DEUTSCHES INSTITUT FÜR ENTWICKLUNGSPOLITIK
GEMEINNÜTZIGE GESELLSCHAFT MBH

GERMAN DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE INSTITUT ALLEMAND DU DÉVELOPPEMENT

Purpose, Organization and Training Methods

Berlin

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Purpose of the Institute

The impact of the rapid changes taking place in the developing countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America is being strongly felt in the political, economic, and social spheres in this second half of the twentieth century. The industrial nations have realized that these changes are having a greater effect on them and that they share with the developing countries the responsiblity of ensuring that they assume as harmonious a course as possible.

Development is never an isolated phenomenon within a single sphere of individual or social life. On the contrary, socio-economic, cultural, technological, political and psychological aspects are all interlocked and reciprocal in the process of development. It has become clear that the people who launch, direct and carry forward the development process are of decisive importance, and that financial resources, capital goods, and technical know-how alone are not sufficient for the task.

The challenges which have been created by the process of change in the developing countries are so complex that they can be identified and met only with the help of a highly developed scientific apparatus and by devoting due attention to the comprehensive view. Conditions in the industrial countries cannot simply be transferred to the developing countries, nor can resources in our modern industrial society be utilized to any great extent, for with its division of labor, there is such a high degree of specialization in the sciences that a comprehensive view is seldom employed. Therefore, special training must be given to the technical specialists who are concerned with development problems and who intend to accept assignments in developing countries or with international organizations, or who are interested in working with private enterprises or institutions of either the developing or the industrial countries. The German Development Institute has the task of providing this training on an interdisciplinary basis. It also conducts research studies using the same interdisciplinary approach and provides advisory services for private and governmental institutions concerned with development problems.

The purpose of this training is not to enable specialists to become even more expert in their fields, but rather to provide them with the intellectual tools they need, in addition to their professional knowledge, to understand und to contribute to the development process. They must also learn to adapt themselves to alien cultures and to free themselves of the temptation to base their opinions uncritically and unreservedly on Western images and models. In this manner, the German Development Institute thoroughly prepares experts for leading careers in the field of development policy.

Organization

The German Development Institute is located in Berlin and is a non-profit association, in partnership with the Federal Republic of Germany and the City of Berlin. The Board of Trustees, consisting of twelve members appointed by the association, supervises the management of the Institute and approves the general training and research programs developed by the scientific staff. The Institute is headed by two directors, who are permanent members of the scientific staff. The Contract of Association guarantees scientific independence in matters of training and research.

The scientific staff consists of professors who are permanently employed by the Institute, or who have been engaged to teach at the Institute on a contractural basis. The greater part of the instruction is done by professors from universities, colleges and other institutions who have accepted a contract with the Institute. These teaching assignments are offered to scholars and scientists from all relevant disciplines who have dealt extensively with development programs. The Institute has only a small permanent scientific staff. In addition to their teaching duties, they conduct research, supervise the interdisciplinary working groups and are responsible for the integration of the interdisciplinary training program. Another group of permanently employed professors have tutorial duties in connection with the working groups, in addition to their teaching and research activities. These staff members who have an excellent command of

languages and who have had extensive experience abroad, come from various disciplines; in particular, economics, sociology, psychology, law and geography.

Duration of Training and Admission Requirements

The course of study is for one year with the number of participants limited to thirty in order to ensure thorough and individual training. Applicants should be university graduates, but the Institute will consider highly qualified and experienced persons who do not hold a university degree. All applicants must, however, have an excellent command of English or French and a good command of a second foreign language (English, French or Spanish). Applications are acted upon by a committee composed of members of the scientific staff and other members of the Institute.

Training Methods

The students attending the courses come from various disciplines, which supports the extensive use made of interdisciplinary methods. Participation in a working group and a field trip to a developing country, which are methods of instruction particularly suited to the interdisciplinary approach, are combined with the traditional methods (lectures, seminars, workshops, etc).

The interdisciplinary working group has been found to be an excellent instrument for instruction and guidance and each student is assigned to a working group for the entire period of training. A permanent member of the scientific staff is in charge of each group and guides the students, through the group method, in the writing of theses on various aspects of development and in preparing them for their assignments abroad through case studies and gaming.

The field trip to one of the developing countries has proved to be of significant value, since experience has shown that a combination of academic training and practical experience yields particularly good results. The students go to the developing countries in groups , in order to continue the interdisciplinary

work during their field studies. The field trip, lasting three months, enables the students to associate with universities, local and national planning and development authorities, and developmental financial institutions, and immeasurably assists them in familiarizing themselves with the practical problems of development policy.

Training Program

A general program of training has been developed by the scientific staff. In keeping with the interdisciplinary approach and objectives, the traditional pattern of disciplines has been replaced by the following areas of study:

A. Development Process
B. Development Aid
C. Programming Techniques
D. Project Techniques
E. Area Studies
F. Acculturation and Communication

A. Development Process

In examining the process of development, the interdependence of the various spheres of individual and social life become abundantly clear. For this reason, the interrelationship of disciplines must be stressed. The most important disciplines that come into consideration are economics, business administration, agriculture, sociology, political science, psychology, law, medicine, ethnology, and economic, transport, cultural and social geography. The aspects of these disciplines relevant to development problems have been included in the curriculum in order to enable the students to understand the fundamentals of the development process and with this deeper understanding to apply their professional knowledge more effectively in their future specialized careers.

B. Development Aid

Considerable attention is given to the organization and methods of development aid provided by governmental and non-governmental agencies of the Federal Republic of Germany, other contributing nations, and international organizations. In particular, the various instruments of development aid are examined and a study made of experience gained in this field in order to thoroughly familiarize the students with the theoretical and practical aspects of development. The students are then able to convey an adequate picture of German development aid policy to the developing nations and, in this manner, contribute to the effectiveness of a coordinated development aid program between the contributing and receiving countries.

C. Programming Techniques

Experience has shown that every expert holding a responsible position in the field of development, be he an economist, physician, engineer or agriculturalist, must be familiar with the data-gathering and planning techniques employed in establishing a development program. Practical knowledge acquired at the international level, particularly in the field of efficiency evaluation, is of considerable importance.

D. Project Techniques

These experts must also receive specialized training in the planning, execution and evaluation of development projects. The individual characteristics of both development aid projects (projects financed primarily out of development aid funds) and various types of individual technical projects (roads, factories, technical schools, hospitals, etc.) are thoroughly examined.

E. Area Studies

Development experts must be familiar with cultural and social anthropology and must be well informed in the history and religion of the developing countries in which they are active. These subjects are included in the curriculum in order to provide a key to the understanding of the social processes and the individual forms of behavior in the different cultures.

F. Acculturation and Communication

Attention is paid to cross-cultural communication in order to prepare the students for the "culture shock" and to assist them in applying the knowledge and skills acquired in their own culture to an alien culture. The students are taught to look at their own culture objectively, which enables them to develop an understanding for and an appreciation of culture. They are then better able to absorb new cultural traits and are better equipped to convey a true picture of Western culture.