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REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

A Visit of Inspection to Malaysia and Singapore (E/4766)

Comments of the Advisory Committee on  
Administrative and Budgetary Questions

REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

A Visit of Inspection to Malaysia and Singapore (E/4766)

Comments of the Advisory Committee on  
Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The report on "A visit of inspection to Malaysia and Singapore" (E/4766), prepared by a member of the Joint Inspection Unit,<sup>1/</sup> 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, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (E/4766/Add.1).
2. The Advisory Committee would like to add the following observations to the comments referred to above.
3. The Inspector states that his aim was to bring an independent eye to bear on as many United Nations activities as he could reasonably cover, and to form a judgement on their utility. It appears to the Advisory Committee that the Inspector has succeeded well in this task. As positive judgements of individual projects considerably outnumber critical observations, it seems that the programmes of technical and pre-investment assistance by the United Nations and the specialized agencies were in general well-programmed.
4. The Committee, like the Secretary-General, was pleased to note the Inspector's complimentary comments on the dissemination of information on technical co-operation work in the field by the offices of the Resident Representatives of UNDP, and on how coverage of United Nations activities could be improved by the addition of material provided by the Office of Public Information. The Advisory Committee hopes that the reappraisal of information policy, programme and activities of the United Nations, to which the Secretary-General refers in paragraph 4 of his comments, will pay particular attention to this extremely important sector of publicity action by the Organization.

<sup>1/</sup> Sir Leonard Scopes.

5. The report under reference, like the reports of other Inspectors, contained critical remarks about the frequent occurrence of long and costly delays between the first formal request by a Government for assistance and the beginning of the project's execution. In this connexion, the Advisory Committee reiterates an observation made in its comments on the report by three other Inspectors regarding "Some aspects of technical assistance activities of the United Nations".<sup>2/</sup> The problem of delays in the preparation of projects, as well as other major problems of technical assistance such as that of counterpart, has been so often mentioned by all concerned without constructive recommendations that it appears that the time has come for a really searching discussion of its causes, consequences and possible remedies, between those responsible for the execution of the programmes, representatives of recipient Governments and the Inspectors. It now appears to the Advisory Committee, bearing in mind the relevant observations on the subject in the Capacity Study, that the Administrator of UNDP would be in the best position to take the initiative for such discussion.

6. In paragraph 23 of his report the Inspector refers to projects in the field of technical and professional training. He expresses the belief that in a country which has reached Malaysia's stage of development, the proper role of the United Nations is institution-building, i.e., in training the faculty of the institution rather than in the production of a satisfactory stream of trained engineers. While, in the view of the Advisory Committee, institution-building in this vital field should have high priority, the Committee feels that UNESCO can play a useful role in the training of engineers even if the training institution is not yet fully established.

7. The Committee fully agrees with the point raised by the Inspector in paragraph 24 of his report that statements on equipment furnished under Technical Assistance and Special Fund projects should include indications about the condition of such equipment, and that an effort should be made to define the degree of utilization. In this connexion the Committee noted with appreciation the positive comment on this suggestion by the Administrator of UNDP.

8. The Advisory Committee forwards the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on "A Visit of Inspection to Malaysia and Singapore" to the Economic and Social Council.

through the Council's Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, together with the comments of the Secretary-General, the Administrator of UNDP, the Executive Director of UNICEF, 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

Report on a visit to Malaysia and Singapore

Addendum

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF UNESCO

1. The Director-General is gratified to note the observations of the Inspector that "in both countries, United Nations aid appears to be well programmed, that is to say, by and large, it fits well with the national authorities' ideas on development strategy" (E/4766, para. 3).
2. The Director-General agrees fully with the suggestion that the assistance of the United Nations family should attempt to accommodate itself to the "economic pulse of countries" (para. 4). He is well aware that sectoral plans will not be feasible unless they constitute part and parcel of the countries' over-all economic and social development plans.
3. The Inspector notes that three UNESCO projects - the technical teacher education and vocational training, Singapore, the Ipoh Polytechnic, Malaysia, and the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Malaya - are placed in the vital field of technical and professional training (E/4766, para. 23). The first two having hardly become operational before the Inspector's mission, the Inspector visited only the Faculty of Engineering of the University of Malaya. While recognizing that this project was producing "a satisfactory stream of trained engineers", the Inspector feels that the real aim of the project, which is institution-building, is hampered by the inadequate counterpart staff situation which has prevailed during the period of three years, already elapsed, of the five-year life of the project.
4. The Faculty has three courses of civil engineering, electrical engineering, and mechanical engineering. The first two of these courses each has a professor, lecturers and assistant lecturers, three of whom have been trained overseas under the fellowship programme of the project and already returned to the institute, while one is still being trained and will return to the project in March 1970. These two courses, adequately though not yet completely staffed and equipped, are turning out a good number of well-trained engineers. The enrolment targets are expected to be reached before the termination of the project.
5. The particular counterpart problem lies in the third course - mechanical engineering. This course, which produced thirty-six graduates against the target of eleven last year, has never had a national professor. It has a senior lecturer, five lecturers and an assistant lecturer. The senior lecturer has recently returned from training abroad, while a lecturer is expected to finish his fellowship study in June 1970. A UNESCO expert in metrology and machine tools worked for one year from October 1966 to September 1967 in the early life of the project. In spite of UNESCO's frequent representation through the Resident Representative, Chief of Mission and the Permanent Delegate of the Government, the professor of mechanical engineering has not been appointed to date.
6. The Vice-Chancellor who was appointed recently is reported to be trying to improve the situation by finding the professor of mechanical engineering before the next academic year starting in May 1970, thus enabling the Faculty to have three distinct departments. The Director-General earnestly hopes that the Vice-Chancellor will succeed in his efforts. Meanwhile the second UNESCO expert in mechanical engineering is about to take up his assignment. Together with the senior lecturer who is an ex-UNESCO fellow and a lecturer expected to return from his fellowship study in June and other lecturers and assistant lecturers, this will constitute a strong core of the staff on which the development of the future department of mechanical engineering can firmly be based.

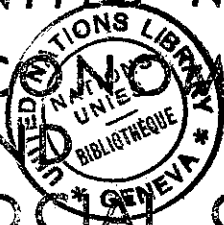
7. In the work of assisting in institution-building, the component which poses the most serious and time-consuming problem is the development of human resources. It is axiomatic that these resources are the prerequisite to economic progress and social advancement, as has been stated in General Assembly resolution 2083 (XX), Economic and Social Council resolution 1274 (XLIII) and resolution 5.541 of UNESCO's General Conference at its fifteenth session. The proper development and utilization of human resources, coupled by effective counter-measures against the phenomenon of brain drain, is one of the factors on which the success and failure of the Second Development Decade may depend.

8. The Inspector's reference to the condition and utilization of equipment (para. 24) might call for certain clarification. The UNESCO Chief Technical Adviser at the Faculty of Engineering undertook a survey of the degree of utilization of the equipment provided under the UNDP-UNESCO assistance. This was an experimental survey which UNESCO intends to extend to other projects, in addition to the normal periodic reporting by project managers including an item on equipment in terms of quality, clearance difficulties, delays, storage, installation and use.

9. The Director-General is grateful for this Joint Inspection report which provides a mid-term evaluation of the field projects in an over-all perspective and gives a new impetus for the success of the operation for which UNESCO and the Governments are jointly responsible.



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REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Report on a visit of inspection to Malaysia and Singapore

by L. Scopes, Joint Inspection Unit

Addendum



1. In paragraph 24 of my report JIU/REP/69/8 of September 1969 (E/4766) which arose out of a visit of inspection to Malaysia and Singapore, I recommended the addition to future forms provided for the purpose of making periodical returns of equipment supplied under the United Nations Development Programme of additional columns for reporting on the condition and degree of utilization of such equipment.
2. In paragraph 7 of its comments on the above report, (document E/4766/Add.2), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions commended this recommendation and noted with appreciation the positive comment thereon of the Administrator of the UNDP.
3. The Administrator's comment referred to, given in paragraph 9 of document E/4766/Add.1, reads: "... the executing agencies and, as appropriate, the Resident Representatives are obliged to report under the provisions of DP/SF/CM/41 and DP/SF/CM/16 on the condition of equipment in connexion with annual inventory submissions and upon completion of projects. In addition, reports are also submitted in accordance with DP/SF/CM/18 on the degree of utilization of equipment provided by the Special Fund."
4. Taking the three documents quoted in the above paragraph 3, I find respectively:
  - (a) The first gives executing agencies a broad review of some of the basic principles of inventory procedures as seen by UNDP. While conceding that a common form of inventory reporting may not suit all the agencies, it postulates among its minimum requirements... "information such as item-wise valuation of equipment, its condition, and an indication of the equipment no longer required by the project."
  - (b) The second deals with the transfer and disposal of project equipment. The only reference which it contains to the condition of equipment deals with the principle of setting a depreciated value, based on age and condition, on items of equipment transferred between projects.
  - (c) The third, directed at "ensuring maximum utilization of equipment," requests Executing Agencies, when submitting their year-end, joint certified inventory listings, to indicate any equipment items contained on the list which are no longer required for use on the project.

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5. Turning to actual practice, I find that none of the typical returns from the agencies listed has separate columns for reporting on condition and utilization such as I had recommended.

(a) The World Health Organization returns are accompanied by a covering certificate to the effect that (inter alia) "all the equipment listed... have been accounted for and verified to be in good condition".

(b) The World Meteorological Organization reports have a column headed REMARKS, in which notes on the condition of equipment can be inserted.

(c) The International Telecommunication Union form makes no provision for reporting on condition or utilization.

(d) The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization form similarly makes no provision, although there is a column for remarks.

6. The above examples, although admittedly not all entirely up to date, confirm my impression gathered in the field that improvement in this respect is desirable and urgent. The main object of this suggestion is not tighter actuarial control of material so much as inducing into those directly in charge of the equipment a greater sense of personal responsibility for its maintenance and proper use. The little extra work entailed in typing "new", "good", "fair", or "unserviceable" alongside each entry might pay concrete dividends in perhaps only one case out of ten - or more - but that proportion would be worth while in increasing the efficiency of operations, besides giving headquarters a basis for comparison between differing replacement requirements in varying conditions or separate types of project. Utilization, as already suggested, is not easy to define, but a promising start on the problem has already been made in UNESCO which might well be followed up with advantage and more widely used in due course. The requirement for a project manager to form and state some idea of the extent to which each piece of equipment in his charge is in fact utilized would surely be a useful and salutary management exercise, leading possibly to the elimination from future similar projects of some of the unsuitable and unused material which I have seen in field projects. I would suggest that cases of non-utilization or serious under-utilization (neither of which is as infrequent as may be imagined) should form the subject of a separate report to headquarters

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setting out the reason, e.g. the omission of key parts, arrival after an expert's departure with inadequate instructions for use, manual in a foreign language not understood etc. Where appropriate, such reports might include recommendations for alternative local use of material unsuitable for a particular project, for example, and it would be helpful if forms included space for recording action taken before the issue of authority to file away.

7. I therefore repeat my recommendation that serious consideration be given to the desirability of including, in any future reprinting of forms for returns of equipment, for both TA and SF projects, columns for reporting on the condition and degree of utilization of equipment. This might appropriately be considered in connexion with the study on standardizing forms referred to in circular DP/CM/FIELD/238 of 17 October 1969 to Field Officers of the UNDP.



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REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

A visit of inspection to Malaysia and Singapore

Addendum

1. The Secretary-General transmits to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions the following comments of the Administrator of UNDP on an addendum (E/4766/Add.4) by Inspector L. Scopes on his report entitled "A visit of inspection to Malaysia and Singapore".

"The Administrator agrees with the Inspector's proposal that annual inventory submissions by executing agencies should indicate in a separate column the condition and utilization of the equipment reported. He believes some real benefits would be so derived. The UNDP's views on this general subject, as the Inspector has indicated, have been previously transmitted to the executing agencies by means of circular memorandum.

"Although UNDP has indicated previously that it does not wish to prescribe a common form of inventory reporting, the Inspector's proposal will be brought to the attention of executing agencies as having the support of the Administrator."



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REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

A visit of inspection to Malaysia and Singapore

Addendum

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF UNESCO ON THE  
ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT (E/4766/Add.4)

70-11517

1. The Director-General concurs with the Inspector's recommendation on the need of "inducing into those directly in charge of the equipment a greater sense of personal responsibility for its maintenance and proper use". He is gratified to note the Inspector's impression that a promising start on the problem has already been made in UNESCO.

2. The Director-General agrees with the Inspector's suggestion that a separate report should be made to Headquarters when the project equipment has not been used or seems under-utilized. As a matter of fact this has been to a large extent the practice for UNESCO for some time in a form of an inventory certificate required of the Chief Technical Adviser. The Secretariat will co-operate with the UNDP, should the latter decide to revise forms for returns of equipment for this purpose.



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REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

A visit of inspection to Malaysia and Singapore

Addendum

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF FAO

70-11521

1. The Report is in the Director-General's opinion, fair, balanced and informative. It contains little with which FAO would disagree. The Director-General notes the favourable comment on the use of network analysis as applied to the Forest Industries Development project, and in this connexion would like to state that it is his intention to have all FAO projects submitted to network analysis. Steps to this end have already been taken, and, at the present time a firm of management consultants is in FAO, training a large number of staff in network analysis. The Director-General agrees with the Inspector's verdict on the success attending this project and fully shares the concern expressed by the Inspector at the delayed start of the Canadian bilateral aid project in Sabah. However, this organization is in regular contact with Mr. Bene of CIDA and all the outstanding problems relating to this project have been resolved. The Director-General wishes to state that in fact the problems of FAO/CIDA relationships have in a way proved useful, since they have served to bring home both to FAO and CIDA the need for regular consultation, preferably right from the preparatory stages.

2. With regard to the second forestry project on Quick-Growing Species for Industrial Use, the Director-General is in agreement with the views of the Inspector, and certain changes have already been introduced into the project, reflecting more stress on research. In this connexion a recent report on the project is annexed for information.

3. The Director-General agrees that the Pig and Poultry project took a long time to bring to the point of agreement between the authorities concerned. This was due to the Government wanting to have control of the project more firmly in its own hands, whilst utilizing the Agency Project Manager more in the nature of an adviser. While it is true that this is a growing phenomenon which tends to assert itself in direct ratio with national achievements in the development field, it was one of the earliest instances observed in the Far East Region. Clearly, changes of this sort are fundamental and take time to negotiate. It may be said that this is a tendency observable also in Taiwan and is becoming a feature in certain of the other more developed countries as well. The poultry side of this project has already taken root but we have had some problems on the piggery side due to the outbreak of brucellosis.

4. The Director-General is in agreement with the Inspector that the Food Technology Research and Development Centre has undoubtedly been slow in getting off the ground. Arrangements have now been made for a network analysis of this project to be drawn up and for the Project Manager to be allowed to devote his full time to the project. He was formerly also FAO's Country Representative. The Director-General is in entire agreement on the importance of this project to the Malaysian economy, and strong links with the newly set-up Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute are to be developed. The Director-General agrees with the Inspector that the project should direct itself to essentially practical matters. These views have already been emphasized on the Project Manager.





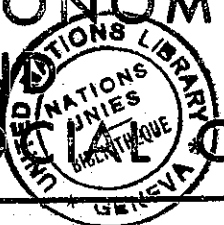
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REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

A visit of inspection to Malaysia and Singapore

Addendum

OBSERVATIONS OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE ILO

1. This report, 1/ which is appended to the present paper, was prepared by Sir Leonard Scopes of the Joint Inspection Unit. It offers comments of a general character of concern to some or all of the organizations in the United Nations system with activities in Malaysia and Singapore. Other comments are specifically directed at ILO operations in the country. The observations on this report are divided accordingly into a section containing general observations and another containing specific ones.

#### General observations

2. The Director-General is pleased to note that Sir Leonard Scopes believes that United Nations aid appears to be well programmed and fits in well with the national authorities' own ideas on development strategy.

3. As regards Sir Leonard's suggestion that the United Nations agencies time their operations and the terms of service of their representatives to coincide with the countries' own development planning cycle (paragraph 4 of the report), the Director-General agrees that there would be advantage in timing programming and project execution according to development plans (global and sectoral). There would, however, be difficulties in meeting this objective completely as the recruitment process for technical co-operation officials can only be effective if the schedule for recruitment established in the Plan of Operation is followed closely. Sir Leonard's suggestion is consistent with the country programming concept elaborated in the Capacity Study, and the Director-General is of the opinion that Sir Leonard Scopes's recommendation should be borne in mind in connexion with further discussions concerning the Capacity Study.

4. As to Sir Leonard's stress on the importance of co-ordination in the field (paragraph 7 (a)), the Director-General is in complete agreement with this point of view. The ILO has always emphasized to its staff, both during briefing and in written instructions, the importance of co-ordination with other agencies in the field.

5. The Director-General also feels that the proposal for follow-up on completed projects (paragraph 7 (b)) is welcome. In the Special Fund sector, the new project reporting procedures, which include the submission (before the end of project operations) of a plan of follow-up action to be taken by the Government, offers the possibility of active follow-up of projects by the agencies through the office of the Resident Representative, in co-operation with Governments. Under these new reporting procedures the Resident Representative is expected to report annually on further investment and other action on completed Special Fund projects. Copies of their reports are sent to agency headquarters and to interested field offices for scrutiny and appropriate action. Similar measures can be envisaged in respect of projects in the Technical Assistance sector. Furthermore, the ILO has made it a practice that ILO field officials, including regional advisers, follow up completed projects.

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1/ Issued as document E/4766.

6. On the recommendation concerning family planning (paragraph 11) the Director-General wishes to note that recent policy decisions taken by the ILO support the conclusions drawn in the report. Industrial and plantation workers are the groups that the ILO believes are the first priority based on its mandate within the United Nations system. The need for mutually supporting services, e.g. medical and social security services as a backstop to national efforts, is fully recognized. Proposals for population projects have recently been forwarded to the United Nations Population Fund.

#### Specific observations on ILO operations in Malaysia and Singapore

7. Sir Leonard Scopes draws attention in his report to specific ILO projects in Malaysia and Singapore. While Sir Leonard appreciates the ILO's work in the field of industrial training, he recognizes the problems of counterpart staff (locally trained instructors) being attracted by higher wages to private industry (paragraph 13). The Director-General agrees that the problem of counterpart wages is an important issue. It was discussed at the October 1969 session of the Inter-Agency Consultative Board and is currently under examination by that body. The ILO had already made some proposals to the Government of Malaysia concerning revised salary scales and a list showing the comparative payments made to instructional staff by other Governments in the region has been sent to the Government of Malaysia. The ILO intends to keep this facet of the project under continuous review.

8. Sir Leonard Scopes is critical of the delays which have occurred in the Singapore Metal Industries Development Centre (paragraph 14), which in his opinion have "reduced the value of United Nations co-operation in this project". As a result of the delay between Governing Council approval of the project and the signing of the Plan of Operation, he states that "rising prices have appreciably reduced the quantity of machinery and equipment which it was originally intended to supply".

9. The Director-General has noted this criticism but would like to point out that the actual implementation of the project has not seriously been affected by this delay as three experts, including the chief of project, have been in post under advance allocation throughout the period of delay and two more experts joined the project in September 1969, i.e. not long after the signing of the Plan of Operation on 9 June 1969. Furthermore, advance allocations for the procurement of equipment were obtained in two instalments amounting to almost half of the total equipment allocations, ultimately permitting the ILO to order a substantial amount for the project. On the Government's side, the construction of buildings and other facilities for the project has progressed at a fast pace and the delay in the signing of the Plan of Operation has had no effect on this aspect of the project. The Director-General, while agreeing that there has been a delay occasioned by the need for extensive discussions with the UNDP, the Government and suppliers on equipment matters and for the clearance of various drafts of Plans of Operation with UNDP, UNIDO, and the Government, would stress that these factors have not significantly affected the actual implementation of the project, which is at present on a sound footing.

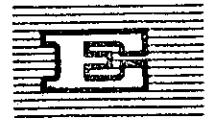
10. The inspector notes that the prices of equipment for this project have increased during the period of delay. However, this has been due not to the delay

in the signing of the Plan of Operation but mainly to the fact that the prices quoted in the equipment estimates of the Plan of Operation were somewhat lower than market prices. This error arose owing to the highly sophisticated nature of the equipment in question for which a complete costing proved difficult to achieve when the Plan of Operation was drawn up. A headquarters technical equipment inspection mission was undertaken to the project in January 1970 and this has helped to resolve the difficulties. It is expected that by the end of the year the balance of equipment will have arrived on the project.

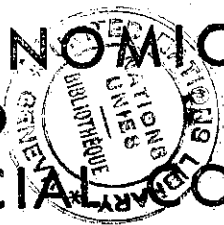
11. The Director-General fully supports Sir Leonard Scopes's remark in paragraph 16 that "the problem of creating sufficient employment opportunities" is of fundamental importance. In this connexion, the ILO manpower mission in Kuala Lumpur has assisted in creating a manpower department within the Ministry of Labour and is currently helping to improve the existing system of employment market information, and developing and strengthening the network of employment exchanges. Within the framework of the World Employment Programme, Malaysia will be further assisted by the Asian Regional Employment Team in an assessment of the employment needs and the availability of skilled manpower.

12. Sir Leonard Scopes's hope that the Malaysian Government will soon be able to make a start in other States on the proposed establishment of vocational rehabilitation institutions on the lines of the pilot project at Cheras (paragraph 17) is shared by the Director-General. Furthermore, the successful development of the Cheras Centre is having a stimulating effect on the national rehabilitation programme through the creation of state rehabilitation committees and the formulation of schemes of placement and sheltered employment.

13. Submitted for information and observations.



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REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Addendum to report on a visit of inspection  
to Malaysia and Singapore

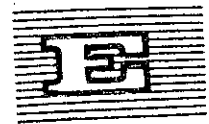
Addendum

COMMENTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF WMO

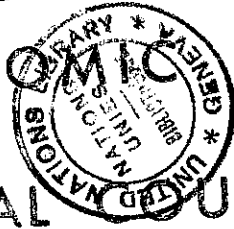
The main points raised in the addendum are with regard to periodic reports of inventory of equipment from Special Fund projects and Technical Assistance projects. It is mentioned that inventories as at present received by the agencies do not contain information on the condition of the equipment and the degree of their utilization though according to the UNDP document DP/SF/CM/41 dealing with inventory procedures of UNDP (SF) project equipment the inventory should include remarks on the condition of the equipment.

It is agreed that it will be extremely useful if information on condition and the degree of utilization is included in the periodic reports of inventory of equipment. As far as WMO is concerned this can easily be done since the form for inventory at present in use has a column for "remarks" in which this information can be included. Instructions will be given to the Project Managers and the experts in the field to include such information in future reports of equipment.

As a point of information it may be mentioned that most of the equipment provided by WMO for Special Fund projects and also Technical Assistance projects are operational types of equipment such as equipment for taking meteorological and hydrological observations, telecommunication equipment for collection and dissemination of synoptic data, etc. Therefore, these equipment are in daily use so that from the point of view of degree of utilization they can be classified as 100 per cent utilized. In the case of other equipment such as those used in workshops and laboratories and office equipment which form a minor part, the degree of utilization might not be as high as 100 per cent.



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REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

A Visit of Inspection to Malaysia and Singapore (E/4766)

Attached are the comments of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Administrator of UNDP and the Executive Director of UNICEF addressed to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on 12 December 1969.

69-32146

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12 December 1969

REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

A Visit of Inspection to Malaysia and Singapore,  
by Sir Leonard Scopes (E/4766)

Comments of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the  
Administrator of UNDP and the Executive Director of UNICEF

1. The Secretary-General has read with interest Sir Leonard's report on his visits to Malaysia and Singapore. He is pleased to note the favourable impression which Sir Leonard had following his review of OTC and UNIDO activities in these two countries.
2. The Secretary-General believes that the Inspector's report (para. 6) serves to highlight the need for flexible and imaginative approaches in fulfilling the responsibilities vested in him by the General Assembly in the field of public information.
3. Malaysia and Singapore offer a good example of how, in certain areas and under certain circumstances, such responsibilities can be fulfilled on a regional basis. Both States (as well as Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Viet-Nam) are serviced by the Information Service of ECAFE in Bangkok, which maintains regular contact with, and disseminates information to, the respective government information services and to the Resident Representatives. The national radio and television networks of both Malaysia and Singapore frequently broadcast or rebroadcast programmes prepared by the Office of Public Information, ~~or based on such programmes.~~
4. The Secretary-General is pleased to note that the dissemination of information by OPI and by the Resident Representative has resulted in satisfaction by the Governments concerned, and by private and United Nations circles, at the coverage obtained. He is bound to point out, however, that there can be no one over-all approach to this question. He has obtained from the OPI a reappraisal of the public information policy, programme and activities of the United Nations and, in the light of the manpower utilization survey at present under way, expects to submit his report to the ACABQ at its spring session in 1970, and to the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

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Comments of the Administrator of UNDP

5. The Administrator has noted with considerable interest the various comments made by the Inspector on the Special Fund and Technical Assistance projects viewed during his brief visit to Malaysia and Singapore. It is a source of some encouragement that the Inspector has indicated his satisfaction, by and large, with the assistance being rendered the organizations of the United Nations family in those two countries.

6. In particular, the Administrator has taken cognizance of the Inspector's comments (para. 7) on the importance of co-ordination at the field level, with which he fully agrees, and the value of continuing active interest in certain types of completed projects on the part of the executing agencies. Note has also been made of the ideas expressed by the Inspector (para. 11) on the subject of family planning.

7. With respect to the Inspector's mention of delays in getting Special Fund projects from the initial request stage to operational status (paras. 14 and 21), the Administrator has already made his views known in his comments on the JIU report entitled "Some aspects of technical assistance activities of the United Nations" (E/4764/Add.1).

8. The Administrator is most interested to learn of the Inspector's satisfaction with the use of network analysis in the planning of a five-year SF forestry project being executed by the FAO in Malaysia (para. 19). He shares the conviction of the Inspector (para. 23) that assistance in the field of institution building is a proper role for the United Nations organizations to undertake.

9. The Inspector's comment in paragraph 24 that "return of equipment provided under Technical Assistance and Special Fund projects rarely, if ever, include any statement about condition" needs to be clarified. With respect to Special Fund project equipment, it should be noted that the executing agencies and, as appropriate, the Resident Representatives are obliged to report under the provisions of DP/SF/CM/41 and DP/SF/CM/16 on the condition of equipment in connexion with annual inventory submissions and upon completion of projects. In addition, reports are also submitted in accordance with DP/SF/CM/18 on the degree

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of utilization of equipment provided by the Special Fund. In the case of equipment provided under the auspices of Technical Assistance projects, the existing arrangements require that the executing agencies alone take responsibility for its condition, utilization and inventory control. However, UNDP is presently engaged in formalizing arrangements for reporting on equipment provided under Technical Assistance auspices and it is intended that these arrangements will be in close harmony, where feasible, with those relating to Special Fund project equipment. Lastly, the proposal that equipment inventory reporting might contain means whereby reference would be made to condition and utilization is noted, although, as indicated above, provisions exist or are under preparation for such detailed reporting.

Comments of the Executive Director of UNICEF

10. We are grateful for and encouraged by the recognition given to the usefulness of UNICEF's work in such fields as malaria eradication, tuberculosis control, clean water supply, health services, and family planning. Two more specific comments are the following:

11. In paragraph 10, it is stated that "the provision of clean water to rural kamponge is a useful activity on which sufficient momentum has probably been generated to enable the programme to go on rolling after the departure of the WHO expert concerned, provided UNICEF is prepared to continue to contribute some of the necessary imported hardware". I can affirm that a recommendation for the continuation of the supply of such hardware to the project in Malaysia is now in preparation for submission to the next session of our Executive Board in April 1970. This conforms to the guidelines of a global assessment of such programmes recently carried out by the Joint Committee on Health Policy (an expert committee made up of representatives of the UNICEF and WHO Executive Boards).

12. In paragraph 4, the suggestion is made that the United Nations family might try to accommodate itself to the economic pulse of countries which, through the existence of successive, timed development plans or of set governmental periods,

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may be said to have an established rhythm. This effort would apply, perhaps, to the timing by UNDP and agencies of the appointment and terms of service of their representatives and to the concentration of projects so as to coincide to some degree with the country's own cycle. We feel the suggestion has great merit. For some time, UNICEF has appreciated the importance of relating projects to the period of development plans, has already made considerable progress in many countries in this direction, and will continue efforts along this line whenever the country concerned is interested.