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CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A PROGRAMME OF TECHNICAL
CO-OPERATION AMONG ARAB STATES*

Recommendations adopted at the Arab Regional Meeting on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries held in Geneva, 22 May 1980.

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RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE CO-ORDINATION OF THE TECHNICAL
CO-OPERATION QUESTIONS AMONG THE ARAB STATES

1. The Arab Regional Meeting on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, held in Geneva, from 21 to 23 May 1980, recommended the creation of special organs for technical co-operation in each Arab administration, linked with other organs concerned with development and planning, for the purpose of co-ordinating matters related to the application of technical co-operation. Within each organ, a unit should be specifically concerned with technical co-operation among developing countries.

SPECIAL RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE WAYS AND MEANS OF STRENGTHENING
TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG ARAB STATES

2. There is a need to co-ordinate developmental efforts concerned with the Arab countries which are carried out by international and Arab regional organizations and to promote and develop these efforts in order to prevent the duplication and dispersion of activities.

3. Emphasis should be placed on the qualitative and quantitative aspects prior to the ratification of technical assistance agreements. It is important that national organs be assigned to deal with the continuation and evaluation of the progress achieved in the implementation of these agreements and to propose national developmental priorities which should be the basis for bilateral and/or multilateral technical co-operation agreements.

4. Participants emphasized the need to:

(a) Co-ordinate among Arab national and regional projects and with other developing countries as well as with international organizations;

(b) Select technical co-operation projects and experts on the basis of economic and social development needs; this includes carrying out feasibility studies to guarantee the effectiveness of the projects;

(c) Observe the timely implementation of projects and whenever necessary, continue an activity beyond the first phase;

(d) Review and appraise periodically the impact of the development projects executed by the United Nations System in developing countries including the Arab States in order to benefit from these experiences in drawing up projects.

RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF INFORMATION
IN THE FIELD OF TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG ARAB STATES

5. Considering the importance of information on development in directing technical co-operation efforts among developing countries, the participants recommended the strengthening of technical co-operation among Arab states and with other countries through the establishment of development information networks and of co-ordination among them in order to familiarize themselves with common problems and to find means for exchanging know-how and experience with a view to formulate a new approach and alternatives for solving development problems.

RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE FIELD OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
FOR DEVELOPMENT

The participants recommended the following:

6. To call upon the Regional Bureau for Arab states in the United Nations Development Programme to prepare a standard methodology for analysis that can be followed by the Arab Governments to evaluate their reliance and dependence on foreign sources in the field of scientific and technological activities necessary for the implementation of sectoral development projects. The method should lead to the detection of difficulties facing these countries and indicate ways and means to relieve such dependence. This methodology should include solutions and practical measures that can be applied to remove the aforementioned obstacles and in accordance with national, regional and international priorities.
7. To urge Arab Governments to implement recommendations (referred to in the preceding paragraph) in accordance with national, regional and international priorities calling on the assistance of the United Nations Development Programme and the Interim Fund for Science and Technology for Development to assist in implementing the solutions and to take the appropriate steps for their integration in national, regional and interregional projects.

8. (a) To urge Arab Governments to contribute to the Interim Fund for Science and Technology for Development in order to consolidate its financing projects;

(b) To urge the above-mentioned Fund to follow up on the execution of these projects.

9. To request the Interim Fund for Science and Technology for Development to assist the Arab States in preparing and executing special programmes aimed at introducing, promoting and disseminating technology and scientifically related avocations in the educational syllabi of secondary schools as well as enhancing related clubs.

10. To call upon the Interim Fund for Science and Technology to assist the Arab States and the Arab organizations wishing to create units for the planning and development of science and technology and in their efforts to formulate legislation governing the transfer of technological processes.

11. To request the United Nations System to assist the Arab Governments in their co-operation, in both the private and public sectors, in the field of science and technology, and the exchange of relevant information as well as the creation of institutional units to be initially financed by the public sector for the achievement of these objectives.

RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO ENERGY

The participants emphasized the need:

12. To search for new sources of energy, particularly solar energy.

13. To halt the disorderly importation of solar energy projects and to prevent the industrialized states from using the Arab countries as an experimental market and an open field for new products and instruments.

14. To encourage local industries that produce components for the use of solar energy.

RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION IN THE
TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECTOR

The participants recommend to the Arab States:

15. To pursue the efforts aiming at developing national telecommunications networks, particularly in the rural zones and to create an integrated regional network.
16. To create a regional institution for technical training embracing all national centres and to arabize training.
17. To create and/or develop telecommunications industries.
18. To develop scientific research and applications in the electronical sector and create national and regional centres for applied research.
19. To ameliorate the social situation of technicians and promote technical training in this field.

RECOMMENDATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMISSIONS

The meeting recommends:

20. To support and intensify technical co-operation among Arab and African States in the framework of Arab and African co-operation by means of promoting close relationships between the appropriate organs of the Arab League and the African Unity Organization with a view to exchanging information regarding activities in the field of technical co-operation among Arab and African States as well as technical co-operation between this group of states and other developing countries.
21. That the Economic Commission for Western Asia undertake, together with the Economic Commission for Africa, studies about water, desertification and food security problems in the Arab region, to find solutions and exchange information and experience between the Arab States on one hand, and the African States on the other hand.
22. That the Regional Bureau for Arab States promote the efforts of Arab States to safeguard and protect their cultural heritage and assist Arab States to explore and preserve historical heritage.

23. That the Regional Economic Commission participate in determining regional projects' priorities and that UNDP should consider allocating a certain percentage of regional IPF for such projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG ARAB STATES IN THE
FIELDS OF EDUCATION AND TECHNICAL TRAINING

24. Considering that the development of human resources, through education, training and other basic services, is a decisive factor in social and economic development in the Arab region;

Considering that Arab States in general, and the least developed as well as poorest in resources of these Arab States in particular, suffer (despite all the great efforts exerted) from qualitative as well as quantitative gaps in their educational system and training institutions at all levels;

Considering that the Arab organizational system is in pressing need to achieve intensive development and at higher rates during the following two decades in order to reach the stage of economic take-off and progress;

Considering that economic co-operation and joint Arab work are necessary to provide suitable education and training for every Arab citizen. Participants have adopted the following:

(a) Arab States should carry out the recommendations and projects already agreed upon (and especially those adopted in the regional conferences for Arab Ministers of Education) in the fields of co-operation and joint effort for educational development;

(b) Arab States should intensify their joint efforts (financially and technically) during the following years in the fields of education and technical training in the light of specific needs in developing areas. This should be executed with the help of Arab and international organizations as well as the appropriate regional organizations and with the help of the UNDP. These efforts should be organized and co-ordinated in the form of well prepared plans within the framework of an overall plan for joint efforts by Arab countries, in order to achieve integrated social and economic development in the Arab region;

(c) The Regional Bureau of the Arab States in UNDP should help in collaborating with the concerned Arab and international organs - and in agreement with the Arab States - for the preparation of this overall plan;

(d) The Arab Organization for Education, Culture and Science should prepare a plan for joint Arab co-operation in the fields of education and training, in collaboration with the UNESCO and its regional organs;

(e) The UNDP and other international as well as Arab organizations concerned should devote special attention to preparing and training national cadres for the next period, when planning and carrying out technical co-operation projects.

25. Considering that adult illiteracy remains a fundamental problem in many Arab States, and is a grave and negative factor in the development process;

Considering that adults share with children the basic right to education, training and developing their technical and cultural capacity;

Considering that Arab States are in need of mutual help in their collective efforts to eradicate functional illiteracy, in the shortest possible time and the widest range, the participants recommend the following to the Arab States:

(a) To give particular attention to policies and educational planning to eradicate functional adult illiteracy and provide training for them, according to the degree of urgency of this problem;

(b) To study some leading experiences in eradicating illiteracy, carried out recently in some Arab States in general, and derive benefit from the Iraqi experience in particular;

(c) To strengthen the efforts exerted by the Arab organization as well as by the UNESCO, in order to eradicate adult illiteracy in the Arab region, and to set up a plan for joint work and co-operation aiming at the eradication of illiteracy, and adult education, especially in the Arab States that suffer from this problem;

(d) The participants also recommend that the UNDP devote special attention to deal with this problem in its plans.

26. Considering that the movement of manpower between the Arab countries is an important phenomenon of social and economic development in these countries and since this phenomenon concerns both the providing States and recipient States; and considering that the size of this movement is growing and expanding; and since the professional and cultural development of this manpower means further economic and social development.

The participants recommend joint efforts be undertaken and co-operation among Arab countries be directed to provide this manpower with necessary training and skills to raise its capability.

They also recommend that the UNDP as well as the Arab and international organizations concerned devote more attention to this problem.

27. Considering that the Arab States as a whole suffer from an obvious shortage of scientific, technical and administrative qualified manpower which they need to ensure their self-sufficiency and development independence; and

Considering that technical co-operation and joint Arab efforts constitute a decisive factor in providing such manpower quantitatively and qualitatively, and to accelerate the development process and the execution of the ambitious projects, participants underline the need for Arab States to undertake, individually or collectively, through the related Arab and international organizations, studies on this subject; to organize regional meetings and conferences, to study the high and secondary academic educational development in the region; and to draw up a plan for joint Arab action and co-operation in this field.

28. Considering that the Arabic language is the tool used in education, expression, communication, thinking and innovation in the Arab region, and that arabization and translation into Arabic constitute the most important cultural problems facing the Arab countries.

Participants recommend that the Arab educational establishments be aided to reinforce the Arabic language position in basic and higher education, postgraduate studies, and in scientific research. This will help in facilitating the exchange of culture and technical skills among the Arab States at all scientific levels, and in achieving effective co-operation in the economic, social and other fields.

The participants also recommend that the UNDP devote in its projects in the region a particular attention to this basic side in the cultural and educational development.

29. Considering the urgent need for Arab States to pursue the development of their educational systems, both formal and non-formal aspects, and to innovate such systems so as to make them more adequate to Arab life and to development requirements;

Considering the important role which could be played by the regional network, the initiative which has been taken by UNESCO, to innovate education for development purposes in the Arab States equally with other regional networks in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Southeast Europe;

Considering the fact that this network is an expression of technical co-operation in new fields among Arab States in addition to its being a technical co-operation instrument between third world countries in the field of educational innovation;

The participants recommend that the United Nations Development Programme and the Arab Funds strengthen this project and provide all possible assistance during its setting-up and take-off stages.

30. Considering the importance of the Palestinian University Project to safeguard and develop the Palestinian cultural identity and increase the training and educational opportunities to the Palestinian people;

Considering the benefits and inputs of such project on the regional level, not to mention its leading and innovative qualities in the fields of education and training in the Arab territory;

The participants recommend that this project should get special support in the field of technical co-operation and joint Arab work so as to execute it adequately and as rapidly as possible;

Call upon the concerned international organizations and the United Nations Development Programme to increase their efforts in this field.