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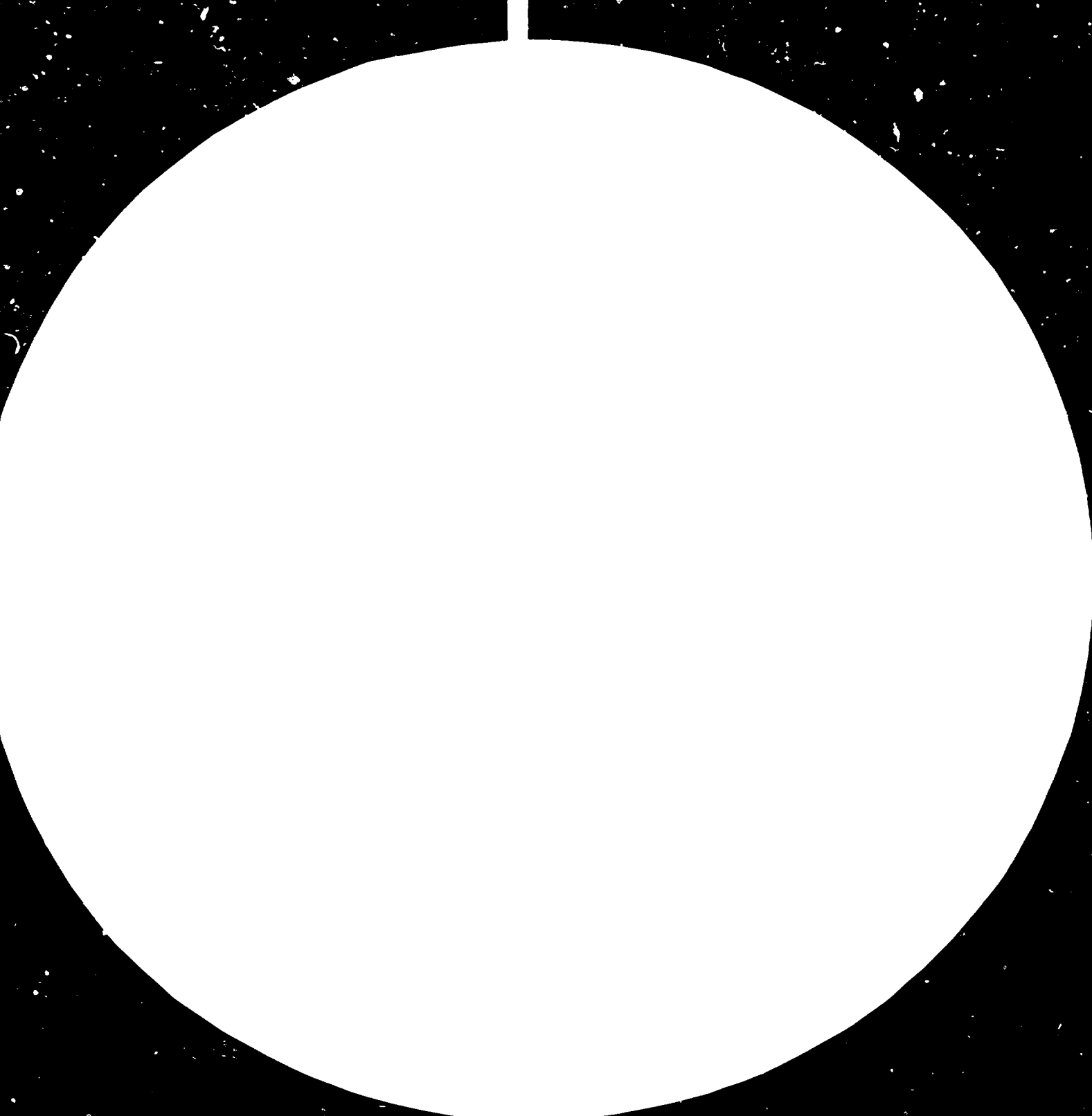
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Resolution Test Chart

Resolution Test Chart



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INDUSTRIAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL INFORMATION BANK

Activities undertaken in 1979 and prospects
for the future

Report by the Executive Director

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Summary

This report describes the activities undertaken by the Industrial and Technological Information Bank (INTIB) since the last session of the Board. No resources were available specifically for INTIB in 1979; to the extent possible, however, the operation was pursued as a complement to existing information and advisory services. The recommendations of the Board at its last session called for a qualitative and quantitative improvement of INTIB activities and also its extension to 20 industrial sectors. This would be possible only if adequate staff and financial resources were provided - and the resources so far made available to INTIB fall far short of those required. Suggested points for decision by the Board are contained in paragraph 12.

Background

1. At its thirteenth session, the Industrial Development Board considered a Report by the Executive Director on the Industrial and Technological Information Bank (INTIB).^{1/} It also had available to it the report of an expert group meeting on "The analysis of the experience gained from the pilot activities of the Industrial and Technological Information Bank (INTIB)"^{2/} held 5-9 February 1979. The Board took note with appreciation of the reports and having considered the positive experience gained from the pilot activities of INTIB recommended that:

- (a) INTIB be continued as an ongoing activity of UNIDO;
- (b) INTIB's work be undertaken in accordance with the suggestions of the Expert Group as contained in paragraphs 14 to 21 of that Group's report (ID/WG.294/3/Rev.2). and in the report of the Executive Director (ID/B/226, paras.35-36);
- (c) INTIB's activities include the sectors and topics covered by the UNIDO System of Consultations as well as the sectors chosen at the International Forum on Appropriate Industrial Technology;
- (d) Appropriate staff and financial resources be assured.^{3/}

2. The Board requested the Executive Director to take into account the views and suggestions expressed in its discussions on INTIB and to submit a report on further activities undertaken and progress achieved by INTIB to its fourteenth session.^{4/}

I. FURTHER ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS OF INTIB

3. Since the pilot operation concluded in December 1978 and the Board could consider its results only in May 1979, no resources were available specifically for INTIB in the year 1979. To the extent possible, however, the operation was pursued according to its original terms of reference, as a complement to existing information and advisory services. Action relating to the four sectors chosen for the pilot operation - namely, iron and steel, fertilizers, agricultural machinery and agro-industries - was continued in terms of collecting, ordering, processing and providing information of relevance to the technology selection process, while developing linkages with sources and users of such information in developing countries.

4. Efforts were also undertaken to integrate the work of INTIB with the ongoing activities of UNIDO and to direct it in accordance with the further orientation that had emerged from the discussions in the Board as well as from the suggestions contained in the reports of the Expert Group and the Executive Director. Thus, attention was given to a reformulation of UNIDO's industrial and technological information programme, taking into account the common features of INTIB and the "traditional" industrial information activities related to acquiring access to information sources, management of information material, provision of services, promotion of linkages, networking with other systems, and preparation of publications. As an aid to the technology selection process, a joint programme with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) was developed on the preparation of technical memoranda for six sectors. In this respect also, a series of new technological profiles are being commissioned. Inquiries concerning technology

^{1/} ID/B/226.

^{2/} ID/WG.294/3/Rev.2.

^{3/} A/34/16, para.153.

^{4/} Ibid., para.154.

selection continued to be handled through the Industrial Inquiry Service, while efforts to mobilize in-house information were pursued through the Industrial Development Abstracts, which are maintained as a computerized data base as well as a series of sales publications. The Abstracts relate only to UNIDO documentation, but the documentation collected elsewhere in UNIDO, not only by the Technology Group but also by other Sections such as Sectoral Studies and Negotiations, is to be fed into a new INTIB documentation base which is under development. A feature of this base will be the utilization of indexing and abstracting activities for subject and country filing for industrial and technological information purposes.

5. Further networking efforts were made to access relevant data banks and to intensify ongoing activities related to the network of correspondents, the roster of consultants and the guides to sources of information. Linkages were developed with other information systems, including those developed within the United Nations as monitored by the Interorganizational Board for Information Systems. The UNIDO Secretariat also participated in the ongoing work of the United Nations system on a network of technological information. INTIB publications as well as a note on the activities of INTIB were made available to the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD)^{5/} (which also envisaged a technological information system based on networking similar to that of INTIB). Under an agreement with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the Austrian Patent Office, the capacity of UNIDO's information services has been considerably strengthened through the addition of patent searches to complement information obtained from other sources.

6. In an endeavour to intensify links with users, efforts were made to enlist the co-operation of institutions in developing countries in becoming regional or national focal points for relaying services provided by INTIB. Work was initiated on the drawing up of a "Directory of industrial information systems and services in developing countries" with which INTIB is to enter into networking arrangements. A programme of visits to such institutions, to promote co-operation between them and INTIB, and possibly to develop technical assistance programmes, is scheduled for the first half of 1980.

7. Work on the Technological Information Exchange System (TIES) was continued, resulting, inter alia, in a complete revision of the TIES coding manual of the computerized programme. Several registry offices participating in TIES are being visited by a staff member to facilitate the supply of information by these registries in accordance with the requirements of the system.

II. PROSPECTS FOR INTIB

8. The limited work referred to above was carried out without specific staff or financial resources. For the biennium 1980 - 1981 (a) four Professional and six General Service staff and (b) consultant and contractual services amounting to \$200,000 per year were proposed for INTIB.^{6/} These resources were indicated as the minimum required to carry out the functions outlined by the Expert Group. Yet, only two Professional posts, three General Services posts and \$75,000 for experts' services have been made available for INTIB for the biennium.^{7/} These resources are intended to cover not only the preparation of profiles and the collection of information on indigenous technologies from developing countries, but also part of the costs

^{5/} Report: A/CONF.81/16.

^{6/} ID/B/226, para.40.

^{7/} General Assembly resolution 34/233.

of specific information acquired from national technical information centres, governmental and non-governmental technical R + D institutes and professional associations and, in connection with the upgrading of coding manuals, the analysis of data and translation of materials for the information exchange system of technology contracts. Action is under way to recruit the staff now sanctioned.

9. It is clear that the work of INTIB has been virtually at a standstill and that the resources made available for its operation are inadequate even for carrying out the tasks assigned to it in the four sectors on which work was initiated in the pilot operation stage. The Board has recommended not only the further orientation of the work of INTIB, which would call for a qualitative and quantitative improvement of its activities, but also an extension of its coverage to include the sectors and topics covered by the System of Consultations as well as the sectors examined by the International Forum on Appropriate Industrial Technology. As a result, some 20 sectors will have to be covered by INTIB, as listed in the Annex to this report. Such an expansion will only be possible, however, if adequate staff and financial resources are provided.

10. The operation of INTIB in the future has to be considered in the context of the multiplicity of related initiatives, in particular those of the United Nations system, and bearing in mind the UNCSTD recommendations relating to the establishment of a global and international network for the exchange of scientific and technological information, a network that was previously envisaged in General Assembly resolutions 31/183 of 21 December 1976 and 32/178 of 19 December 1977 which foresaw that INTIB should be one of its components. Given adequate resources, INTIB, as it develops, could respond fully to the recommendations of UNCSTD insofar as industrial technology is concerned.^{8/}

11. Information systems - if they are to meet current-day requirements, particularly for processed information - require considerable financial inputs, as witness the various information activities now being developed. Rapid developments are taking place in the fields of information and informatics and the international community is laying ever-greater emphasis on communications, on the development of information technology implying the use of data banks and telecommunications, and on the volume, speed and form in which industrial and technological information is wanted or required in the developing countries. During the deliberations of the Third General Conference of UNIDO, a call was also made to expand INTIB activities to include training and technical assistance programmes and also the collection and dissemination of information on alternative energy technologies of immediate relevance to developing countries.^{9/} The resources made available to INTIB are thus seen to fall very far short of those that would be required if it were to seek to fulfil all that is expected of it. The lack of adequate staff and financial resources is a critical constraint in realizing the full potential of INTIB for the benefit of the developing countries.

^{8/} Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development, paras.70-75, 96 (A/CONF.81/16, chap.VII).

^{9/} See page 10 of ID/CONF.4/21, Report of Committee II, and also page 16 of ID/CONF.4/CRP.16/Add.1.

III. ACTION REQUIRED OF THE BOARD

12. Under the circumstances the Board may wish to:
- (a) Recommend to the General Assembly that it grant the resources originally sought as the minimum necessary (viz., four Professional and six General Service staff as well as consultant and contractual services amounting to \$200,000 per year); and/or
 - (b) Recommend to Governments of countries participating in the activities of UNIDO that they make voluntary contributions to UNIDF for the strengthening of INTIB; and/or
 - (c) Recommend to the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development that it allocate resources from the Interim Fund for Science and Technology for Development, and from the United Nations Financing System for Science and Technology for Development to be eventually established, for a specific project aimed at strengthening INTIB.

ANNEX

Industrial sectors to be covered by INTIB

	Related to or recommended by			
	INTIB pilot operation	System of Consultations	International Forum on Appropriate Industrial Technology	Industrial Development Board
Iron and steel	X	X		X
Fertilizers	X	X		X
Agricultural machinery and implements	X	X	X	X
Agro-industries	X	X	X	X
Non-conventional sources of energy		X	X	X
Petrochemicals		X		X
Vegetable oils and fats		X	X	X
Leather and leather industry		X		X
Pharmaceuticals		X	X	X
Capital goods		X		X
Food processing		X	X	X
Low-cost transport for rural areas			X	X
Paper products and small pulp mills			X	X
Energy for rural requirements			X	X
Textiles			X	X
Food storage			X	X
Sugar			X	X
Light industries and rural workshops			X	X
Construction and building materials			X	X
Electronics				X

