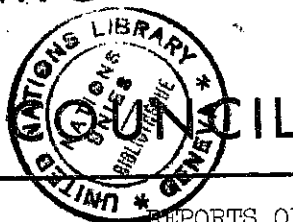


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22 December 1969

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REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

SOME ASPECTS OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES OF THE
UNITED NATIONS (E/4764)

Note by the Secretary-General

Attached is the text of a note addressed by the Secretary-General to the
Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

SOME ASPECTS OF THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES
OF THE UNITED NATIONS (JIU/REP/69/5) 1/

Note dated 30 September 1969 from the Secretary-General to the
Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The following comments on the above-mentioned report have been prepared by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and by the Secretary-General. The Administrator was asked to respond to those points made by the Inspectors bearing on UNDP's over-all activities, while the Secretary-General's response has been prepared on those aspects which he feels fall within the proper competence of each participating agency.

Comments of the Administrator, UNDP

2. "The Administrator has noted with appreciation the recognition given in the report to the efforts made by UNDP and the agencies towards overcoming the difficulties and delays reported. As the JIU knows, such difficulties and delays have been the constant concern of the Governing Council, of UNDP and the agencies, and the subject of periodic discussions at, and reports to, the Governing Council. In this respect, he wishes to refer to the report of the eighth session of the Governing Council to the forty-seventh session of the Economic and Social Council (E/4706) and especially to the statements made under chapter IV, General debate."

3. "The Administrator feels that rather than that he should comment point by point on the report, which might lead to some duplication with the above-mentioned statements, the JIU will prefer to be informed of his views on certain selected problems which are currently the subject of his special attention. (Should this, however, not be the case, he would be glad in the future to defer to its wishes.)"

4. "In regard to the slowness of processing Special Fund project requests to the point of commencement of execution, and the handling of urgent project requests, experience has shown (recognizing, of course, the need to improve and accelerate procedures at all stages) that in many cases the 'original sin' had

1/ Now issued as E/4764.

been an inadequate preparation of a request, in so far as the document itself may have sounded reasonably convincing and the requesting Government had given it a high priority, but an insufficient effort had been made by Government, agency and UNDP alike to ascertain whether the concept itself was sound, whether the means and the timing proposed for execution were realistic, and what expectancy there was that after UNDP support had ceased the Government would be able to continue, expand and exploit the activities initiated with UNDP support. This 'original sin' has been, in many cases, the underlying cause of difficulties throughout planning as well as execution. Therefore, while agreeing with the need for every possible simplification, and possibly for telescoping of procedures, the Administrator must keep considering as an overriding parameter the careful preparation of realistic project requests. Instructions have been issued to the agencies to the effect that specific planning elements be built-in in requests, but again this cannot be a substitute for initial conceptual correctness."

5. "Indeed this is one of the purposes of the facilities granted by the Council to the Administrator under the Revolving Fund arrangement. It is further the purpose of an increasing number of 'mini-projects', not merely to refine the conditions of preparation of a given request, but to look at the very root of the problem and to ascertain whether the difficulties threatening the proposed project are not, for some time to come, insuperable."

6. "In respect of a standard manual for project requests, the Administrator, while recognizing the usefulness of such a document, must wonder whether one of its purposes should be to assist a Government in determining to which agency their request for assistance should be directed, when the proposed project would seem to fall under the SF component of UNDP. In many cases, the choice will be obvious, but when it is not, in other words when the field of activity concerned is one in which more than one agency may be competent, the Administrator would much prefer the request to be addressed to himself, leaving it to the conclusion of his consultations to decide to which agency the matter should be referred."

7. "As to the problem of counterpart, the UNDP has taken an increasingly flexible attitude in the interpretation of article IV of the Basic Agreement between Governments and UNDP, especially as concerns equipment and supplies, and the provision of services by subcontractors established in the country (not

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to mention assistance in the construction of housing and buildings). As to article V, flexibility has been introduced in the schedule of local costs payments. As concerns counterpart staff, however, the Administrator must insist on active participation of the Government as essential under the partnership aspect of UNDP assistance (please see in this respect Project Guideline No. 1, document SF/PGL/1, under II, Guiding principles). An important step towards ensuring that a project will have adequate support in counterpart staff was the instructions given by UNDP to the agencies as early as June 1965 for the building-in of training components in projects where the request contained no such provision. However, the Administrator would like to stress again that the chances of any project to outlast successfully the period of UNDP assistance being an overriding consideration under the criteria set by the General Assembly, his appraisal of a project request must give due weight to the prospects of adequate, successful and timely training."

8. "The Administrator fully agrees with the need for a closer association of Governments in project implementation and especially in the preparation of plans of operations. He must reserve his position, however, on the suggestion made in the report concerning plans of operations, or amendments thereto, that might be agreed upon between Government and agency without formal clearance by UNDP. Indeed, such plans and amendments commit the responsibility of the Administrator in regard to the disposition of funds earmarked by the Governing Council. As to such changes in plans of operations without financial aspects, the procedure of the adjustment advice has been found to be a reasonable simplification."

9. "In conclusion, as an illustration of the problem subject of paragraph 4 above, and at the same time commenting on the case history, cited in section I, paragraph 7, subparagraph (a) of the report, of the Sihanoukville Municipal Drinking Water Project in Cambodia, the Administrator wishes to submit the following facts:

"The Cambodian Government's request of December 1968, not officially endorsed until February 1969, was based on the assumption that a dam across the Tuk Sap River was the only feasible solution to the Sihanoukville water supply problem. The UNDP appraisal did not support this view. In the period between February and May, our usual round of consultations led to the conclusion that ground-water studies would have to be combined with other modified aspects of the

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project, leading to an over-all feasibility report. This involved a considerable change in the nature and budget of the proposed UNDP (Special Fund) project. On 6 May, the Resident Representative was asked to communicate the recommended reformulation to the Government. On 26 May 1969, he reported that 'the (Foreign) Minister fully accepted our (the UNDP) approach and was much relieved to have this question clarified for the benefit of the Chief of State...'. .

"The UNDP has authorized preliminary work on the first phase from September 1969 (only seven months after receipt of the official request), and expects to recommend the full Project to the Governing Council in January 1970."

Comments of the Secretary-General

10. On the question of requests for Special Fund assistance and the time required to process them, there is an ambiguity in the Inspectors' report which does not make it clear whether or not it dates the request from the time of its official presentation to UNDP. In cataloguing three stages in the history of a request, the first stage relates to 'the formulation of the initial request by a Government and its acceptance by UNDP'. It is not clear what 'acceptance' means in this context since, according to the report, the second stage culminates in 'approval by the Governing Council'. Now, the formulation of a request prior to its official submission by a Government to UNDP may quite justifiably take a long or a short time according to the circumstances of the case. Experience shows that requests which have had a long gestation period may be more easily executed as projects by reason of more careful preparation. On the other hand, interesting requests are often made to UNDP in a very rudimentary state, and require further study and reformulation, usually with UNDP and agency assistance, before they are suitable for approval. Thus, when the Inspectors refer to a total interval of eighteen months between 'the date of a project request and the commencement of its execution', it is not at all clear what 'the date of a project request' is, and in some cases eighteen months may be too short a time. However, the time required to put a request through all the processes leading through appraisal to approval has sometimes been excessive, and it may have tended to increase as the programme has grown.

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11. The preparation of a single manual relating to procedures for preparing Special Fund requests would be advantageous. This might be supplemented as necessary by additional agency manuals relating to their own fields of competence.

12. The question of additional powers for the Administrator to act on urgent requests in advance of Governing Council meetings is a matter for the Governing Council. The Secretary-General believes that there are occasional situations which would merit the grant of such authority.

13. The United Nations has consistently been in favour of a move towards a more simple type of plan of operations, with the substantive work programme being prepared as a separate document. It, therefore, agrees with the suggestion of the Inspectors on this point.

14. Although it is true that UNDP procedures require that negotiations with a Government for signature of the plan of operations should begin only after UNDP approval, as far as United Nations practice is concerned, it is common for informal negotiations to take place as soon as an adequate draft is prepared. Since the plan of operations is a three-way agreement, amendments by any of the parties must be acceptable to the other two before signature.

15. There is full agreement on the desirability of making use of the resources of the regional economic commissions in project preparations and programming. In the future it is intended to involve the commissions to an even greater extent in that direction.

16. It is recognized that adequate counterpart support is essential to the success of projects and that the training of counterparts during the life of a project is frequently one of its most important contributions. Conditions vary greatly from country to country in regard to availability of counterparts, and also projects vary in their need for them. In many cases it would be advantageous, and in some cases necessary, to pre-train counterparts before launching a project completely. United Nations experience certainly supports this view.

17. Wherever practicable, the United Nations prefers to appoint experts (and, in particular, Project Managers) for the duration of a project. There are many reasons why this is not practicable in a considerable proportion of appointments to Special Fund projects. However, considerable efforts are made to retain the services of tried and successful experts (and, again, especially of Project

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Managers) by using them in other suitable assignments when one is completed. From time to time there has been discussion with UNDP about the possibility of arrangements that would permit bridging the gap between one assignment and another in order to ensure retaining the services of Project Managers who had shown themselves to be outstanding. The United Nations is well aware of the practical difficulties in the way of such measures.

18. In its execution of Special Fund projects, the United Nations recognizes the key role played by the Project Managers, and delegates to them a considerable degree of authority. Ideally, the Project Manager should be recruited early enough to take a leading part in drafting the plan of operation. Recruitment problems and procedures are such that this is frequently not possible even though we make full use of the UNDP arrangement which permits advance recruitment. A larger lead time than the two months now available would be helpful in many cases. It is agreed that informal soundings with Governments before submitting possible candidatures for Project Manager are desirable, and, in fact, such informal soundings are frequent. No doubt there is room for an even wider use of this approach. It is also agreed that in some cases it would be desirable to extend the authority of Project Managers in financial and administrative matters, and the United Nations is ready to do this in specific cases. It is believed that there may be sufficient flexibility within existing regulations to go a long way to meet this need; however, it may also be worth while to consider whether or not further changes in the regulations would be desirable.

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REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

SOME ASPECTS OF THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Comments of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions

1. The report "Some aspects of the technical assistance activities of the United Nations" (E/4764), prepared by three members of the Joint Inspection Unit,^{1/} was received by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in accordance with the procedures recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies. The Committee has also received the comments on the report by the Secretary-General and by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, dated 30 September 1969 (E/4764/Add.1).
2. The Advisory Committee would like to add the following observations to the comments referred to above.
3. The fact - acknowledged by the Inspectors in paragraph 28 of their report - that the problems in the field of United Nations technical assistance and Special Fund projects are not new certainly does not diminish the value of the Inspectors' observations. It is of importance that these problems be clearly identified and analysed with a view to finding practical solutions. The Advisory Committee appreciates the efforts made by the Inspectors to that end.
4. Both the Secretary-General and the Administrator respond in their comments in broad terms to the major problem areas identified by the Inspectors. Like the observations of the Inspectors, the comments of the Secretary-General and the Administrator are valuable. Some of the major problem areas, particularly

^{1/} Mr. S. Ilić, Mr. C.S. Jha, Mr. A.F. Sokirkin.

the slowness in the processing of Special Fund project requests, the problem of counterpart, the selection of Project Managers, and the manner in which they approach their task, however, are of such vital importance for achieving maximum success of the assistance rendered, that, instead of relying on an exchange of observations, suggestions and comments, it might be more fruitful to arrange for a searching discussion of the problems between those responsible for the execution of the programmes, the Inspectors, and, as may be required in special cases, the representatives of recipient Governments. The Administrator of UNDP and the executive heads of the executing agencies are, because of their vast experience, in an exceptionally good position to trace the basic difficulties underlying the problems; the Inspectors, with their professional objectivity and independence, have the advantage of being able to take a fresh look at the problems in question; while the Governments at the receiving end of large programmes can explain the limitations of counterpart provisions, the changes in priorities which might lead to delays, and psychological factors which might affect the performance of Project Managers. In the view of the Advisory Committee, a full and detailed discussion in which the three parties mentioned above would participate may well lead to better solutions than a mere exchange of observations and comments.

5. While seeing merit in the suggestion of the Inspectors that, if possible, a time-limit be set for the total interval between the date of a project request and the commencement of the execution of an agreed project, the Advisory Committee agrees with the comment of the Administrator that adequate and realistic preparation of project requests is of overriding importance.

6. The Inspectors' suggestion that the preparation and distribution of manuals or handbooks relating to procedures applicable to project requests should be expedited seems to be supported by both the Administrator and the Secretary-General. The Administrators, however, speaks of a "standard manual for project requests", whereas the Inspectors and the Secretary-General appear to envisage agency manuals in addition to a UNDP manual. As it is unlikely that the procedures would become identical in the near future in all the organizations involved, and as each organization will understandably continue to apply its own specific procedures, adapted to its own requirements, the Advisory Committee sees advantage in the preparation of both types of manuals; the agency manuals, however, should be closely

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linked to the provisions and basic procedures required by UNDP. The Committee agrees with the Administrator that, in cases of doubt as to the choice of agency to which a request should be directed in the first place, the request should preferably be addressed to himself, so that the decision can be taken following his consultations with the agencies concerned. The delimitation of agency fields of activities, though considerably improved in recent years, has not yet reached the stage when there will be no need for a central place for consultation in cases of uncertainty. As the resources of UNDP could be involved, the Programme would appear to be the only place where such consultations could be held.

7. In their report the Inspectors suggest that a more flexible approach is called for in regard to counterpart contributions by the countries receiving assistance. Reference is made to counterpart personnel, often difficult to acquire, to retain and to train on the project, as well as to financial contributions by the recipient Governments. Without wishing to comment on minimum requirements of counterpart personnel, the Advisory Committee nevertheless is of the view that such personnel are of paramount importance for carrying the projects beyond the stage of international involvement. A more liberal and flexible approach should not lead, therefore, to the ultimate removal of conditions regarding early participation of national personnel. In respect of financial counterpart contributions the flexibility margin could, if necessary, be somewhat larger than in respect of personnel. In this connexion the Committee supports the suggestion of the Inspectors, concurred in by the Secretary-General, that consideration should be given to the provision of funds to pre-train counterpart personnel before a project is completely launched.

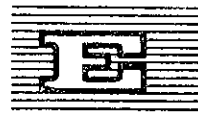
8. As to the problem of the availability of highly qualified experts in a specific field of specialization and, in particular, of Project Managers, the Committee noted with interest the observations of the Inspectors. The Secretary-General, in his relevant comment, mentioned the possibility and the desirability of arrangements that would permit the bridging of the gap between assignments of highly qualified experts, thereby ensuring that they would remain available. The Secretary-General is well aware of the practical difficulties in the way of such measures. The Advisory Committee, while equally recognizing those difficulties,

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would recall that this problem has existed since the early years of technical assistance. If the best experts in specific fields, where serious problems of recruitment exist, are to be retained for service with the United Nations system on field assignments, this problem has to be solved.

9. The Inspectors made suggestions on a variety of other subjects, such as the flexibility in the use of the Revolving Fund of UNDP, the division of plans of operations into two parts to expedite the commencement of projects, and the possibility of making greater use of regional economic commissions for securing the short-term services of experts to help Governments in the formulation of project requests. While acknowledging that, at first sight, those suggestions appear to be sound, the Advisory Committee does not feel qualified to express considered opinions on them, as they relate to the procedures and arrangements that have been subject to thorough review in the past by organs that are better able to judge their many aspects. This notwithstanding, the Committee commends these suggestions of the Inspectors to a more detailed study by UNDP and the executing agencies. Such a study should take into account the observations and recommendations on these matters contained in the study of the capacity of the United Nations development system.^{2/}

10. The Advisory Committee forwards the report of the Joint Inspection Unit "Some aspects of the technical assistance activities of the United Nations" (E/4764) to the Economic and Social Council through the Council's Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, together with the comments of the Secretary-General and the Administrator of UNDP (E/4764/Add.1), and its own observations, for distribution as a Council document, in which form it will be available to all Member countries.



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REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Some aspects of the technical assistance activities
of the United Nations

Addendum

OBSERVATIONS OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL AND ACTION TAKEN BY THE
EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNESCO

70-01573

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Observations of the Director-General of UNESCO
submitted to the Executive Board at its 83rd
session

The Director-General has consulted his colleagues in the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) concerning possible joint observations on the report in question. It does not appear that a formal comment by ACC will be agreed before the Executive Board has taken up the matter at its 83rd session.

Certain members of the ACC consider that, in such circumstances, the Director-General should provide the Executive Board with his preliminary observations, it being understood that they are subject to subsequent observations jointly agreed in ACC.

The Director-General considers that such a procedure will facilitate discussions in the responsible councils of the participating agencies while ensuring prompt consideration of the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit.

Accordingly, the Director-General submits the following preliminary observations:

1. In the first instance, he is gratified to note that the Inspectors have found "everywhere deep appreciation of the efforts of the United Nations family of organizations in assisting governments in the field of Technical Assistance and pre-investment studies".

2. The Director-General realizes that the report, which is the outgrowth of the general impressions of the Inspectors' visits to a number of countries in Africa and Asia during the last eighteen months, was aimed at summarizing the difficulties facing the countries visited and to suggest certain remedial measures primarily in the following five areas:

- I. The processing of Special Fund project requests;
- II. The planning of Technical Assistance requirements;
- III. The problem of counterparts;
- IV. The terms of contracts of experts;
- V. Project managers and their problems.

3. Agencies have been aware of concern over the time taken to prepare and process Special Fund project requests and have taken various measures to reduce delays to a minimum. On the other hand, there are criticisms (including from Inspectors) that some projects have been rushed into operation without adequate preparation, resulting in the need to make subsequent corrective adjustments and sometimes in wasted efforts. More and more, the United Nations Development Programme and the agencies hope, once there is sufficient mutual comprehension of agreement on the over-all concept of a project and the respective responsibilities of the country and the international agencies concerned, to identify and begin work or essential preparatory phases thereof. The Director-General thus agrees with the Inspectors' suggestion of the desirability of financing urgent requests from the UNDP Revolving Fund.

4. It has always been the practice of UNESCO to provide short-term services of experts to help Governments to formulate project requests; such services are available through the UNDP Revolving Fund, Technical Assistance or the regular budget. Better planning by each Government for the utilization of all external Technical Assistance involves the harmonization of United Nations programmes with national priorities, bearing in mind regional and global guides and targets.

5. The Director-General shares the view of the Inspectors that "the process of integrating multilateral Technical Assistance projects within the real priorities of the various national development plans is not yet satisfactory" (E/4764, para. 12). It is with this in view that UNESCO has made, and will continue to make, efforts to assist Member States in establishing their development priorities, through the convening of regional conferences of ministers of education, of science, and of planning; through visits of Secretariat officials to Member States and through "country planning" within UNESCO's competence.

6. The Director-General shares the view of the Inspectors that too frequent changes in project personnel are unsettling to the project and to expert staff. Some experts, moreover, would like assurance of longer-term contracts than has generally been the practice. In fact, the impact of technical assistance in the past twenty years has been reduced by the fact that funding and projects have been planned for very short periods with continuity often in doubt. There seems to be a gradual improvement, in particular with the recent introduction of continuous programming. In respect of long-term contracts, the progress has been less rapid; all parties, the international agencies, the benefiting countries, and even many experts, tend to keep open options for change. Who should assume the risk if, after a long-term commitment, there proves need for change? No reserves to facilitate change within a system of long-term expert contracts are maintained in projects accounts, in the central UNDP accounts, or in regular budgets. Until such reserves are provided, although the Secretariat will continue to try to assure more stability, progress will continue to be slow.

7. The Director-General is fully aware of the difficulties of the recipient countries in providing contributions of funds, services and personnel to the projects for which it has sought external aid. Efforts are being made to deal with this problem in as flexible a manner as possible, within the framework of the existing legislation, including the application of the waiver provision and special advance training to meet staffing requirements for the project. Again it appears necessary to emphasize basic principles: institutions furnishing external assistance must not press any actions or projects for which provisions are not included in the national economic development plans; those institutions must take account of those development plans and the general capabilities of the country in agreeing on the terms of the co-operative arrangement for each project.

8. The Director-General agrees that the importance of project managers cannot be over-emphasized as the success or failure of a project depends, to a large extent, not only on the professional qualifications of the project manager but also on his organizing and administrative skill as well as on his ability to establish good working relations with the Government and the counterpart personnel. He is glad to note that the door is open for recruiting project

managers at an early stage for the preparation of plans of operations as well as for launching projects.

9. The Director-General is in complete agreement that before formally nominating the project manager and the experts, the Government's endorsement should be secured, as suggested by the Inspectors (E/4764, para. 23). It has always been the policy of the Secretariat that the appointment of the project manager is subject to the prior concurrence of the Government concerned. Efforts have been made to delegate more authority to the project manager for dealing with financial and administrative matters with certain specific limitations. Further improvements in this regard are being sought.

Decision of the Executive Board of UNESCO

The Executive Board,

1. Having examined the reports of the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit,
 - (a) on the organization and proceedings of the General Conference (83 EX/3);
 - (b) on some aspects of Technical Assistance activities of the United Nations (83 EX/26);
 - (c) on the activities of the Joint Inspection Unit (January 1968-June 1969) (83 EX/27);

I

2. Notes the report on the activities of the Joint Inspection Unit (83 EX/27);

II

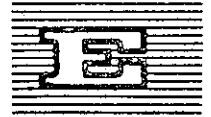
3. Notes also the report on some aspects of the Technical Assistance activities of the United Nations (83 EX/26) and the preliminary observations on this subject submitted by the Director-General (83 EX/26 Add.);
4. Recalls that most of the recommendations set out in document 83 EX/26 are already being applied by UNESCO, in accordance with previous directives of the Executive Board to the Director-General;

III

5. After making a preliminary examination of the report on the organization and proceedings of the General Conference (83 EX/3),
6. Takes note of the Director-General's intention to implement the recommendations contained in that report where he is competent to do so and in so far as they are consistent with the decisions and directives of the General Conference and of the Executive Board and within the approved budget provisions, and without prejudice to any decisions the Board might subsequently take on the recommendation of the Special Committee;
7. Requests its Special Committee to continue its examination of the report when considering the organization of the work of the sixteenth session of the General Conference on which it is to report to the 84th session of the Executive Board, bearing in mind the observations made during the discussion in the Board;

IV

8. Notes the statement of the Director-General regarding the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the overhead costs of extra-budgetary programmes and on methods of measuring performance and costs, and invites him to submit the report to a future session of the Executive Board indicating the follow-up action he envisages after consultation with the ACC.



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REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Some aspects of the technical assistance activities
of the United Nations

Addendum

NOTE AND COMMENTS BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF IMCO

70-01626

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Note by the Secretary-General submitted to the Council of IMCO
at its 23rd session

The Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit, in a letter to the Secretary-General dated 18 July 1969, transmitted a report (E/4764) under the above title.

It will be observed that the report is mainly concerned with Special Fund projects within the United Nations system. At the present time, the Organization has no such projects nor does it have a technical assistance programme in its regular budget.

Furthermore, much of the report deals with projects of interest to other executing agencies and to a lesser extent with problems of operation and day-to-day work in the technical assistance field.

For these reasons, the Secretary-General feels that the Council may think it unnecessary to make any observations of fundamental substance on the report. The Secretary-General proposes to reply forthwith referring particularly to paragraph 11 (a) of the report and underlining that the Organization has already distributed, to Member States and to all other countries to whom IMCO might be of assistance in this respect, a brochure detailing not only its technical co-operation activities and responsibilities but also the procedures for introducing requests for such assistance.

Comments of the Secretary-General of IMCO

I. SLOWNESS IN THE PROCESSING OF SPECIAL FUND PROJECT REQUESTS

Up to the present time IMCO has not had any Special Fund projects, it is therefore difficult to comment on the processing of such project requests.

11. (a) Compilation of a standard manual for project requests

IMCO has already compiled and distributed to Member States, and to all other countries to whom IMCO might be of assistance in this respect, a brochure detailing not only its technical co-operation activities and responsibilities but also the procedures for introducing requests for such assistance. Nevertheless, IMCO would be fully prepared to co-operate in the compilation of a handbook on criteria and procedures, under the auspices of ECPC, if such a handbook appears to be necessary.

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11. (b) Handling of urgent project requests

The proposals of the Inspectors' on the handling of urgent project requests are supported.

11. (d) Closer association of Governments in project implementation

The proposals of the Inspectors on this item are supported.

11. (e) Expert assistance in project formulation

The use of experts of the Economic Commissions for project formulation might be useful and would be welcome.

II. THE PLANNING OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE REQUIREMENTS

Too often there is not enough co-ordination between the various requests for technical assistance introduced by a particular Government. In the field of maritime transport, the co-ordination of project requests concerning shipping and other means of transport, industrial and agricultural development, etc., is of great importance and a well co-ordinated development planning is indispensable.

III. PROBLEMS OF COUNTERPART

The suggestions of the Inspectors on this item appear to be very sensible and are welcome.

IV. LONG-TERM VERSUS SHORT-TERM CONTRACTS

IMCO feels that a certain amount of caution should be practised with regard to the length of contract of an expert at the outset of a project of long duration, unless the capability of the expert has first been proved in a similar project.

V. PROJECT MANAGERS AND THEIR PROBLEMS

The remarks and suggestions made by the Inspectors in this respect are interesting and will be borne in mind.

VI. OTHER PROBLEMS

No comments. IMCO has no field offices.

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Some aspects of the technical assistance activities
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Addendum

OBSERVATIONS OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE ILO

70-01809

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Introduction

1. The report (E/4764) by the three Inspectors Messrs. Ilić, Jha and Sokirkin, was received by the ILO on 22 July 1969. In accordance with agreed procedures for inter-agency consultation on reports of the Joint Inspection Unit established at the forty-seventh session of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, the observations of the Director-General were circulated for comment to the other organizations of the United Nations system to whom the report was addressed. The observations below take into account the views and opinions already expressed by some of the other organizations. The comments of those organizations which were not available at the time this document was prepared will be placed before the Committee as appropriate, if received in time for consideration by the Committee.

2. The present document has been drawn to the attention of the Committee on Operational Programmes so that the views expressed on the report by that Committee might be considered by the Financial and Administrative Committee together with those of the Director-General. This procedure accords with the wish expressed by members of the Financial and Administrative Committee at the one hundred and seventy-fifth session of the Governing Body that reports of the Joint Inspection Unit which concern technical assistance activities be considered in the first instance by the Committee on Operational Programmes.

3. In accordance with the procedures established at the forty-seventh session of the Economic and Social Council for the handling of reports of the Joint Inspection Unit concerning more than one agency the Director-General intends to place his observations and those of the Governing Body on this report before the Committee on Programme and Co-ordination as soon as possible after the current session of the Governing Body.

Observations of the Director-General

4. The report of the Joint Inspection Unit discusses five broad aspects of the technical assistance activities of the United Nations:

- (i) The processing of Special Fund project requests;
- (ii) The planning of technical assistance requirements;
- (iii) The problem of counterparts;
- (iv) The terms of contracts of experts;
- (v) Project managers and their problems.

The Director-General has noted with interest the issues raised in each of these areas and below makes his observations on them.

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5. As regards the general criticism found in paragraphs 5 and 6 of the first chapter "Slowness in the processing of Special Fund project requests", Governments, UNDP and the agencies are concerned that the utmost effort be made to facilitate early processing of government requests and commencement of execution of projects. However, it is the responsibility of the UNDP and of the agencies to assess carefully government requests in order to make the best possible use of UNDP funds. The time spent in appraisal of an initial request, including those cases where it undergoes a complete revision, normally results in a project which is better conceived and presents fewer problems of implementation in terms of national and international possibilities. Indeed the Administrator of the UNDP has expressed the view that in many cases a major cause of delay has been an inadequate preparation of requests with a resultant need to determine by means of further study and investigations if the objectives, means of action and follow-up envisaged in project requests were sound.

6. As a specific example of a Special Fund project subject to undue processing delays the report cites (paragraph 7 (c)) the National Industrial Vocational Training Centre (Kenya), a project for which the ILO is the executing agency. The specific criticisms made are twofold: first, that there was an undue delay between the time the project request was submitted to UNDP and the UNDP's approval of it (July 1965 to June 1967) and second, that the signature of the plan of operation was only obtained after yet another year (June 1967 to June 1968).

7. It should be noted that basic agreement on the project existed among all concerned by March 1966. It was not feasible to have the project considered at the June 1966 session of the Governing Council of UNDP and the project was accordingly held over until the subsequent session of the Council in January 1967. As a result of a change in priorities of project requests by the Kenyan authorities, the UNDP decided to defer consideration of the project until the June 1967 session of the Governing Council. The project was approved at this session and a project manager was appointed in August 1967. One expert, an automotive trades specialist, had already been appointed in March 1967, the finances for this post being met from a contingency fund of UNDP. Thus some essential work on the project was carried out despite the delay in obtaining approval for the project.

8. As regards the signature of the plan of operation, a first draft was communicated to the Kenyan Government by the ILO on 13 July 1967 (i.e. one month after project approval). After a series of negotiations and amendments among the Government, UNDP and the ILO, a final signature copy of the plan was forwarded to the Resident Representative on 29 May 1968. The plan was formally signed on 26 June 1968. The interval of forty-six weeks between 13 July 1967 and 29 May 1968 saw a total of ten transmissions of the draft plan among the three parties to the agreement. A rough analysis of the time spent on this draft plan shows that it was with the ILO for eight weeks; UNDP, eleven weeks; the Government, twenty weeks; and in transit, seven weeks.

9. This delay in obtaining signature of the plan of operation did not affect the recruitment of experts, all of these being appointed during 1968.

10. In paragraph 11 of the report a number of specific remedies are suggested to speed up the processing of project requests. In paragraph 11 (a) it is

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suggested that a standard manual (or a collection of individual agency manuals) should be compiled for project requests. The Inspectors have expressed two concerns in this regard. In the first place it is stated that Governments require assistance in determining from which agency assistance should be sought. On this question the Director-General believes that the Resident Representative is in a position to advise Governments. The ILO has supplied to each Resident Representative a listing entitled "Functional Classification of ILO Activities for Technical Co-operation", to assist in this task. The distribution of the ECPC manual on criteria and procedures noted in the report will no doubt be a welcome information supplement to Governments in directing their requests and in preparing them.

11. Secondly, the report suggests that a single manual or individual agency manuals be compiled to indicate "what particulars are required to substantiate the requests". The ILO has no single manual for this purpose. The Resident Representative in each country as well as the ILO's own representatives in the field are available to assist Governments in formulating project requests. Indeed this function is one of the most important for this latter group of officials. It is difficult to conceive a manual that would be truly useful to Governments in view of the considerable complexity and often unique circumstances giving rise to a request for technical assistance. The Director-General has, however, noted this proposal with interest and agrees that, in the light of the need to achieve an expeditious handling of project requests, the feasibility of producing such a manual, should be examined further. He would propose to do this after the report on the Study of the Capacity of the United Nations Development System is published. As this report is reviewing the full gamut of technical assistance activities, including related administrative methods, it would be wiser to await the findings of this study before proceeding to attempt to document all the elements required in a project request for which the ILO would be executing agency.

12. The recommendation in paragraph 11 (b) concerning the UNDP revolving fund is a matter for the Administrator and Government Council of UNDP to consider.

13. The suggestion in paragraph 11 (c) that plans of operation be divided into two parts, the first part being a contractual agreement between the Government, the UNDP and the executing agency, and the second a detailed plan of execution is welcomed by the Director-General. To some extent this has been met by the new format of plans of operation introduced by the UNDP which, in fact, consists of two parts; however, the UNDP has not authorized signature of the first part before the second is completed, as has been suggested in the report.

14. Paragraph 11 (d) comments on the need for closer association of Governments in project implementation. The report states: "... once the request has been made, recipient Governments have little further say in its implementation. For example, the important final phase before work actually starts - the elaboration of the plan of operations - is carried out independently by the executing agency..." In point of fact there is seldom any need for such consultations on the plan of operations. This is because this document is simply a synthesis of three documents - the request submitted by the Government (already thoroughly discussed with the agency), the recommendation prepared by the Administrator of the UNDP for the Governing Council, which gives a brief

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synopsis of the request, and the detailed "informal offer" of assistance to be provided which is prepared and sent to the Government after discussion in the Inter-Agency Consultative Board and before submission to the Governing Council. The substantive information contained in the plan of operation is all taken from these documents, a copy of each of which is distributed to the Government concerned. At the stage of the drafting of a plan of operation more negotiations do not appear necessary between the Government and the executing agency except in rare instances when the project concept has changed. The need for close consultation between the Government, the agency and the UNDP is at the stage of project formulation. The Director-General strongly supports this latter principle and believes that there is an increasing tendency for such closer consultation to occur. .

15. The report raises a second point with regard to the plan of operation, namely, the system of approvals required for the signature and, at the same time, possible amendments to the plan. UNDP procedures do permit such modifications to be made on non-financial aspects of the plan of operation without the Administrator's prior approval but there is, in the opinion of the Director-General, scope for a more liberal interpretation of the modifications that might be arranged at the local level by representatives of the three parties.

16. The recommendation in paragraph 11 (e) is that use be made of experts, on a short-term basis, from the (United Nations) regional economic commissions to assist Governments in formulating their project requests. The Director-General understands that such assistance would be devoted to the identification of country requirements in terms of economic and social development to be used in support of project requests. He does not envisage that officials of the regional economic commissions would actually help in the specific formulation of project requests as the commissions do not have the experience of handling country projects and their staffs are less specialized than those of the agencies on operational activities.

17. The comments offered in the second chapter of the report "The planning of Technical Assistance requirements" (paragraphs 12-14) are among the major points to be covered by the "Capacity Study" and do not appear to call for comment by the Director-General at this stage.

18. Paragraphs 15 and 16 of the report "Problems of counterpart" cover, in essence, several points: government financial contribution, physical contributions by the Government in terms of buildings, equipment, etc., supporting staff and counterpart personnel who are to take the place of the experts after the end of international assistance. All these have, of course, budgetary implications.

19. The need for a more flexible approach in respect of the first two of these contributions of Governments is being increasingly recognized. For example, the ILO applies the existing arrangements providing for waivers of local cost contributions in certain cases as regards projects financed by UNDP/TA: parallel waivers are given for ILO regular budget technical co-operation projects. It is also ILO practice not to require any local cost contribution as regards projects financed under the ILO regular budget in the fields of workers' education, management development and rural development.

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20. As regards supporting staff, some transitional arrangements might perhaps be made to help Governments; however, international aid could not be a substitute for the Government's contribution, since this would tend to create artificial situations and institutions which could not be maintained once this aid ceases.

21. The question of counterparts is of fundamental importance since it is the major aspect of the training element in technical co-operation, particularly as regards institution building. The matter has already been discussed among the organizations of the United Nations system, particularly during the March meeting of the Programme Working Group of the Inter-Agency Consultative Board, and will be taken up again in the next meeting of the Working Group, prior to the forthcoming session of the IACB. A working paper on this subject is being prepared by UNDP headquarters. As regards the suggestion for an in-project training element for counterparts, the ILO has proposed just such an approach in a recent submission to UNDP for financial support of a "Global approach of computer training for management".

22. In fact, this submission envisages intensive centralized training of counterparts in advance of implementation of country projects. By this means it is hoped to reduce the number of international experts required, to provide a stable and effective counterpart team ready to take over from international experts at an early date and to facilitate subsequent training of national staff and provision of EDP consultancy services, etc. by these counterparts who will be able to deal with future trainees in their own languages. If this proposal proves acceptable to UNDP and if it meets with success in implementation, the opportunities for extending this method of prior training of counterparts to other types of ILO projects will be closely examined.

23. The Director-General is in agreement with the conclusion stated in paragraph 17 of the report, viz. the need for greater emphasis on longer-term versus short-term contracts for experts.

24. With regard to chapter V "Project managers and their problems" the Director-General fully supports the statements in paragraphs 18 to 21. As regards paragraph 22, it should be stressed that in order to speed up preparation of plans of operation, the present trend is to ask Governments to submit their project requests in such a way that they contain practically all the elements of the plan of operation. In the circumstances, the role of the Project Manager in the preparation and finalization of the plan of operation does not pose very serious problems. Further, in those cases where the Project Manager could not be appointed before the plan of operation was finalized it would always be possible to adjust the plan subsequently to take into account new ideas of the Project Manager, and of course, of the counterpart government agency. In any case the recommendation at the end of paragraph 22, regarding the early appointment of project managers is fully supported.

25. The approval of candidates for appointment as project managers (paragraph 23) is the responsibility of Governments who are free to accept or reject the candidatures submitted to them. Discussions are always held with Governments to draft the job descriptions which indicate what type of candidate is considered to be suitable. Resident Representatives and agency staff are also aware of those cases where candidates might not be considered as suitable

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for other reasons (e.g. nationality). Unofficial contacts which would in any case have to be followed by official submission of candidatures would only be a cause for longer delays in appointment.

26. As regards problems of communication between field projects and agencies' headquarters and the suggestion that the scope for greater devolution of authority be considered, the report notes (paragraph 27) that the ILO has recognized the need for and acted to provide a substantial measure of delegation and devolution of authority. One of the measures already taken in the general context of this policy of decentralization has been to entrust responsibility for a greater number of financial and administrative matters to its offices in the field which are in closer contact with project staff. Senior financial and administrative officers are stationed at regional headquarters, where they can be more rapidly contacted for advice and decisions.

27. The ILO also follows a policy of using local UNDP offices, to the maximum extent possible, to provide on-the-spot financial and administrative support for project managers. This includes the hiring and payment of local project staff and the settlement of local expenditures. In each case the project manager receives precise instructions as to the extent of his authority to incur such expenditures within the framework of the plan of operations for the project. Regional advisers who are stationed in the field are also in a position to act quickly when advice is needed on technical matters.

28. Submitted for information and observations.

Geneva, 8 October 1969.



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REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Some aspects of the technical assistance activities
of the United Nations

Addendum

OBSERVATIONS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF ITU

70-02167

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The report prepared by Mr. Ilic, Mr. Jha and Mr. Sokirkin of the Joint Inspection Unit does not call for any special comment. The examples and observations, some of which are accompanied by proposals, appear pertinent and will doubtless enable the UNDP administration to consider the possibility of making more flexible or modernizing certain administrative and financial procedures which, through too rigid interpretation or application, may be the cause of the excessively long time taken to prepare and execute Special Fund projects.

I. It is particularly desirable that clear and precise instructions be drawn up to guide Governments in the formulation of their requests for assistance, with the aid where necessary of the specialized agency. These instructions should be so framed as to ensure that, if they are followed, the preliminary study accompanying the request will contain all the basic information required for the subsequent preparation of the first part of the plan of operation as defined in the Inspectors' report.

A comprehensive, concise, preliminary study enables the agency and the UNDP specialized services to examine the request within a reasonable period of time, to correct errors, if any, and to speed up the preparation of the first part of the plan of operation. The agency must have the necessary funds to carry out the preliminary investigation as efficiently as possible.

There is no doubt that the economic and financial aspect of a Special Fund project must be studied in detail before the project is submitted for approval to the UNDP Governing Council. The preliminary study accompanying the request must therefore also be as precise as possible and in conformity with the rules specified by the UNDP services that have to consider it.

But there is a dilemma inherent in the whole process of which the ITU is acutely aware. On the one hand, the recipient country wants the benefit of the assistance envisaged at the right moment, before the situation has had time to evolve to such an extent that the content of the request and the justification given are no longer relevant.

On the other hand, the executing agency and the services at UNDP headquarters are anxious to make a searching study of the project, to analyse the substance and its chances of "receivability" by the country, without undue difficulty, and then to establish a suitable plan of work. All of these processes, however, tend to take some time. We consider that, if applied flexibly, the present procedures will provide an appropriate way out of the dilemma, but the UNDP and the agency must have such organizational and administrative arrangements that the interval between submission of a request and the day when work is begun in the field - on the basis of the plans adopted - is cut to a minimum. The capacity study might lead to recommendations to this end.

The ITU also wholeheartedly shares the view that a Special Fund project has much greater chance of success if the plan of operation is developed in close co-operation among the authority directly concerned in the recipient country, the project manager and the executing agency. This demands the early recruitment of the project manager who will take part in this work and, for some projects, the recruitment of one or more members of the staff assigned to the project.

II. Government contributions (counterpart)

Every project must be considered on its own merits - its nature, its importance, the region concerned, financial resources of the recipient country, etc. It is thus very difficult to apply very rigid rules and it is advisable that the existing regulations be made more flexible.

On the other hand, there is the danger that, if certain basic principles are not maintained in determining the amount of the counterpart contribution (taking GDP, for example, into account), some Governments may be tempted to request that their contribution be either too small or non-existent.

III. Project manager

The choice of project manager is a determining factor for the success of the project. It is therefore essential to take every possible precaution at the time of recruitment to ensure that the project manager is fully qualified and to have no reluctance about replacing him in mid-stream if he is not entirely satisfactory.

The project manager must be associated with all stages of the preparation and finalization of the plan of operation; in some cases he should even be responsible for it.

He should therefore be recruited as soon as the agreement in principle has been given by the UNDP without waiting for final approval of the request by the UNDP Governing Council.

It is desirable, moreover, that the project manager be allowed to exercise a certain amount of discretion in technical, administrative and financial matters within the framework of the broad directives given by the agency and the UNDP. A high degree of centralization is often very harmful; it is always possible to make a check subsequently.

IV. Establishment of the technical assistance plan

The ITU agrees with the Inspectors and others that the various forms of technical assistance furnished to the new or developing countries have now reached such proportions that they should be planned and co-ordinated at national and regional levels rather than be dealt with by sector. Our feeling is that the UNDP resident representatives and the United Nations regional economic commissions, working in consultation and co-operation with the regional experts of the executing agencies, have a part to play that cannot be overestimated. We are inclined to favour the idea that the offices of the resident representatives should in some way be equipped to give their support to and act in close liaison with the national planning authorities.

The points mentioned above relate primarily to projects in the Technical Assistance sector, but they also apply to a large extent to projects in the Special Fund sector.

V. Urgent projects

The ITU would welcome maximum exploitation of the advantages to be derived from the decisions recently adopted on the size and management of reimbursable advance funds for financing urgent projects.

It should be pointed out here that the ITU, mainly from the resources in its own budget, has set up a group of engineers who are specialists in different branches of telecommunications. Among other tasks, these engineers assist countries in defining and solving the problems that fall within their specialities. They can also be called upon to help countries in formulating their basic requirements for assistance in telecommunications.

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REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Some aspects of the technical assistance activities
of the United Nations (E/4764)

A visit to Malaysia and Singapore (E/4766)

FINAL COMMENTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF WHO

Report on some aspects of technical assistance activities
of the United Nations

As regards the slowness in the processing of Special Fund project requests, the observations made by the team are valid. The delay occurs at each stage and, as mentioned by the inspectors, is partly due to the cumbersome procedure which had to be followed.

For important projects which need careful preparations for their planning and programming, it might be that a period of about twenty-four months is really the time necessary to prepare the plans and their implementation. Any reduction of this period could result in the obligation of making later important modifications in the programme of the project which would be detrimental to it.

It may be mentioned that in those cases where the requests were formulated by an expert mission organized either by the agency or by UNDP, the time interval between the government submission and the approval by the Governing Council is usually smaller than otherwise. This suggests that this type of assistance for the formulation of a project request should be used as much as possible.

The inspectors suggest that the total interval between the date of a project request and the commencement of its execution should not normally exceed eighteen months. This may be too optimistic even if the procedures are streamlined. Taking into account that the Governing Council meets only twice a year for the approval of projects, and considering also the normal delay in the recruitment of project managers, it appears reasonable to attempt that the interval between the Government's request and field operations should be brought down to approximately two years.

The report also suggests the compilation of a standard manual for project requests. The suggestion to issue a standard manual for project requests is fully supported; there is indeed a real need for such a manual for the guidance of Governments. The manual should be prepared by UNDP, but the executing agency should be given the opportunity to comment and to make suggestions before the manual is finalized. As far as WMO is concerned, circular letters have periodically been sent to the Permanent Representatives giving fairly detailed information on the mechanics of the preparation and submission of a request for Special Fund assistance, but a standard manual, which would be available at all times, might still be more useful.

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The proposals of the inspectors regarding the handling of urgent project requests where they suggest that recourse be taken to the special powers given to the Administration to sanction preliminary operations from out of the revolving fund are fully supported. The suggestions contained in the inspectors' report to simplify the plan of operation have already been more or less introduced in the revised format for a plan of operations which was brought into use by UNDP early in 1969.

As regards close association of Governments in project implementation, the suggestions made by the inspectors are supported. In fact, WMO has always been keeping the government informed at all stages during the development of the plan of operations.

The suggestion to make use of experts of the Economic Commission for project formulation may be useful in the field of some of the other agencies. In the case of WMO, however, the Economic Commissions would not be able to provide experts in the field of meteorology.

The inspectors are right in observing that there is little internal co-ordination between the various requests for technical assistance submitted by a Government. Long-term forecasts are sometimes difficult to make, particularly if a technical assistance project is requested to respond to requirements which were unforeseen.

It may, however, be mentioned that in the field of meteorology, at least a major attempt has been made to co-ordinate the various elements of assistance (the Government's own efforts, UNDP assistance, bilateral aid, VAP assistance) for some years ahead in the implementation plan for the World Weather Watch. It may be recalled that the administrator of the UNDP on various occasions qualified this plan as a unique example of world-wide co-ordinated development planning.

It might be pointed out that in some fields (telecommunications, meteorology, etc.), there exist already world and regional plans which have been prepared and agreed by representatives of Governments. These plans should constitute the guidelines for the assistance which should be requested in these fields by the countries.

The suggestion of a training sub-project preliminary to the main project in order to train counterpart personnel is very welcome. In fact, WMO contemplates to do this in the case of the proposed Special Fund project for

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Senegal. Another possibility may be mentioned. In the case of the WMO Mongolia project, the Special Fund agreed that some experts provided bilaterally by the USSR might be considered as counterpart personnel of the recipient country since it was evident that on the country side, insufficient national counterpart personnel was available.

In the case of WMO projects of longer duration, it is the normal practice to give the expert an initial contract of one year. This is a matter of precaution because it is hardly possible to anticipate how the expert will turn out to be and how he will be able to go along with his counterpart. After it has been proved during the first year that everything is proceeding satisfactorily, WMO issues, in a number of cases, further contracts of two years' duration whereas, in other cases, it is felt that continuation from year to year might be better. This method reduces the danger of having to interrupt an expert's contract and to pay an indemnity. No major difficulties have so far been encountered with this method.

The observations by the inspectors that project managers must possess not only high professional qualifications, but also organizing and administrative skill and the ability to establish good working relations with the Government and counterpart personnel (if any) of the country in which they are employed are usually taken into consideration in selecting project managers.

Regarding paragraph 22 which recommends that project managers be recruited in good time and that they be associated with all stages of the preparation and finalization of the plan of operations, WMO usually appoints the project manager well in time to be associated with the development of the plan of operations.

The suggestion made in paragraph 23 that, before formally nominating project managers (and experts) for governmental endorsement, executing agencies should, in the course of their contracts with Governments, seek to ascertain in the latter's thinking on the suitability of the candidates for a particular project, is interesting. In many cases for WMO projects, the Government is informally consulted regarding their ideas of the suitability of the candidates or experts and even before formally submitting names. As far as possible, more than one name is submitted and the Government has the choice to select the candidate it wants. This avoids embarrassment to the Government to be forced either to accept or to reject the expert if only one single candidate is presented.

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The suggestion made in paragraph 25 concerning the need for greater flexibility of initiative of the project manager is well taken. WMO is slowly evolving steps whereby the project manager will be more and more associated with decision making on the administrative, organizational and financial sides.

There are, however, also certain dangers involved. One example might be quoted. When the project manager in Central America initiated a seminar not knowing that WMO was instructed by the Executive Committee to do something similar, both objectives could have been combined if WMO had been put in the picture earlier. As matters developed, however, the initiative of the project manager put the Secretariat in a somewhat embarrassing situation.

Report on a visit to Malaysia and Singapore

As regards the possibility of continued active interest by executing agencies in certain types of completed projects, it is recommended that some continuing contact should be maintained between the Executing Agency and the Government of the country in which a Special Fund project has been completed. To that end, a number of steps have already been taken which are listed below:

(a) In several countries in which a WMO Special Fund project has been completed, it may happen either as a result of the project or for other reasons that a TA expert mission is required. In such cases, the expert appropriately briefed is requested to inform WMO of the situation concerning the project and its developments;

(b) WMO has had discussions with the UNDP concerning possible assistance which may have to be provided (on a relatively small scale) by UNDP for the continuation of activities established as a result of Special Fund projects. For instance, in those cases where spare parts are needed for equipment provided under the project and where such spare parts can only be obtained against payment in foreign currency. The UNDP has agreed in principle to make such parts available after completion of the project if they are essential for the continuation of work;

(c) More recently, WMO included in the plans of operation provisions as illustrated by the following example (extract from the plan of operation of our Mongolia project):

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"After termination of the project, the Director of the Mongolian Hydrometeorological Service shall submit to the Secretary-General WMO annual reports on the operation of the expanded network of meteorological and hydrological stations and on any follow-up work until three years after the end of the project. There should also be a possibility for WMO officers, during a period of three years after the end of the project, to visit the institutions established in order to study the benefits being derived from them."

It was noticed "that returns of equipment provided under TA and SF projects rarely, if ever, include any statement about conditions". It was assumed that "returns of equipment" meant annual inventories of equipment. In this respect, it should be pointed out that WMO introduced in the plan of operation of several New Development Fund projects a clause such as the following:

"The Permanent Representative of Ecuador with WMO shall submit to the WMO Secretariat annual reports on the operation of the station for five years following the completion of the project."

The recommendation that inventories should include information about the conditions and degree of utilization of equipment is therefore supported by WMO.
