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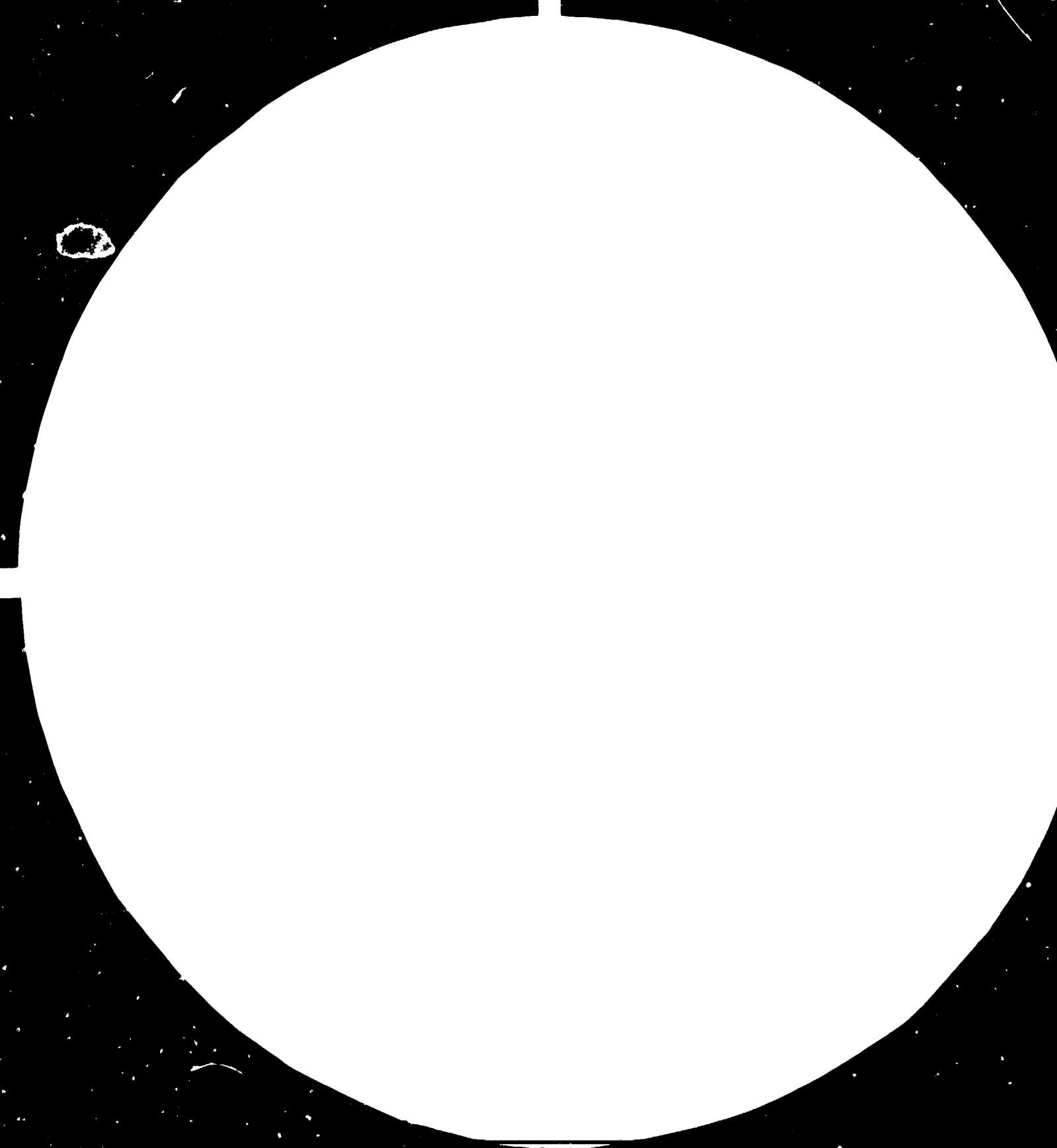
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EVALUATION REPORT ON UNIDO PROJECT NIR/75/012

Nigeria. MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

made by

PHILLIP FOOKS

during a

ONE MONTH MISSION TO THE PROJECT

FEBRUARY/MARCH 1984

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## INTRODUCTION

The comments in this report constitute an evaluation of the situation of UNIDO Project NIR/75/012 at Ile-Ife, Nigeria, as observed by Phillip Fooks, your consultant on mission from 7 February to 6 March 1984, this being directly compared with that observed during a previous mission in the month of May 1983 and in turn with the situation existing when he left the project at the end of 1981, having served then in the capacity of Project Manager.

Because of the extremely full programme which the current mission entailed it was not possible to have such wide contacts with University of Ife personnel as during the last mission. Nevertheless, there was full discussion with key concerned people and these comments are based upon these and upon personal observations. Thus, immediately following this Introduction is a section outlining the status of the project and this is followed by a set of specific recommendations for action.

## STATUS OF THE PROJECT

### OVERALL ASSESSMENT

At the time of the last mission (May 1983) a very broad assessment of 20% effectiveness was made, this comparing favourably with that obtained at the time of leaving (end of 1981) and very strong recommendations regarding appointments and recruitment were made. Some action on these has been taken but more needs to be done. Meanwhile, continued significant progress is being made and the situation of the Centre for Industrial Research and Development (CIRD) is undoubtedly steadily improving.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING DIRECTOR AND EXPANSION OF THE PROGRAMME

A key change since the time of the last mission (May 1983) is that a full-time acting director has been appointed to CIRD. The lack of a full time officer to head up the operation was regarded then as a major constraint to progress. Following this appointment, the rate of progress has accelerated and the programme of seminars already in progress (indeed the last mission was to enable your consultant to participate in that programme) and has been expanded and extended, this in turn is generating more and more interest in the services that CIRD can provide. So the project can be said to be 'on course' and developing in the right direction. There has been a progressively expanding seminar programme for well over a year now and the success of the current mission (three one-week seminars for small scale industrialists with a total of 67 participants in three locations referred to in a separate report) is strongly indicative of the rapidly emerging reputation of CIRD. However, it is essential to maintain both field follow-up and an on-going programme. Without promised follow-up, serious adverse and harmful criticism of both CIRD and the University of Ife would be inevitable. Industrialists need help, they now want help and they have been promised visits to provide such help. If the promises are not fulfilled within an acceptable period of time, then disappointment and disillusionment will follow and the reputation of CIRD and the University of Ife must suffer accordingly.

## NEED FOR MORE TRAINED NIGERIAN STAFF AND CONSTRAINTS TO SUCH APPOINTMENTS

The need therefore is for more Nigerian staff. Indeed lack of such staff has been the major constraint to progress of the project from the outset and the problem still remains. However, we understand that approval has been given for the appointment of two more management consultant grade staff and one more Industrial Officer for Extension work: also a Research Co-ordinator has been selected but the research side of the Unit is not yet operational. Clearly there is an urgent need to action these appointments and make them operational as a matter of top priority. Also, we understand that there are valuable resources within the University, in Business Administration and Technology in particular, that it should be possible to draw upon and therefore it is submitted that the time has now come when this should be done.

In making these comments, we are aware that the University of Ife, like other Universities in the country, has major financial problems and we do not seek either to minimise or to disregard these. However, it is submitted that CIRD is not just another academic department of the University: it is part of the UNDP country programme of Nigeria. The objectives of the project, together with agreed inputs by both UNDP and the Government of Nigeria required to achieve these objectives, were clearly set out in the Project Document. The University of Ife was nominated as the Government executing agency, being thereby charged by the Government with responsibility for carrying out the agreed programme and a Naira budget (i.e. as well as, and quite separate from, the dollar budget for the UNDP side) was built into this document. The document, and all subsequent revisions or up-datings have been signed by: the Government, UNDP and UNIDO (as the executing agency for the UNDP side to the programme). We therefore feel we should raise again the question raised on many previous occasions, namely; is it not possible for the University to secure a small budget from the Government separate from the main University budget to enable the commitments made by the Government, upon which the progress and success of the Project so vitally depends, to be fulfilled properly. As compared with the requirements of the University, the needs of



CIRD must be very small, indeed almost minute, and there is the added factor that the work of CIRD is potentially capable of being fee earning. Indeed, already, charges are being made for seminars and it is submitted that, if sound and proper field follow-up is made and maintained, the time is not far away when fees for management consultancy in-plant development work may be charged. In other words, the University does not have to face continuing and ever expanding financial liability with CIRD. Indeed the sooner CIRD can be made fully effective, the sooner it can become self supporting and, by virtue of the much needed service it performs, enhance the reputation of the University in consequence. Full effectiveness is a direct function of staffing, indeed, if the agreed staffing levels of the Project Document and timing thereof had been adhered to, there can be little doubt that CIRD could have been, not only self supporting but, profitable by now. So we respectfully suggest that the possibility of securing additional and separate finance should be re-investigated, against the background of the increased rate of activity by CIRD, to see whether additional help might now be secured.

#### THE PRESENT ROLE OF UNIDO

A directly related problem is that of necessity, there is, at the present time, too great a dependence upon the inputs provided by UNIDO personnel. It has always been intended that the work of CIRD should be intensely practical, because clearly, this is what the small industrialist needs. However everything is inter-related ie:

- field work is generated partly from interest created at seminars;
- seminars depend for realistic case-histories on field work;
- true benefit to industrialists come from both seminar work (which stimulates interest and awareness) and field work, which gets down to the 'nuts and bolts' of practical problem-solving (and provides in turn fresh case history material).

Most of the case history material has been gathered by the UNIDO staff both in Nigeria and in other parts of the world but there is an urgent need to replace this by new case history material

gathered by Nigerian staff working on Nigerian small industry. During discussion at the University your consultant made the point that, much as he appreciated being given the opportunity to come and contribute in the on-going programme and much as he enjoys doing so, the aim of all concerned must be to create a situation where such contribution is not called for, for the simple reason that it is not needed, better material being available from your own staff. Such a situation would constitute success.

#### THE SEMINAR PROGRAMME FOR 1984

Because of these problems, we made the comment, during discussion, that the seminar programme for 1984 seems almost too ambitious. This was based on the belief that there are not enough trained Nigerian staff to maintain proper follow-up to the interest generated. As pointed out earlier, failure to do so must harm the reputation of both CIRD and the University. Once interest has been generated, then response must be given if harm is to be avoided - it is not possible just to defer action until the capacity is there to handle it; there is a time-scale element to be observed also. CIRD has generated the interest and that interest is real and increasing. It is submitted that it is essential that full and adequate provision be made to enable trained Nigerian staff to keep pace with what is confidently believed will be an expanding and accelerating requirement. We do appreciate that already interest is building up in the programme that has been published, that commitment has been made and that therefore it will be very difficult now to cut back on it. This therefore would seem to underline even more acutely, the need for acceleration and expansion of the recruitment programme. If, in parallel with this, some trimming of the programme (say, possibly the Management Consultancy Training scheduled for July and perhaps also in some of the short seminars planned) could be contemplated, then we believe it would be wise to try and do it, so as to ease the pressure until such time as additional staff can be made fully operational.

#### POSSIBLE FUTURE ROLE OF UNIDO

We understand that the officers of CIRD hope to secure some

additional UNIDO input in order to bridge over to the time when Nigerian staff can become fully operational. In view of the expansion of interest now apparent and the immediate training load that must come from the further appointments advocated, then such continuing input would seem to be wise. However, it is inevitable that the Government and UNDP must review any such request against the background of the adequacy of Nigerian inputs in the past, i.e. without proper inputs, the UNDP input is rendered partially ineffective. We understand that this item will be on the agenda of the next Tripartite Review Meeting scheduled for the 11 April. We submit therefore that it is extremely desirable that tangible evidence of progress on recruitment, be made available by the time of that meeting.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Against the background of the analysis of the situation made in the preceding section, the following specific recommendations are made for action by CIRD/University of Ife:

1. Make appointments as a matter of extreme urgency of:
  - two management consultant level officers;
  - one industrial officer for extension work;which we understand are now approved by the University authorities. Try if possible to have them in situ by the Tripartite Review Meeting (11 April) or at very least, fully confirmed by then, with agreed start dates.
2. Review the next recruitment requirements to meet the expanded follow-up work now arising and start processing approval for these with the University authorities (i.e. it is no use waiting until a desperate situation has built up, before taking further recruitment action; experience shows that the processing of such things takes a very long time and therefore it is submitted that it should be started now).
3. Make the Research section operational as a matter of urgency, so that what is believed will now prove to be an expanding requirement for:
  - economic research studies;
  - feasibility studies;
  - market and product research;can be responded to and fully exploited.
4. Prepare a list of all UNIFE personnel who, by their knowledge and experience would be deemed capable of making part-time contribution to CIRD and prepare a procedure for the utilisation of their services whilst, at the same time, conducting the necessary campaign to 'drum up' support of the University and concerned personnel, for such activity.
5. Re-examine again with the authorities of the University, the possibility of making a separate approach to the Government for

a separate budget in line with that included in the Project Document, specifically to enable the necessary, and previously specified, recruitment programme upon which the success of the whole project depends, now to go forward.

6. Review the training requirements of new personnel to be appointed together with that of personnel currently attached to CIRD, to determine what additional action may be taken to expedite the full and proper utilisation of these people in the on-going development programme taking particular account of the need to ensure steady involvement in field work, so that the necessary practical experience and corresponding case history material be built up.
7. Make up a programme of field follow-up visits to cover all of the 60 or so industrialists who have attended the three seminars just completed, integrating this into the overall programme in such a way that at least one such follow-up visit is carried out to each industrialist within six months at the very maximum and see that this is carried through. Presumably, existing extension staff could, with supervision, be used on this.
8. Re-examine the seminar programme for the current year so as to see whether there is any possible way in which this might be lightened (e.g. deferment of the Management Consultancy programme to next year being one possibility) so as to provide more time for proper completion of the follow-up programme called for under 7 above and the additional follow-up need that the on-going seminar programme generates.
9. Develop a programme for the progressive increase in involvement of present industrial officers in the seminar programmes. This might be done initially by involving them in the organisation and supervision of seminar exercises, under the guidance of the senior man conducting the particular session, encouraging their involvement in the discussion session that should follow: this will get them used to performing in front of seminar participants, thus building up their confidence and moving them progressively nearer to the time when they can themselves take over and conduct sessions alone.

### CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Previous reports and their recommendations were always directed towards securing action to enable CIRD to 'take off'. Now the situation has changed in that CIRD is already 'taking off' and the requirements are now those needed to enable it to operate effectively or, in other words, to 'avoid crashing'. It is submitted that this creates a very much greater sense of urgency. The return for doing the right things now are very much greater and very much more tangible than previously. On the other hand the consequences of failing to do what is necessary (i.e. letting down industrialists whose expectations have been sharpened) are also greatly increased. Whilst it is serious if a project fails to take off, it is much more serious if, having taken off successfully, it then crashes. A great deal of very genuine interest has been stimulated and people are really expecting that the promised follow-up will not only be forthcoming but that also it will yield practical and tangible help in a way that other things have failed to do. In short, industrialists are becoming more and more 'sold' on CIRD and the service offered and therefore it is essential that nothing is allowed to happen which might in any way be construed as 'let down'.

As said earlier on, CIRD is now 'on course'. The need for services of a type that are being offered can never have been greater but the emergence of genuine interest is also greater than ever before. CIRD is poised ready to go and it is submitted that no effort should now be spared to ensure that the things that will make it do so, are carried out.

PHILLIP FOOKS

March 1984

