

DACCA FRIDAY JANUARY 6, 1978

Technical Cooperation

WE (Fund) are organised in three programme divisions—General Technical Assistance, Education and Training, and Export Market Development—a small headquarters Technical Assistance Group, and a division responsible for Finance and Personnel Services. I will try to illustrate the functions of each.

GENERAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE: The General Technical Assistance programme provides from within the Commonwealth the professional, technical and managerial expertise requested by developing member countries to meet their specific manpower needs; either as advisers or to fill posts for which qualified nationals are not yet available. By its nature it is the largest CFTC programme in money terms, accounting for 59 per cent of our anticipated programme expenditure in the current year. Its principal objective is to supplement the efforts of developing Commonwealth countries in accelerating their pace of development. This calls for flexibility and speed of response, and the programme gives highest priority to requests which are perceived by Governments as critical to the achievement of self-reliance. These vary widely of course, according to the level of development of the country concerned and the sectoral priorities established by its government.

Experts to assist with development planning and implementation at all levels are among those most frequently requested from the Fund, whether for central planning offices or for functional ministries and parastatal bodies. The nearly 300 CFTC experts currently in the field include accountants, agriculturists, airport officers, architects, auditors, bankers, economists, engineers, harbour masters, lawyers, lecturers, librarians, managing directors, medical officers, pathologists, professors, quantity surveyors, statisticians, tax assessors, and a university vice-chancellor.

Among the fields in which other advisers are providing assistance are audio-visual aids, broadcasting, education, electronic data processing, environment, industrial development, insurance, irrigation, port, administration, railways, shipbuilding, telecommunications and tourism.

A VARIETY OF EXPERTISE: The following examples of some current projects illustrate the variety of requests to which the General Technical Assistance Programme seeks to respond. To help with development planning and implementation, the Fund has provided an economic planning adviser to assist the Ministry of Finance in St. Kitts. A transport planner is engaged on recommending fare structures for all methods of transportation in Fiji,

and rural planning advisers have been posted to Kenya to assist with the formulation of provincial and district plans for integration in the rural development programme. In Tonga, the Fund is providing the Central Planning Office with the services of a project economist whose duties include the formulation, implementation and review of the five-year development plan, the identification and evaluation of projects and the preparation of reports for the Development Co-ordination Committee. In addition, the Fund is recruiting a macro-economist to assist in forecasting economic development and trends. Similar assistance in the field of planning has been given to Botswana and Papua New Guinea.

Support is being given to projects leading to the identification and establishment of new industries. In response to a request from the Government of Malaysia, the CFTC has agreed to provide three experts to work with other experts assigned by UNIDO to an industrial project identification exercise. Their tasks will include the preparation of sectoral studies for use by officers of the Malaysian Federal Industrial Development Authority responsible for the conduct of the detailed feasibility studies. In Malta, the Fund has provided a general manager for the Malta Spinning and Weaving Mill. This state-owned industry is due to begin production shortly in programmed stages and is expected to provide about 1,000 new jobs. The general manager's function is to organise and run the factory which will be producing goods for the export market.

The Fund has also made available expertise in environmental conservation and management, a problem of growing concern in many developing countries, particularly where environmental factors were neglected in efforts to accelerate the process of development. An expert dealing with the environmental conditions of a hydro-electric scheme in Papua New Guinea, has responsibilities which include the preparation of an overall action plan and an environmental impact assessment covering fisheries, water quality, watershed management and human settlement. Similarly, in Fiji, the Fund has provided an environmental expert to advise ministers on all environmental questions, to co-ordinate information on the environment, and to assist the Government in its negotiations with private enterprise for the planned exploitation of Fiji's natural resources.

Insurance and insurance legislation is another area where the Fund is active. An expert in this field, originally assigned under Indian technical assist-

ance arrangements to Barbados has now been released to the Fund to serve as a regional insurance adviser in the Caribbean. In this capacity he will be working with the Caribbean Community Secretariat and advising member Governments on regional and national policies and programmes. In the Pacific, another expert is advising the Government of Fiji on insurance policy matters and on the drafting of supporting legislation, and has also undertaken short-term assignments in Western Samoa where he reviewed workers' compensation insurance and drafted appropriate legislation.

FEASIBILITY STUDIES: As there is considerable potential for the establishment of major projects based on minerals, timber, fish and hydro-electric power, the Fund has commissioned several feasibility studies usually undertaken by consulting firms. In India the Fund is meeting the cost of consultancy services to prepare a report on the improved exploitation of forest resources in Kashmir, including recommendations on forest regeneration and management. Another team of consultants is advising on the establishment of a commercial fish farm in the State.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING: The Education and Training programme, which began in a small way in 1972, accounts for 24 per cent of anticipated programme expenditure in the current year. It supports the training of personnel from Commonwealth developing countries almost exclusively in other Commonwealth developing countries, and generally in the same region, thus keeping costs down and enabling students to be trained in conditions similar to those in which they will subsequently work.

During the financial year 1976/77, the programme supported 582 projects some involving single students or trainees and others covering a group of students or seminar participants. A total of 1350 students were assisted to take degree, diploma, certificate and other course, to serve training attachments or to make study visits. In addition, the Fund financed the attendance of almost 700 people at seminars and workshops that were training oriented. In all, therefore, more than 2000 people benefited from the Education and Training Programme in 1976/77.

Requests for assistance were received from the Governments of 47 countries from regional organisations, Commonwealth associations, universities and other bodies requiring support for their education and training activities. The training activities supported by the programme took place in 41 different countries. This is striking

(Continued on page 6)

Technical Cooperation

(Continued from page 5)

evidence of the willingness of the developing countries, big and small alike, to share their education and training resources and thus to contribute to each other's development.

All Commonwealth countries in Africa, for instance, participated last year both as sending and receiving countries. As an example, Swaziland sent students to Tanzania for training in banking, insurance and financial management; to Ghana for courses in teaching the deaf and in senior management; to Malta for hotel training; to Kenya for business administration and hydrology; to India for improved techniques in handicrafts; and to Nigeria for instruction in grain storage methods. In return, Swaziland received 45 students from 12 countries to be trained at the Agricultural Management Centre at Manzini, while a further 19 were provided with technician courses in engineering and agriculture.

In the Caribbean Trinidad and Tobago provided training for students from the other Caribbean countries in some of the subject areas in which she has well developed resources, such as customs and excise procedures, statistics, air traffic control, agriculture, engineering and management services. Similar examples can be quoted from Asia where India, for instance, generously made available its vast education and training resources to people from many Commonwealth countries, and in the Pacific where Fiji and the Solomon Islands have been hosts to CFTC-sponsored students from neighbouring countries.

NO BRAIN DRAIN

Brain drain is an issue that has exercised the minds of many Commonwealth Governments. The problem of the student who is sent to one of the industrialised countries for a course of training and falls to return home is a familiar one. One of the advantages of training in developing countries, where conditions are similar to those in the student's home country, is that the risk of brain drain is considerably reduced. Since the inception of the Education and Training programme, not a single student or trainee has been 'lost' to brain drain. Equally encouraging is that the success rate of CFTC students in passing their examinations is approximately 98 per cent; this is a tribute to

the care with which Governments select their candidates, to the high quality of the instruction they receive, and to the diligence of the trainees.

The Governments of Commonwealth developing countries are giving increased attention to the training of personnel for development management. Shortages of officers trained to identify development projects, to prepare proposals for consideration by donor agencies, to monitor progress on projects or to supervise their implementation, are a severe constraint on many Governments. By supporting training programmes such as those provided by the Institute of Development Management in Botswana, by the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning in Senegal, and the courses in project planning in rural development that are run by the University of the South Pacific, the Fund aims to assist Governments in building up cadres of trained personnel who can accelerate the pace and improve the quality of social and economic development.

Approximately 20 per cent of the resources of the Education and Training programme were devoted to funding training activities arranged by the functional divisions of the Commonwealth Secretariat. Thus, the Secretariat's Education Division with Fund support held seminars and workshops on technical education, the production of low-cost science equipment and in-service teacher education, and arranged a practical training course, in conjunction with the University of Nairobi, on educational administration and supervision. The Legal Division was able to continue the successful series of regional courses which has resulted so far in 97 legislative draftsmen being trained for 30 Governments. The training activities of the Food Production & Rural Development Division, of the Commonwealth Programme for Applied Studies in Government, of the Medical Adviser and of the Science Adviser, were also funded by the CFTC. In this way, the Fund enhances the ability of the Secretariat to respond effectively to the recommendations of Governments made at ministerial and other meetings.

(Part of an address by Antony Tasker, Managing Director of the Fund, to the Commonwealth Section of the Royal Society of Arts, London.)