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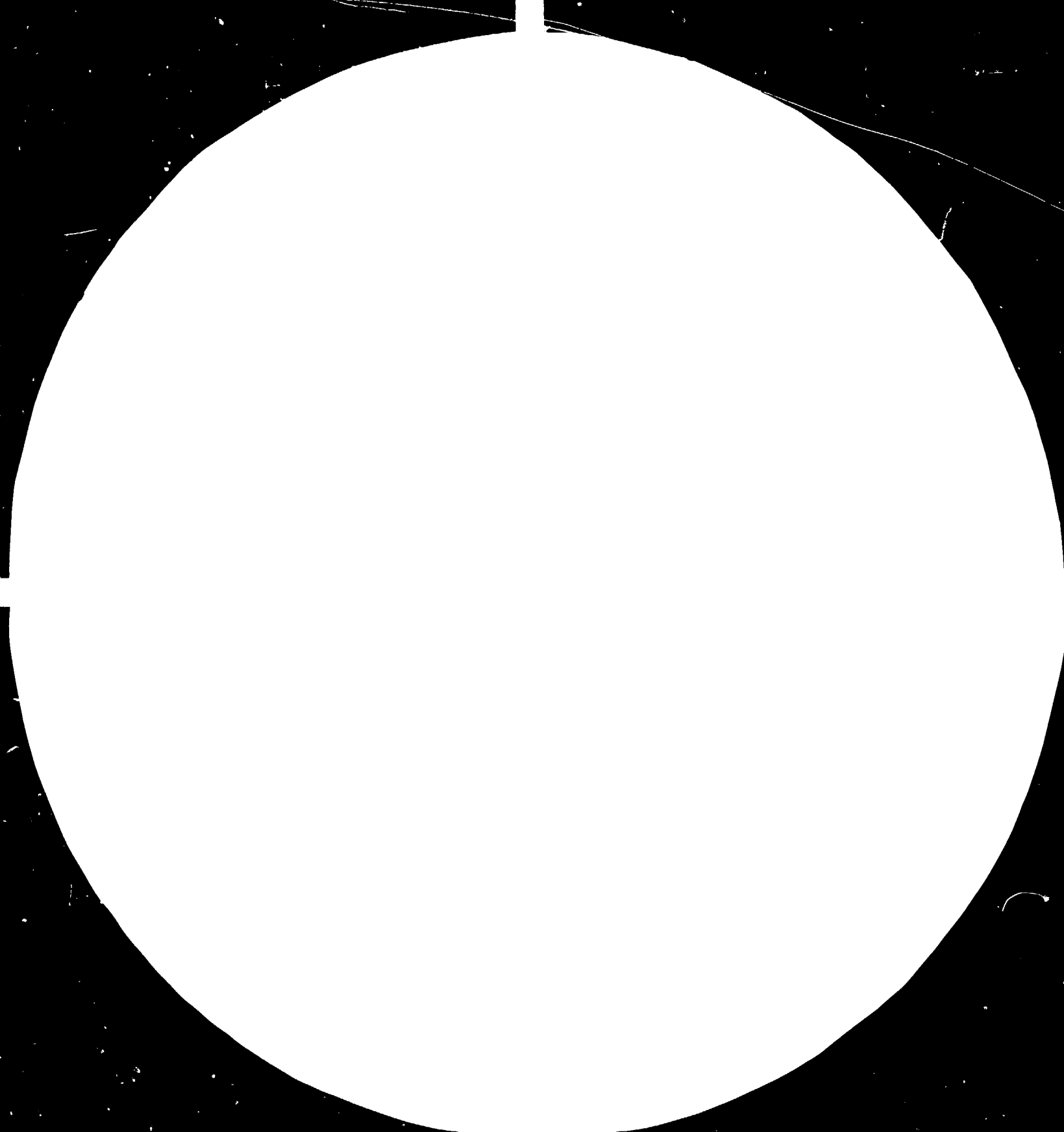
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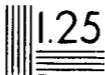
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UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CENTRE, OSHOGBO

NIGERIA

UNIDO project DP/NIR/73/014

Terminal report

by

Christer Swaelas

woodwork expert

December 1984

This Terminal report has been prepared to serve as a complementary document to the Terminal report by the Project Manager and will therefore not inform or penetrate the historical background of the project, neither any statistics nor the economical aspects. It will only studies the activities of the woodwork section of the UNIDO project DP/NIR/73/014 during the period october 1983 to october 1984.

JOB DESCRIPTION

The expert will assist the Project Manager in the direction and operation of the project, and assume, at the direction of the Project Manager responsibility for certain aspects of the project, whilst working in co-operation with other team members. Specifically, the expert will be expected to:

1. Guide, supervise and train counterpart personnel, entrepreneurs and their workers in his field of activity.
  
2. Assist and advise new and existing small woodworking and furniture factories on their operation and management including the choice of materials and machinery.
  
3. Propose better production methods and help to improve design and quality of products.
  
4. Plan and set up in co-operation with team members, courses, seminars and practical demonstrations for counterpart personnel, entrepreneurs and their workers, covering the design and manufacture of wood products, and the organization and management of small woodworking and furniture factories.

COMMENT

The job description correspond fairly with the tasks which were involved in the duties. However, it could have been pointed out that the difference was more distinct between the upgrading in skillness of the counterpart industrialists, than the advanced training of the counterpart staff at IDC ( Industrial Development Centre, Oshogbo). The co-operation with the IDC-counterpart had to be planned in such a way so the counterpart did not only participated in the planning or the preparatory work, but also in the actual seminar without the feeling of being left behind or "runned over" by the expert.

Besides, it has to be mentioned that the standard-work level- of the industrialists had to be looked into with carefulness. Thus in order to avoid the risk of to conduct seminars without value for the participants-industrialists, owing to the fact that the seminars might "pass above their heads".

The writer feel dubious that this consideration previously was taken into account.

#### ACHIEVEMENTS

The situation in the project at the time of my arrival, forced us towards a programme which had to be set up around "external services". This was not looked upon as a drawback. On the contrary, it shown to be a very fruitful way of working, both for the writer and counterpart. We got almost all the basic information needed for the set up of training programmes.

Unfortunately, the writer and IDC-counterpart did'nt get the opportunity to set up programmes, at the institution, the way we wanted. To this, it was a must to be in the possession of well equipped workshops. But, the ministry of commerce and industry did not fulfill their obligations, namely to equip the IDC-workshops in Oshogbo with machine tools and necessary equipment.

Anyhow, practical instructions were incorporated in the training programme whenever there was a possibility, depending on the availability of access to other workshops equipped with machine tools, or if the subject allowed the use of power tools only. The practical parts of the seminars was very important and eagerly awaited by the industrialists. The thought to develop IDC as a resource centre of technical "know-how" utilized by the industrialists, has already shown to be succesful, if we measure the importance in the amount of "invitations to in-plant training" received by IDC from different industrialists after every seminar which included practical elements. The practical elements incorporated in the seminars were determined by the experience the writer and his IDC-counterpart gained during travels and visits to different industrialists.

It might be of interest to mention that the in-plant training occasions, technical discussions and practical demonstration during our visits to different industrialists, as well as seminars of course, very often led to an introduction of new techniques which later were implemented in their workshops respectively.

Another form of industrial development training is the "on-the-spot contribution to solve problems" for some separate industrialists, performed in the follow-up visits in connection with the external service. It is a very time-consuming way of training and had to be diminished by the writer and his IDC-counterpart. Because, it's of little advantage and is comparatively an expensive way of training. Besides, it's always a risk that IDC, in the future, will be looked upon as a service possibility only.



## FINDINGS

To list the amount of seminars or in-plant training occasions does not seem to be of much value. It might be of advantage to the statistics of comparison rather than to underline the importance of technical assistance to an industry with enormous need for development.

Practical people, industrialists, might not always "go for" the recommendations they get from theoreticians only. Which means, that a nice set up on paper, of systematically planned improvements of their industry, might not impress on the industrialists to such a great extent so they are prepared to agree and immediately change the "line of action"

It's the writers opinion that the expert has to work closely together with the industrialists, preferably on the shop-floor-level. This does not mean that the expert has to work in each and everyone's workshop for a certain period of time. But, it does mean that the expert has to work with the industrialists on their own terms, in order to be able to set up industrial training programmes in consideration of the great variations in skillness as well as receptiveness to new ideas.

It seems that it is hard too laymen to understand that small scale industrialists must be stimulated both practically and theoretically. Practically in order to make it possible for them to see, by their own eyes and feel by their own hands, the handling of new techniques, methods, ways and means so they can plan and arrange their work according to a system they find logical.

Their logical thinking however, should be based upon the information and training they have received at the IDC, during their participation in tests, seminars and try-outs.

This prerequisite well equipped workshops at the IDC in order to be able to:

- run practical demonstrations, with the main point to serve as an instrument for a remoulding and modernization of the small scale industry.
- manufacture of prototypes.
- produce furniture of the "break-sketch" principle in order to "turn" drawings into "reality".

- introduce new techniques, evolved at the IDC, especially to suit the wood industry, furniture/joinery, and the conditions in Nigeria. Most industrialists do not realize the difference in using seasoned or unseasoned wood.
- to work through a seminar, the practical machine elements, beforehand so to speak, in order to avoid misunderstandings between the expert and his IDC-counterpart.

AV-equipment plays an important role, because it facilitates to train the industrialists to interpret pictures the way we expect, or want them to. The writer found, during the seminars, that the industrialists had great difficulties to interpret drawings, sketches, pictures, figures etc. which is necessary in order to open or widen the possibilities for them to develop. The AV-equipment which was available in this project was very much used by the writer and his IDC-counterpart. This will also affect the ability for the industrialists to profit from the information-possibilities available from other sources than IDC.

The necessary travelling together with the IDC-counterpart Oshogbo, was, unfortunately, mostly limited to the Oshogbo-district due to that IDC's budget didn't allow overnight travels for their staff. This had a checking effect on our work, because the journeys to other districts in the region was necessary to be carried out jointly. This was not for to determine the work-level of the industrialists only, but also for the planning of the advanced training of IDC-staff. The internal training of IDC-staff was planned to take place at Oshogbo several times a year. This is a must in order to share views, discuss and handle questions concerning different approach to industrial development training.

## CONCLUSION

Our work was based upon the belief that the workshops at IDC would be equipped with machine tools.

The programme was therefore expressed and discussed at different occasions with industrialists about the possibilities for them to utilize IDC as a resource of technical "know-how" in the future. It was easy to notice a change of the opinion about IDC among the industrialists, during the relatively short period, one year, the writer had the opportunity to work with the development of the small scale industry sector, towards a position as a precursor for industrial development.

The demand for the introduction of "new" techniques and different "course of action" is enormous already at present, this information is based on the amount of invitations, from the industrialists and received by IDC, to organize and conduct in-plant training in their workshops. IDC will be as important and significant for the industrial development and its training as one makes it.

The industrialists did follow the development about the future co-operation between UNIDO-IDC with excitement, but contrary to their expectations, the project was closed down. The development within the small scale industries sector will, because of this, be heavily retarded. This is clear to everyone initiated, but is it clear that it also will affect the whole industry in the long run?

The whole industrial "ecology" will be put aside when the small scale industry is not there, or is so poorly developed so it won't support the basic industry.

IDC's role as a forum for industrial development will never be questioned, provided that the flexibility is there. IDC should not concentrate upon the furniture/joinery industries only, but about the whole wood industry. One possible field is for instance to assist the agriculture sector by studying ways and means for the manufacture of tools and equipment for the farming industry where wood is used as material.

The writer does not prior any other sector for the furniture/joinery but will only point out that there are other possibilities of activities to take under consideration, when the time comes.

As mentioned before, about laymens reluctance to try to understand the necessity of technical development. It might be "high time" to change the name from small scale industry to "fundamental industry" which it actually is. Because, it seems that small scale probably means "peanuts" to some laymen.

The same laymen are often holders of positions who has the right of decision.

This is very unfortunate for the small scale industry, because all the information and the experience the writer has got from the year in Nigeria speaks its own language, namely the urgent need of industrial development .

The planners and persons with the competence to pass a resolution must bear in mind that there is no "status quo" in the industrial process. It is simply, neither -or.....progressive or regressive.

RECOMMENDATION

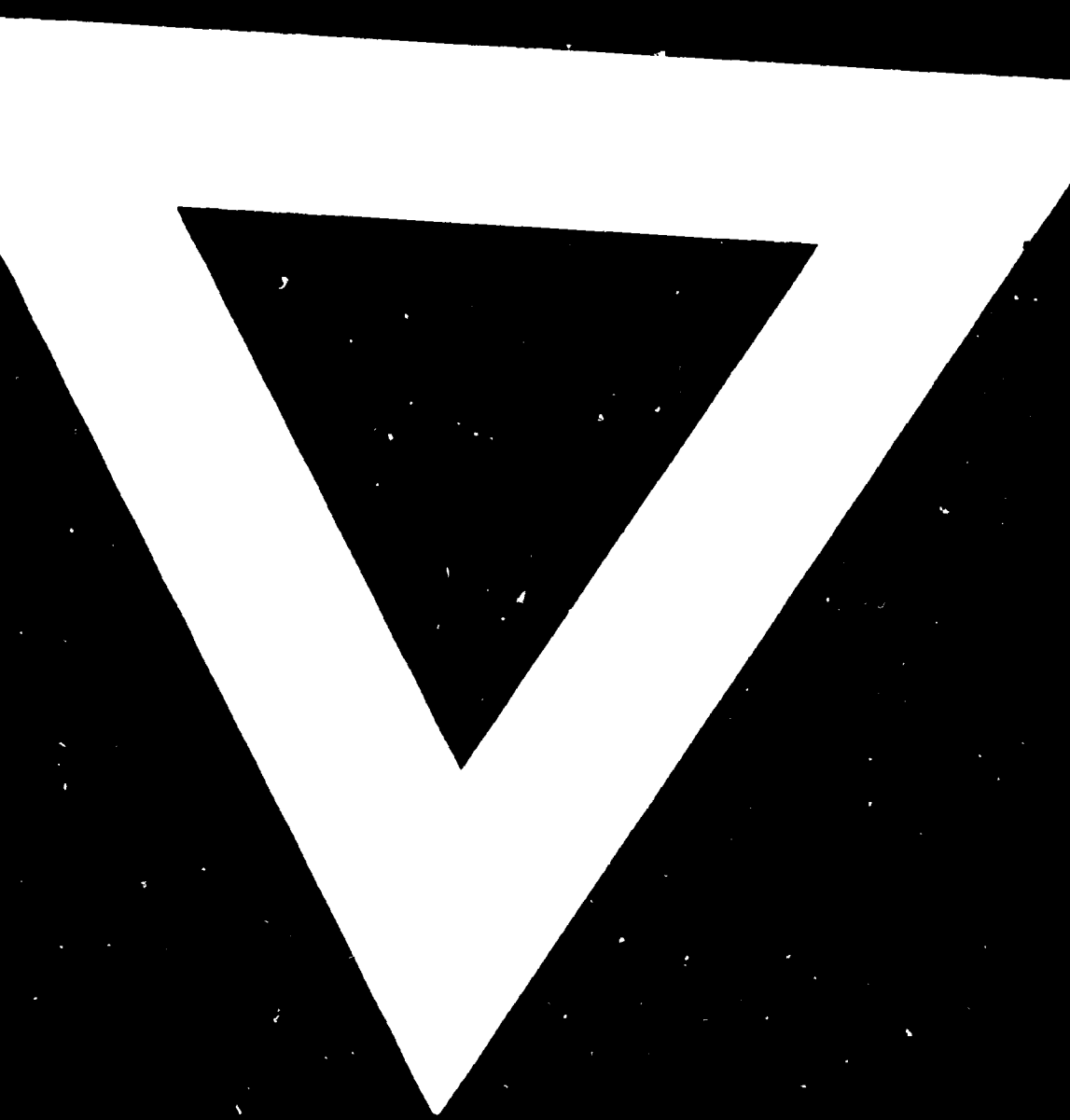
To reconsider the possibility of a renewal -or establish- a project similar to DP/NIR/73/014 in order to co-ordinate and build up an institution -IDC- for to make technical training possible within the industrial development scheme.

As far as the writer is concerned, there is hardly no vocational training going on in Nigeria today, there is no industrial school for apprentices training either. It is therefore necessary to establish industrial educational possibilities. Nigeria can not afford to be without any longer, and United Nations should seek a co-operation in this matter. Because, the industrial educational training is necessary in order to be prepared to meet the future demand for quality products. Besides, if the demand for training and the training itself is neglected today, it will then be expensive many times over tomorrow, in a way which not a soul can foresee.

The training in book-keeping, budget matters and feasibility studies and so on, is already well provided for by other institutions. It's the writers firm conviction that IDC should concentrate on the practical-technical part of the industrial education, but obviously aiming towards a co-operation with other institutions in order to get the best possible results.

IDC should also diminish the field of activities, learning from experience, to two or maby three sections only.

The writer is convinced that IDC will succeed with its undertakings, provided that the reorganization is carried out with the intention to meet the demands of tomorrow.



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