfill the basic needs of the people. So providing shelter for the people is the main priority for the wood processing industry. In this respect joinery has a role to play and furniture will come at a second stage.

Only one modern furniture industry exists. It is situated in Chittagong and is mainly supplying all types of furnitures for the entire country. There is no modern joinery industry, and no proper product designer, as well as no trained people or technicians.

Although we have forests as well as manpower resources we lack technical personnel.

Labour:

We have sufficient skilled and unskilled manpower, but the problem is due to the economical conditions many skilled persons are leaving for the Middle Eastern countries, because of the very good salary offered there. Although vocational training institutes exist at the district

---

<sup>1/</sup> US\$ 1 = 15.35 Taka.

level, they suffer from a lack of discipline and good instructors.

Higher technical education and training of managers is required in foreign developed countries.

Local manufacture and/or import of woodworking machines:

There is no local woodworking machinery manufacturer; everything is imported from foreign countries.





