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tion or market research is difficult to conduct as people do not always cooperate with researchers. This is partly due to the fear that such data will be used for tax purposes and partly due to the fact that most of the people do not appreciate the significance of research in general. Thus even if the funds and the manpower are available to conduct research, the consultancies might still not be able to generate the data they need.

External Problems: A very unfortunate but common disease of industries or establishments in Nigeria is a lack of confidence in, and a bitter prejudice against, something Nigerian. Even when there are competent Nigerian consultants, non-Nigerians are sometimes preferred

to Nigerians. Two other minor problems which are still external to the consultancy firms are the problem that their recommendations may be rejected and the fact that some consultancies, particularly the foreign ones, might not be aware of the effect of the sociological factors and native customs and traditions of Nigeria on the variables they are investigating. This might affect their results. These problems — both internal and external — will affect the growth of consultancies in Nigeria. The problems coupled with a short supply of consultancies will make consultant fees high and beyond the reach of most of the indigenous entrepreneurs which have small-scale businesses. Ironically, these are the people who need consultants most.

Realising the problem that the small-scale businesses have, the Federal Government has decided during the Third National Development Plan period to expand the functions of the Centre for Management Development to include "consultancy services including general functional consultancy and small business advisory services for indigenous businessmen; research and studies in business finance, productivity, business organisation, personnel management, marketing etc."¹³ In pursuit of this decision, branches of the Centre for Management Development have been opened in different parts of the country to cater for the small businessmen.

¹³ Guidelines For the Third National Development Plan 1975-1980, op. cit., p. 52.

Foreign Experts as Advisers in Developing Countries

by Dr Wilfred A. Ndongko, Yaounde *

In developing countries the available domestic trained manpower is largely complemented by foreign nationals who serve in the advisory capacity. The purpose of this paper is to critically examine the role of these foreign expert advisers who come to developing countries to supposedly fill the gap between the *required* and the *available* trained manpower necessary for the formulation and implementation of the various development programmes and projects. Furthermore the necessity to examine the role of foreign advisers in developing countries arises from the fact that some of the wastage of external aid resources by the re-

cipient countries¹ may be partially blamed on expert advisers who for the most part do not carry out their responsibilities with the dedication, understanding and objectivity as originally expected of them.

Costs to Donors and Recipients

Despite the fact that the dimension of the development problems requires that the developing countries continue to depend on the developed countries for expert advisers, the quality of the advice and the effectiveness of the advisers have a lot to do with the success or failure of their mission. To both the recipients and the

donors, in general, the costs of an unsuccessful expert mission take the form of the total capital investment in a development programme or a project plus the overhead or operating costs that are involved. In the case of the donors, these costs involve the transfer of real resources to the recipients. To the latter, the costs are reflected by their inability to achieve their overall development objectives especially as the projects in question may have been intended to play a leading role in their development plan.

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¹ Cf. Wilfred A. Ndongko, *Stop Wasting Aid*, in: United Nations Development Forum, April 1975.

On the part of the donor country or agency, in particular, the assignment of a trained national to serve in an advisory position in any developing country, normally calls for such financial expenses and payments like annual salary increments, fixed expense allowance, cost of living allowance, hardship and inducement allowance, and schooling allowance for his children. For the recipient country, the presence of a foreign expert adviser (depending on the nature of the protocol agreement) generally calls for the provision of certain basic allowances like non-domicile or resident allowance, free housing, water, electricity, free transport, exemption from certain domestic taxes like import and sales taxes and commissary privileges.

To this extent, foreign advisers constitute considerable resource costs to both the donors and the recipients.

Reasons for Failure

Because of the magnitude of the real and financial resources which are channelled to developing countries from developed countries under the auspices of various technical assistance agreements, both the donors and recipients should normally be concerned with the quality and effectiveness of the advice rendered by each expert. Notwithstanding the necessity for this concern, many development projects and programmes failed for many related reasons:

☐ Many experts have tended to abandon their original responsibilities and instead exhibit a dual loyalty in which the interests of their country of origin or the donor are placed in front of those of the recipient. This practice has tended to generate mistrust of advisers by the recipient countries and has made cooperation between them and

the indigenous citizens of the developing countries difficult.

☐ Many foreign advisers tend to ignore the potential contribution of their collaborators, indigenous government officials who for the most part understand the implication of a proposed project on the particular area of the country in which it is to be located.

☐ Frequently experts make no effort to understand the culture, values, needs and temperament of the people of the country to which they have been assigned. As a consequence, they attempt unsuccessfully to impose their advice on the people.

☐ Some experts display a superior attitude towards their indigenous counterparts who in many cases may be better trained in the particular field in which the former have been assigned to render professional advice.

☐ The prospects of large financial gains from an overseas assignment have most inevitably and seriously distorted the professional career decisions made by those experts who are offered the opportunity to serve in any developing country as advisers.

☐ High financial benefits and special privileges no doubt encourage some experts and their families to adopt living standards and life styles which prevent the effective accomplishment of their mission. Experts who go to developing countries because of the potential windfalls are precisely the wrong people for an advisory position.

☐ Many developing countries have been utilized as a dumping ground for some expert advisers who for the most part are not professionally equipped to handle equivalent or comparable responsibilities in their own countries.

For the above reasons many advisers have tended to formulate or propose unsuccessful development projects which have remained "eyesores" in the developing countries. This has certainly been an undesirable situation on the part of both the donors and recipient countries or agencies, particularly as the former are interested supposedly in maximizing the return on each dollar spent on each project whilst the latter do not have resources to waste on advisers whose marginal productivity will be zero by the end of their mission. Because, as noted earlier, the developing countries will continue to need foreign advisers for some time to come and because the developed countries and the multilateral aid agencies would always like to ensure that every dollar spent in the former yields some benefit to the people who are being assisted, the question arises as to how can foreign advisers be made more effective and productive.

Improving the Advisers' Effectiveness

The indigenous people who are the beneficiaries of the advice to be rendered or project to be initiated, often look at foreigners with distrust and suspicion. Consequently, they very often are not willing to cooperate wholeheartedly with the advisers. Rather they do prefer to confide in and cooperate with the indigenous trained officials who may be the counterparts of the expert. The primary objective of every adviser should be to ensure that he is replaced by an indigenous counterpart in the shortest possible time. This can be done through mutual consultation between the adviser and his potential successor, joined-team field work, equal participation in the formulation of a policy or project and by ensuring that the indigenous

trained officers understand the unwritten spirit of the project or piece of advice. This will ensure the continuity of the project or policy even after the expert adviser has left the country. Given that

☐ foreign expert advisers are actually needed and that the people with the appropriate training and experience are to be made available,

☐ the advisers understand the purpose of their mission from the point of view of the donors and recipients,

☐ foreign advisers are willing to make the necessary financial, social, and moral sacrifices in order to successfully carry out their mission in the respective countries to which they are assigned, and

☐ there is no dual loyalty,

it is proposed that the effectiveness or success of an expert adviser be determined by the rapidity with which he is replaced in his functions by an indigenous counterpart. If the difference between *required* and *available* trained manpower is zero in any particular country at the end of each development programme or project, then foreign experts have been successful. Otherwise they may be regarded as having been ineffective or unsuccessful in their mission.

☐ The gap between required and available trained manpower could be filled through the interdisciplinary training of policy-oriented professional advisers who are apt to quickly recognise, learn and appreciate the problems of the developing countries, and

☐ the training and effective utilization of indigenous citizens who have skills comparable or identical with those of the foreign advisers whom they will be replacing.

Concluding Note

Some of the wastage of external aid resources in the developing countries can be partially blamed on the quality and nature of the expert advice which is rendered to the governments of those countries. Effective expert advice should reflect the greater participation of the available indigenous trained manpower in the formulation and execution of development programmes and projects with a view to the eventual replacement of foreign expert advisers by the former.

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