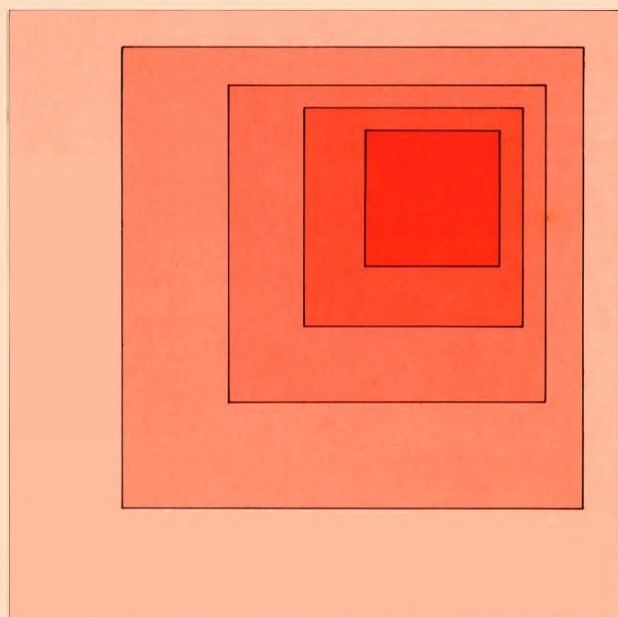


JAKARTA PLAN OF ACTION ON HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT IN THE ESCAP REGION



UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

JAKARTA PLAN OF ACTION ON HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT IN THE ESCAP REGION

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FOREWORD

At both its forty-second and forty-third sessions, convened in 1986 and 1987 respectively, the Commission deliberated upon the theme topic of human resources development. At the forty-second session, the debate focused on the technological aspects of human resources development and at the forty-third session, on its social aspects.

At its forty-third session, the Commission decided that the theme topic for the forty-fourth session, to be convened at Jakarta in April 1988, should continue to be human resources development, with a view to considering an integrated plan of action on human resources development for the region.

The Commission also adopted, at its forty-third session, resolution 260 (XLIII) on an ESCAP integrated plan of action on human resources development. In that resolution, it was indicated, *inter alia*, that:

- (1) In considering human resources development as the theme topic of its forty-fourth session, the Commission would give special attention to the formulation of an integrated plan of action on human resources development for the ESCAP region;
- (2) The Commission welcomed the offer of the Government of Japan to host an expert group meeting in Tokyo to formulate guidelines on an integrated plan of action on human resources development for the ESCAP region and to provide substantial funding therefor;
- (3) The secretariat should formulate a draft integrated plan of action on human resources development for the ESCAP region in pursuance of the decisions and recommendations of the Commission at its forty-second and forty-third sessions and in the light of the report of the expert group meeting.

In compliance with the directives contained in the resolution, the secretariat, in co-operation with the Government of Japan, convened the Expert Group Meeting to Formulate Guidelines for an ESCAP Integrated Plan of Action on Human Resources Development, which was held at Tokyo from 7 to 10 December 1987. The Meeting was attended by 20 experts from 14 countries and by representatives of 13 intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and United Nations bodies and agencies. The report of the Meeting contains guidelines for the overall scope and content of the plan of action; guidelines for the specific content of the plan of action with respect to major issues

concerning employment and manpower development, science and technology, quality of life and women's concerns; and guidelines for a co-ordination mechanism to implement the plan of action.¹

As a follow-up to the Expert Group Meeting, the Inter-agency Meeting on an Integrated Plan of Action on Human Resources Development for Asia and the Pacific was held at ESCAP headquarters, Bangkok, on 18 December 1987. Representatives of nine agencies, in addition to ESCAP, attended the Meeting. The Inter-agency Meeting reviewed the report of the Expert Group Meeting and considered inter-agency co-ordination mechanisms and proposals for specific agency activities in support of the plan of action. The agencies' views and suggestions on those matters were recorded in the report of the Meeting.

The draft integrated plan of action on human resources development was formulated by the secretariat in accordance with the guidelines and recommendations contained in the reports of the above meetings and in compliance with the directives and recommendations earlier specified by the Commission. The draft integrated plan of action was considered by the Commission at its forty-fourth session, held at Jakarta from 11 to 20 April 1988.²

The Commission endorsed the plan of action as a general guideline, bearing in mind that the various considerations and proposals expressed by Governments at the forty-fourth session would be taken into account by the secretariat in the course of practical implementation of the plan. In doing so, it called attention to the fact that specific courses of action would have to be formulated in terms of the unique circumstances prevailing in each country of the region.

The Commission considered it appropriate to use human resources development as a core integrating concept in overall development planning and policy. It recognized that human resources development was both a necessary precondition and the ultimate goal of national development. The themes of the plan of action were accepted as constituting an effective focus for the specification of a wide-ranging set of priorities, policy recommendations and specific proposals for action. Those priorities, recommendations and proposals provided an appropriate basis for the formulation of human resources development policies and strategies suitable for the varying conditions which prevailed in the region.

¹ The report of the Expert Group Meeting, in addition to background documentation prepared for that meeting, is contained in ESCAP, *Background to an Integrated Plan of Action on Human Resources Development for the ESCAP Region* (ST/ESCAP/601).

² See the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on its forty-fourth session, Jakarta, 11-20 April 1988 (*Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1988, Supplement No. 11* (E/1988/35-E/ESCAP/644) (forthcoming) (paras. 194-232).

A number of delegations expressed the view that the draft plan of action would serve as a useful guideline or check-list of policies, strategies and programmes from which countries could choose those approaches that would be most appropriate, given their national priorities and development situations. Many delegations also stressed that the plan was intended mainly for consideration and implementation by Governments at the national level, and that regional support should focus primarily on monitoring, technical assistance and promotion of regional co-operation, including the sharing of expertise and facilities and the exchange of information and experience concerning human resources development.

In concluding its deliberations on this major topic, the Commission adopted resolution 274 (XLIV) on the Jakarta Plan of Action on Human Resources Development in the ESCAP Region. This resolution, with its annex, which comprises the Plan of Action itself, is presented below.

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RESOLUTION 274 (XLIV): JAKARTA PLAN OF ACTION ON HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT IN THE ESCAP REGION

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

Recalling its resolutions 247 (XLII) of 1 May 1986 on forecasting, planning and development of technological human resources, 256 (XLII) of 2 May 1986 on the ESCAP Plan of Action on National and Regional Initiatives for Human Resources Development: Its Technological Dimensions, and 260 (XLIII) of 30 April 1987 on an ESCAP integrated plan of action on human resources development,

Reaffirming its commitment to human resources development as a vital aspect of integrated national development efforts,

Recognizing the need for informed, concerted national and regional action in the field of human resources development,

Recognizing that the issues of employment and manpower development, science and technology, and quality of life, should be addressed in the integrated plan of action,

Also recognizing the human resources development is a broad concept encompassing many components and requiring sustained efforts over a long period for its gradual effective implementation,

Taking into account the report of the Tokyo Expert Group Meeting to Formulate Guidelines for an ESCAP Integrated Plan of Action on Human Resources Development,

Also taking into account the opinions of those members and associate members which were not in a position to express their views on the subject at an earlier stage,

Also taking into account the deliberations on the issue of human resources development in the Asian and Pacific region at its forty-second, forty-third and present sessions,

Acknowledging the opening address by His Excellency President Soeharto of Indonesia,

1. *Adopts* the integrated plan of action on human resources development annexed to the present resolution as a general guideline to be applied

flexibly by the Commission and its members and associate members in accordance with the differing economic and social conditions prevailing in the countries of the region, giving special consideration to the least developed countries of the region,

2. *Decides* that the plan of action shall be called the Jakarta Plan of Action on Human Resources Development in the ESCAP Region;

3. *Invites* members and associate members in a position to do so, as well as other interested countries, to support the Commission's efforts to implement the Jakarta Plan of Action;

4. *Also invites* relevant agencies, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, and intergovernmental bodies, to extend effective support to the implementation of the Jakarta Plan of Action, together with the projects, programmes and activities undertaken in the field of human resources development;

5. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

- (a) To examine in further detail the problems and recommend possible solutions in implementing the Jakarta Plan of Action, and in that connection, upon the availability of the necessary extrabudgetary resources, to convene a meeting of experts to obtain advice in this matter;
- (b) To organize an intergovernmental meeting to make preparations for the necessary arrangements to implement the Jakarta Plan of Action, and to submit the report of that meeting to the Commission at its forty-fifth session in 1989;
- (c) To monitor the human resources development process in the region;

6. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its forty-fifth session, and at alternate sessions thereafter until the year 2000, on the implementation of the present resolution.

Annex

**JAKARTA PLAN OF ACTION ON HUMAN RESOURCES
DEVELOPMENT IN THE ESCAP REGION**

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Part One

INTRODUCTION

I. HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT: THE CORE CONCEPT

1. In its deliberations on the issue of human resources development, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific has observed that, while the human factor plays a decisive role in economic and social progress, it is also the people who are the intended beneficiaries of development. Human resources development is, in this perspective, much more than an instrument for development: it is the ultimate objective of the development process.

2. That the development of the full potential of human beings stands at the centre of the economic and social development process is self-evident. Yet much development policy and planning appears to ignore this truth. It is gratifying to find, therefore, that there has been a growing recognition in the ESCAP region in recent years of the need to re-examine and redirect development efforts in favour of the human dimension.

3. This is partly in response to the growing awareness that development in too many cases has been successful only in narrowly-defined terms, while even that success has in many cases largely bypassed the majority of the people. It is also partly a reaction to perceptions of the limited immediate human relevance and impact of development planning and programming in many countries. In addition, it arises out of the crisis of human redundancy in many developing countries, whereby continued economic growth apparently does not require the full utilization of the available human resources.

4. There is thus a need for a reorientation, a need to put a human face on development. Human resources development refers, in this context, to the strategies, policies, plans and programmes that would seek to translate this concern into operational terms.

5. The critical importance of human capital for economic development is not a new idea, but it has acquired added urgency in recent years. This is related to the growing problem that developing countries have encountered in upgrading their human resources to meet economic development requirements. It is also associated with the fact that changes in the composition of global demand for goods and services have made it imperative for developing countries to reduce their dependence on the production of primary commodities and emphasize modern-sector industries and services if they are to increase their income and employment opportunities. It arises, furthermore, out of the growing threat

of massive labour redundancy owing to the introduction of labour-saving technologies, especially those which save on unskilled labour. Finally, it reflects the fears growing out of the region's continuing increase in population and changing demographic structure, resulting in a rapidly growing labour force.

6. Future advances must spring from structural adjustments involving higher levels of human resources capabilities with more diversified skills. Furthermore, while other physical frontiers of production, particularly land and exhaustible sources of energy, have approached the limits of exploitation in many countries of Asia and the Pacific, the region's vast human resources potential remains largely untapped. The challenge is to raise the productivity of the region's 2.7 billion people in an era of rapid economic and social change. The further development of the region is thus closely dependent upon both the effective use of its human resources and their continued enrichment, through education, skills formation, improved health and nutrition and other means.

7. However, the concept of human resources as perceived by the Commission goes further – well beyond its role as a form of productive capital. The Commission has recognized that human resources development is a broad concept encompassing both the means and the ends of development and that it is equally essential for both economic and social progress. Human resources development therefore requires careful consideration of the implications of different development strategies and priorities, not only in order to ensure that the returns to development efforts may be maximized but also so that the distribution of the benefits of development among the people may be optimized. Likewise, the opportunities provided by human resources development should facilitate broad-based participation by the people in the development process, with special provisions to enhance the status of the disadvantaged sections of society.

8. The interaction between human resources as means and ends of development blurs the distinction between the investment and consumption aspects of human resources development. This in turn impinges on the conventional dichotomy between the economic and social dimensions of development, which characterizes development in terms of the application of economic “instruments” to achieve social “objectives”. The economic aspects are thus assumed to serve as the active principle in the development process and are often accorded priority over the so-called passive social considerations.

9. This view that social “ends” will automatically be served so long as the economic “means” are effectively mobilized and channelled is overly simplistic, and thus misleading. The effective mobilization and utilization of human resources require that development should be viewed as a single, unified process involving both social and economic instruments and aimed at the achievement of overall, integrated objectives. The interdependence between means and ends, between economic and social considerations, in the context of human resources

development negates the narrow, analytical distinctions. This fuller understanding of the development process provides a conceptual counterpart for the reality that economic advancement is no more possible without a firm social base than is social progress a simple and straightforward outcome of economic growth.

10. The interdependence between development means and ends and between the economic and social dimensions of development, as highlighted in the human resources development concept, necessitates an integrated approach to the development of human resources. The Commission has noted that strong supply-demand and social-economic interrelationships reinforce the various aspects of human resources development. These interrelationships require sustained attention if their positive potential for development is to be harnessed effectively. The interface of education and training, on the one hand, and the capacity to satisfy basic needs, on the other, is evident. The further implications of these interrelationships with respect to such fundamental variables as fertility, longevity, employment, productivity and distribution have also been widely recognized. The present Plan of Action is predicated on these considerations.

II. ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

11. A plan of action on human resources development for the ESCAP region requires, at the outset, a common understanding concerning the analytical framework within which the plan may be appropriately formulated. The basic components of the framework can be identified as follows:

A. Dimensions of human resources development

12. From a broad conceptual point of view, the full range of economic and social development processes may be characterized as human resources development. It has sometimes been argued that concepts which seek to be all-inclusive tend to have little explanatory or operational value. Nevertheless, approached from the perspective of human resources development, the main concerns and priorities of the development process take on a clear focus and direction. This clarity is enhanced when the key problems of human resources development are classified in accordance with the three major themes of employment and manpower development, science and technology, and the quality of life.

13. These three dimensions comprise a set of complementary and closely interrelated issues. None of them can be fully examined without reference to the others; yet each provides unique insights into the nature of the overall problem and the means whereby it can be resolved effectively and efficiently. Between them, they provide an integrated framework for examining the human resources development process.

14. The priority issues under each of these themes may be identified as follows:

(a) *Employment and manpower development.* Forecasts to the year 2000 indicate that many countries in the region will continue to have rapid population growth. Labour supply will also grow rapidly. In the face of a relatively slow-growing demand for labour, this will lead to a substantial rise in unemployment. Especially serious situations are likely to arise in the agrarian sector and the market for unskilled labour. For many developing countries, additional problems in matching labour demand and supply will be associated with unstable and possibly deteriorating domestic and international demand conditions, strengthening of protectionist tendencies and obsolescence of many skills in the presence of changing technological circumstances and other factors. Appropriate policy changes based on full information will be required to cope with the changing situation. Since market conditions are likely to remain highly unpredictable because of the uncertainty of changes in demand and the certainty of technological change, the emphasis should be on flexibility and the creation of a broad-based productive capability rather than narrowly skilled manpower. Special efforts must also be directed towards providing favourable conditions for the growth of new entrepreneurial skills to take advantage of emerging economic opportunities.

(b) *Science and technology.* Rapid accretions to the international fund of scientific knowledge and technology are fast revising the region's agenda of development opportunities. The implications of recent scientific and technological progress in such fields as information, biotechnology, micro-electronics, material sciences and energy technologies indicate that, unless vigorous steps are taken immediately to adapt the region's human resources to the new realities, the development potential inherent in modern science and technology will be lost. At the same time, efforts must be made to adapt the new technologies to the region's labour-dominant factor proportions and to its pressing human resources development needs. The interface of the region's science and technology capabilities and its human resources profile thus requires that attention be devoted to both the generation of manpower for the promotion of science and technology and the utilization of science and technology to upgrade the full range of human resources.

(c) *Quality of life.* The evident failure of the development process to generate substantial improvements in national and international equity and eradicate poverty in many developing countries has little likelihood of being overcome in the foreseeable future unless carefully co-ordinated remedial strategies, policies and programmes are introduced in a number of key sectors, including education, health, population, urbanization and the environment. In many developing countries of the region, seriously disadvantaged population groups continue to comprise the great majority of the people. Tapping the potential of these under-utilized human resources would generate significant

socio-economic progress while simultaneously enhancing the quality of life of these groups. Conversely, improvements in the quality of life of these groups would raise their productive capabilities. Practical measures for improving the living conditions of disadvantaged groups and increasing their level of participation in society will need to be identified and vigorously implemented if these benefits are to be realized.

B. Target groups for human resources development

15. The productive capabilities and resilience of individuals, communities and organizations to deal with rapidly changing economic and social circumstances must be strengthened at all levels and among all sections of society if the Plan of Action is to succeed in upgrading the region's human resources. However, no national or regional development plan can hope to have a direct influence on every individual, community and organization, especially in the presence of the severe physical and financial resource constraints prevalent in developing countries throughout Asia and the Pacific. It is therefore necessary that target groups for human resources development be identified. Target groups should be selected on the basis of social cost-benefit criteria as well as the prospective linkage and multiplier effects of human resources development programmes directed at them.

16. Development is fundamentally about, by and for human beings, and in the national context it should be concerned with the well-being of all the people. It is equally true, however, that developing countries are burdened with great disparities in income and wealth, skills, education, health, access to employment opportunities and participation in decision-making. In this context, it has often been noted that the cost-effectiveness of human resources development activities aimed at different segments of the population is often highest among the poor and other disadvantaged target groups. It would thus appear appropriate, in any human resources development strategy, policy, plan or programme, to pay special attention to specific or selected disadvantaged population groups.

17. The disadvantaged sections of society form the obvious target for human resources development, not only because of the egalitarian and humanitarian ideals that would be served thereby but, equally important, because of the high long-term social rate of return on investment that would be achieved. This rationale for identifying target groups for the plan of action coincides with the Commission's broad programme priorities. In a major reassessment of its programme priorities at its thirty-ninth session, in April 1983, the Commission determined that it should place special emphasis on the promotion of economic and social development leading to the alleviation of poverty and that its activities should achieve practical results benefiting the poorer sections of the population of the region. As a corollary, the Commission stressed the need to give special attention to assistance to the region's least developed countries, land-locked developing countries and developing South Pacific island countries.

18. These broad priorities provide a logical frame of reference for the Plan of Action by focusing it on the disadvantaged groups in society. The need remains, within this frame of reference, to identify particular target groups for specific programmes and projects. In keeping with the Commission's earlier programme decisions, the disadvantaged target groups to be accorded priority attention can be identified as, among others, the rural and urban poor, the landless, the unemployed, women, youth, disabled persons, the aging and minority groups.

C. Enablers of human resources development

19. Just as target groups need to be specified in order to optimize the impact and maximize the multiplier effects of programmes and projects under the plan of action, appropriate enablers of human resources development must be identified for much the same reasons. Enablers of human resources development include those individuals, groups and organizations whose active intervention can catalyse the human resources development process. They serve, in effect, as the agents or instruments of human resources development.

20. Those who are perceived to constitute an enabler group at one level may well be considered a target group at another level, since the requisite catalytic capabilities can be generated only through prior education, training, raising of awareness, provision of incentives and other preparation of potential enablers. At the same time, target groups that have been successfully mobilized for human resources development may themselves have the potential to serve as enablers in their own right.

21. Since the target groups for the Plan of Action can be identified as including the general category of the disadvantaged sections of society, it would follow that the enablers should be selected from among those who come into direct contact with the disadvantaged. It is therefore appropriate that priority attention should be given to government officers responsible for local-level public administration, where the weaknesses of human resources development policy implementation are often most keenly felt; officers responsible for the delivery of essential services at the local level, including such personnel as primary school teachers, local health officials and agricultural extension agents; entrepreneurs and managers, who are responsible not only for providing employment but are also sources of technological and other expertise; staff of non-governmental organizations, whose voluntary efforts play an important role in encouraging popular participation, developing public understanding and filling gaps in government efforts at the grass-roots level; and mass-media personnel, who staff the increasingly powerful knowledge, information and communications networks indispensable to modern economic and social life.

D. Demand-focused versus supply-focused approaches to human resources development

22. Human resources development may be approached from the supply side or from the demand side. The supply-side approach deals with the generation of the means for human resources development, on the assumption that the demand already exists. The demand-side approach is concerned with the utilization of these means. The numerous policies and programmes for human resources development that have been implemented by Governments of developing countries of the ESCAP region have concentrated largely on supply-side issues. Yet the level of human resources development in many countries, particularly among their rural populations, remains obstinately low, while the need for effective human resources development continues to be an urgent priority. This suggests that a supply-focused strategy may not be sufficient.

23. The limitations of existing programmes for human resources development suggest that more demand-oriented strategies are required. The absolute poor, rural landless, urban slum dwellers, women, members of minority groups and other disadvantaged groups, especially those in isolated and backward areas, confront a wide range of economic, social, psychological and physical obstacles to the development of their human resources. Programmes that fail to take explicit account of the institutional and structural obstacles to the participation of disadvantaged groups inevitably favour those who are least disadvantaged: those with higher socio-economic status, superior education and training and readier access to development opportunities. If the region's human resources are to be developed, the institutional context within which such development takes place must become an explicit focus of human resources development policy.

E. The problem of uncertainty

24. Any development plan requires a vision of the preferred future and of the means whereby that future may be realized. Yet the unpredictability of events remains an ever-present reality. One of the major lessons of the past 40 years of development planning in Asia and the Pacific is that, no matter how refined the analysis of economic and social conditions and no matter how sophisticated the techniques brought to bear, unanticipated circumstances invariably intervene to distort the planning exercise.

25. Economic and social development planning has, as a result of its difficulties in accommodating the unpredictable, and thus its limited capacity to adapt to unanticipated circumstances, fallen increasingly into disfavour. Nowhere has this problem been more evident than in the planning of human resources development. Strategies for human resources development should be devised with

this issue clearly in mind, thus enhancing the possibility of formulating and executing practicable approaches.

26. While some trends of major concern for purposes of human resources development planning have been acknowledged as having considerable uncertainty, especially over the medium to long term, which is the relevant time span for any plan of action on human resources development, others may be expected to persist and even intensify over the remainder of the twentieth century. Furthermore, the wide range of intercountry variation in economic and social trends requires that the plan of action be formulated in such a way that it can respond to a broad spectrum of possible scenarios. In the presence of uncertainty, the advantage thus lies on the side of those programmes in which resources and efforts will not be irretrievably committed.

27. If flexibility is to be emphasized, the lesson is that, over the medium to long term, the Plan of Action should limit its prescriptive content primarily to the development of human resources at the basic level. Furthermore, over longer intervals, it should be primarily indicative in nature. Where possible, short-term commitments of resources should be favoured over those requiring a longer term. In the presence of uncertainty, furthermore, the plan in its operational form should be fully specified only for relatively short spans of time. It should have built-in capabilities to respond to change through a variety of programmes to enhance the adaptability of individuals and institutions and to strengthen their resilience in the presence of evolving development challenges.

F. National issues in the regional context

28. The Plan of Action must, in the final analysis, be implemented at the national level. Action at the regional level should play a supportive role. Regional analysis and technical assistance, regional co-operation among developing countries, North-South co-operation within the region and regional co-ordination of responses to emerging economic and social issues – all such approaches to human resources development among countries can serve to complement and supplement the broad range of programmes and projects that must be undertaken within countries to resolve critical issues relating to the human resources development process.

29. In this regard, it is essential that the Plan of Action take due account of the diversity of national experience and situations in the ESCAP region. The region of Asia and the Pacific is unique in the heterogeneity of its economic, social, cultural and political conditions, not to mention its geophysical features. Given the broad diversity of the region's national development situations, the Plan of Action must ensure sufficient flexibility and scope to accommodate the full range of national circumstances and feasible human resources development responses.

III. PRINCIPLES

30. The Jakarta Plan of Action on Human Resources Development in the ESCAP region is founded on the following principles:

(a) The human factor plays a decisive role as a productive agent in development; at the same time, it is the people who are the intended beneficiaries of development. Human resources development thus serves as both an essential means and the ultimate end of development.

(b) Human resources development contributes to the attainment of such fundamental development objectives or ideals as the eradication of absolute poverty, full employment, universal basic education, universal access to secondary education and vocational training, national self-reliance in science and technology, satisfaction of basic needs and full participation of all population groups in the development process.

(c) In view of the pervasive interaction between human resources development and all facets of economic and social progress, an integrated approach to the planning and execution of human resources development is required, involving the active participation of all sectors.

(d) The three major themes of employment and manpower development, science and technology, and quality of life constitute a comprehensive framework for the effective planning and execution of human resources development in the ESCAP region.

(e) In the presence of resource constraints, the planning and execution of human resources development should place particular emphasis on specific target groups among the disadvantaged sections of society, and on the least developed, land-locked and developing island countries.

(f) The implementation of human resources development plans and programmes at the local level should be carried out by enablers capable of exercising a direct catalytic effect on the human resources development of specific target groups.

(g) In addition to conventional supply-focused human resources development strategies, which seek to strengthen human resources capabilities, the planning and execution of human resources development should emphasize demand-oriented strategies, which involve the elimination of socio-cultural and other constraints to the effective utilization of human resources.

(h) Uncertainty concerning future economic and social development trends requires that built-in flexibility, including an emphasis on indicative rather than prescriptive content, be emphasized in human resources development planning and execution.

(i) In designing regional approaches to the planning and execution of human resources development, due attention must be paid to the diversity of national experiences and situations in the ESCAP region.

(j) The formulation and implementation of national strategies, policies, plans and programmes for human resources development are the sovereign right and responsibility of each member and associate member of ESCAP, to be carried out within the context of its specific national development needs and objectives.

(k) Regional co-operation and technical assistance in support of national strategies, policies, plans and programmes for human resources development make an important contribution to the enhancement of human resources endowments.

Part Two

RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

Introduction

1. The Jakarta Plan of Action on Human Resources Development in the ESCAP Region provides broad guidelines for transforming the principles of human resources development into practice. It constitutes, in effect, a policy framework within which national Governments, regional bodies and institutions, international organizations and other agents of development may formulate and execute specific strategies, policies, plans, programmes and projects that address the particular needs, and respond to the individual priorities, of each ESCAP member and associate member.

2. The Plan of Action contains 33 broad policy recommendations and 106 specific proposals for action. These recommendations and proposals are classified under six functional headings, relating to policy and planning, institutional strengthening, education and training, research and analysis, information systems, and monitoring and evaluation. It remains for the various participating bodies, agencies, organizations and other institutions to devise specific projects that will ensure the execution of the Plan.

3. In conformity with the intersectoral and interdisciplinary concerns of the Commission, the recommendations and proposals have been formulated to reflect an integrated approach to human resources development. While explicitly pursuing an integrated approach, they do not, however, aim to be comprehensive. Instead, they focus on critical issues and specific target and enabler groups within the population, as practical means of ensuring effective implementation in the presence of budgetary, manpower and other constraints.

4. The recommendations subsume the three major themes of human resources development identified by the Commission: employment and manpower development; science and technology; and quality of life. Similarly, action to be taken at the national and regional levels, and by various bodies, agencies, organizations and other institutions, in implementation of the Plan of Action are subsumed under the various specific proposals for action.

I. POLICY AND PLANNING FOR HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Recommendation 1. Priority for human resources development policies and planning

The realization of the full potential of the individual stands at the centre of the development process. That principle requires that special attention be given to the development of the individual's human resources. *Governments should therefore give priority to the development of human resources in national planning and policy-making.*

Proposals for action

- (1) Human resources development plans should be given priority within the context of overall development planning.
- (2) Policy and planning bodies for human resources development should be established at a high level to ensure that human resources development is given appropriate recognition within the context of national development plans.
- (3) In the intersectoral allocation of budgetary resources, special provision should be made to ensure that adequate resources are allocated to human resources development programmes and projects.

Recommendation 2. National plans of action for human resources development

Plans of action for human resources development should be formulated and executed at the national level. Recognizing that human resources can be effectively developed only with the active participation of all economic and social sectors, as well as the public and private sectors, national leadership and direction are essential in the formulation and execution of plans of action for human resources development.

Proposals for action

- (4) Plans of action for human resources development should be formulated and implemented at the national level.
- (5) National plans of action for human resources development should be constructed so as to ensure that investment in physical infrastructure is supported by adequate investment in human resources.

- (6) In preparing national plans of action for human resources development, Governments should be guided by the recommendations and proposals contained in this Plan of Action.

Recommendation 3. An integrated approach to human resources development planning

Appropriate methods and mechanisms should be developed to ensure that an integrated approach is adopted in human resources development planning. An integrated approach to human resources development planning, as an essential component of development planning as a whole, is necessitated by the interaction between development means and ends and the interdependence of the economic and social dimensions of development.

Proposals for action

- (7) Action should be taken to develop and apply methods for policy-making, planning and programming that are conducive to an integrated approach to human resources development.
- (8) Measures for interministerial and interdepartmental co-operation should be enacted to facilitate the application of an integrated approach to human resources development policy-making and planning.
- (9) Human resources development planning should take into account and utilize interministerial and interdepartmental complementarities and opportunities for co-operation in order to optimize the impact of programmes and conserve resources.

Recommendation 4. Emphasis on demand-oriented strategies

Special emphasis should be placed on demand-oriented strategies for human resources development. Such strategies would seek to stimulate the demand for human resources development by increasing public awareness of its benefits and reducing the impact of socio-cultural and other constraints that restrict demand. Under such strategies, policies and plans would seek to affect values and attitudes as critical determinants of the demand for human resources development. They would also seek to mobilize popular participation and thereby motivate individuals to increase their demand for human resources development.

Proposals for action

- (10) Policy makers and planners should identify and remove socio-cultural and other constraints on the demand for human resources

development. Particular attention should be given to demand constraints that impinge upon disadvantaged groups, such as women, the rural poor and indigenous minorities.

- (11) Programmes should be devised that focus on the creation of demand among the people for the upgrading of their own human resources. Such programmes could seek to raise public awareness concerning the opportunities for, and benefits to be derived from, human resources development.

Recommendation 5. Enhancement of popular participation

Popular participation is a necessary means of ensuring adequate feedback to policy makers and planners so that appropriate adjustments can be made to increase the effectiveness of human resources development programmes. By mobilizing community and private resources, popular participation in programme implementation could also help to provide a valuable supplement to limited public resources. *Popular participation in human resources development policy and planning should therefore be enhanced.*

Proposals for action

- (12) Activities should be undertaken to encourage popular participation, in particular the participation of disadvantaged groups, in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of human resources development programmes.
- (13) Programmes for human resources development should be designed to stimulate active community and individual awareness of their rights and responsibilities as participants in human resources development policy and planning.

Recommendation 6. Encouragement of participation by the private sector and non-governmental organizations

The potential for increased participation in human resources development by the private sector and non-governmental organizations should be explored and utilized. The private enterprise sector offers many opportunities, through its access to technical expertise and other resources, to support human resources development. Similarly, many programmes undertaken by non-governmental organizations, particularly in connection with quality-of-life issues, can contribute to the achievement of human resources development objectives. The active support of both the

private sector and non-governmental organizations should be encouraged, especially in areas where public resources are strained.

Proposals for action

- (14) Where appropriate, policy makers and planners should mobilize private sector involvement in, and support for, human resources development programmes.
- (15) To ensure the effective participation of non-governmental organizations in human resources development efforts, the human-resources-development-related activities of non-governmental organizations should be co-ordinated with ongoing plans and programmes.
- (16) The potential role of non-governmental organizations as testing grounds for exploring alternative, innovative approaches to human resources development should be fully utilized.

Recommendation 7. Focus on specific population groups

Budgetary and other constraints necessitate that human resources development policy-making and planning should focus on specific population groups as plan targets. The disadvantaged sections of society constitute an appropriate focus because of the higher returns to investment in their human resources and because of their greater need. Because of the large numbers of disadvantaged persons in many developing countries, policy makers and planners will need to identify specific target groups among the disadvantaged sections of society. Such target groups should include those whose human resources development would generate strong multiplier effects to benefit others.

Proposals for action

- (17) Policy makers should identify specific human resources development target groups among the disadvantaged sections of society. Development planners should devise measures to make these groups the focus of national human resources development plans.
- (18) Policy makers should identify and direct human resources development programmes towards specific target groups, such as women, which would generate strong multiplier effects to benefit others.
- (19) In devising programmes and allocating funds for human resources development, regional bodies, international organizations and donor agencies and countries should focus on disadvantaged population

groups and give priority to countries with the lowest levels of human resources development.

Recommendation 8. Policy and planning for employment generation

Priority should be given to employment generation in national human resources development policy-making and planning. In most countries in the region, especially in the large labour-surplus countries, it will be increasingly difficult to provide sufficient wage employment for the growing numbers of new entrants into the labour force and those displaced from the agricultural sector. Policy makers and planners should therefore encourage alternative forms of economic participation, including self-employment and entrepreneurship. In addition, the potential for expanding employment in the service sector should be fully utilized.

Proposals for action

- (20) Policies, plans and programmes should be formulated to focus on employment generation, including the promotion of self-employment and entrepreneurship.
- (21) Policies, plans and programmes should be devised to support and expand the capacity of the service sector to generate increased employment.

Recommendation 9. Policy and planning for employment creation in the informal sector

The informal sector absorbs large numbers of workers in most countries of the region and plays an important role in creating employment opportunities for workers displaced from agriculture, as well as contributing to other aspects of human resources development. *Special attention should therefore be given to the informal sector in policy-making and planning for human resources development.*

Proposals for action

- (22) The potential of the informal sector to generate employment should be fully utilized in human resources development policy and planning. The role of this sector should be supported in overall development planning.
- (23) Urban planners should design special measures to provide essential services to small-scale enterprises in the informal sector, which has the potential to employ large numbers of urban workers.

- (24) Small-scale and cottage industries should be supported through special consideration in industrial regulations and the extension of appropriate incentives to support their contribution to employment creation.
- (25) Human resources development policy makers and planners should pay special attention to the promotion of employment in the rural informal sector.
- (26) Industrial regulations and administrative procedures should be rationalized to facilitate the co-existence of the informal and formal sectors.

Recommendation 10. Science and technology policy and planning for human resources development

Fuller consideration should be given in policy-making and planning to the interrelationships between human resources and science and technology. Scientific and technological progress will have a decisive impact on human resources in developing countries in the coming years. Policies should be developed to adapt human resources to those changes. In particular, policy makers and planners should ensure that the potential of scientific and technological progress to create new employment opportunities is fully exploited and that adequate measures are taken to counteract any negative impact on employment.

Proposals for action

- (27) The human resources development implications of science and technology in such areas as employment, education and the formation of social values and attitudes should be fully addressed in policy and planning.
- (28) Policy makers and planners should institute measures to counteract the negative effects of certain science and technology trends on human resources development, especially on employment.
- (29) The potential of scientific and technological progress to create new employment opportunities and enhance the quality of life should be fully exploited in human resources development policy-making and planning.
- (30) Policies should be devised to develop and promote attitudes supportive of science and technology among the population as a means of increasing national capacity for utilizing science and technology for human resources development.

Recommendation 11. Science and technology manpower planning

Policy makers and planners should make provision to ensure that human resources of appropriate quantity and quality are generated to support national science and technology development. Policies and plans for manpower development should be devised to ensure that science and technology manpower at all levels is equipped with a broad and basic range of skills to enable effective response to rapid changes in technology.

Proposals for action

- (31) Educational plans should be framed so as to ensure that an adequate flow of students is channelled through the science and technology streams of secondary and tertiary education to provide the necessary personnel requirements in scientific and technological occupations.
- (32) Manpower planners should make adequate provision for the human resources requirements generated by national scientific and technological development. They should ensure that scientific and technological personnel at all levels are equipped with a broad and basic range of skills to promote the capacity to respond to technological change.

Recommendation 12. Policy and planning to improve the quality of life

The broad range of concerns encompassing the quality of life dimension of human resources development, including such factors as basic education and literacy, health and nutrition, housing, sanitation and the environment, enhance the capacity of the individual to both undertake and benefit from human resources development. *Policy and planning should therefore emphasize improvements in the quality of life as a critical means as well as goal of promoting human resources development.* In this connection, the positive productivity effects of improvements in the quality-of-life aspect of human resources development need to be taken into full consideration in human resources development planning.

Proposals for action

- (33) Emphasis should be given in policy-making and planning to improving the quality-of-life aspects of human resources development.
- (34) In view of the importance of the formative years of childhood in determining the future quality of human resources, policy makers and planners should take full account of the influence of all relevant

economic and social factors on child development so that the best possible results can be ensured by the formulation and implementation of such policies and plans.

- (35) In comparing the respective merits of investments in different sectors as a basis for sectoral investment decisions, policy makers and planners should give due consideration to the long-term and cumulative benefits that often arise out of investments directed towards improving the quality of life.

II. HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING

Recommendation 13. National co-ordination mechanisms for human resources development planning

In view of the pervasive, multisectoral implication of human resources development, policies and plans for human resources development should be carefully co-ordinated. *National mechanisms to co-ordinate the formulation and implementation of national plans of action for human resources development should be established and existing mechanisms strengthened.* Those mechanisms should be located at high levels of government to ensure that the various sectors pursue common objectives and undertake complementary programmes and projects in conformity with the national plans of action.

Proposals for action

- (36) A national focal point should be designated in each country to co-ordinate human resources development activities within the context of overall national development policies and plans.
- (37) Human resources development units should be established in ministries and other national bodies to liaise with the national focal point and ensure that the implementation of sectoral programmes is in accordance with national plans.
- (38) National co-ordination mechanisms should develop and strengthen procedures to facilitate co-ordination between private and public sector bodies involved in human resources development.

Recommendation 14. Strengthening of human resources development training and research institutions

Administrative and technical infrastructures constitute a critical constraint on the effective formulation and execution of human resources development plans and programmes. *Institutions undertaking research on human resources development issues and institutions responsible for training administrative and technical personnel should be supported in order to enhance the capability of such personnel to design and implement human resources development plans and programmes.*

Proposals for action

- (39) National and regional institutions undertaking research on human resources development issues and training of human resources development administrative and technical personnel should be strengthened in terms of staffing, curricula and budgets.
- (40) The establishment of special programmes for research and training in human resources development should be promoted in public and private as well as non-governmental research and training institutions.

Recommendation 15. Support for institutions engaged in manpower planning

The capacity of institutions engaged in manpower planning to undertake an integrated approach to human resources development should be strengthened. Institutional capabilities in manpower planning should be developed to take into full consideration the interrelationships between employment conditions, on the one hand, and the science and technology and quality-of-life aspects of human resources development, on the other.

Proposals for action

- (41) Manpower planning institutions and networks at the national and regional levels should be strengthened to enhance their capacity to undertake an integrated approach to human resources development.
- (42) The staffing of institutions undertaking manpower planning should reflect the multidisciplinary and multisectoral nature of an integrated approach to manpower planning. Staff training, including in-service training, should similarly reflect the interdisciplinary nature of an integrated approach.
- (43) Linkages between institutions undertaking manpower planning and other institutions, in both the public and private sectors, engaged

in employment-related human resources development research and training should be promoted.

Recommendation 16. Support for human-resources-development-related programmes in science and technology institutions

Institutions engaged in scientific and technological research and development should be supported in order to enable them to strengthen programmes of direct relevance to human resources development. The capacity of science and technology institutions to direct their overall programmes to meet national human resources development needs in particular scientific fields should be enhanced. In particular, greater attention should be given to scientific and technological research aimed at resolving quality-of-life issues.

Proposals for action

- (44) The human resources development research and training activities of national science and technology institutions should be strengthened, with special attention to their capacity to develop and adapt technologies appropriate to specific national situations.
- (45) The capacity of institutions engaged in science and technology research and development to contribute to improvements in the physical quality of life should be strengthened.
- (46) The role of the public sector in science and technology research for human resources development should be enhanced by establishing formal and informal relationships between public sector science and technology institutions and the private sector, where appropriate.

Recommendation 17. Institutional support for enabler groups

A number of important enabler groups, including local-level government personnel, voluntary community organizations and the mass media, play a critical role in implementing human resources development programmes and projects at the grass-roots level. Enabler groups can play an especially important role in implementing demand-oriented programmes by mobilizing popular participation and ensuring that programmes reach their intended target groups. *The capability of enabler groups to facilitate the implementation of national plans of action on human resources development should therefore be supported and enhanced.*

Proposals for action

- (47) The capability and motivation of local-level officials responsible for the implementation of human resources development programmes should be strengthened through the provision of appropriate institutional support.
- (48) Support should be provided to non-governmental organizations to ensure their effective participation in the implementation of human resources development plans and programmes at the grass-roots level.
- (49) Institutional support should be provided to programmes for mobilizing and training voluntary group participation in human resources development at the community level.
- (50) In view of the inherent capacity of the mass media to influence and mould public opinion and to inform, they should be fully utilized as enablers of human resources development. In this regard, their capability to reach communities at the grass-roots level should be effectively exploited.

Recommendation 18. Regional co-ordination mechanism for human resources development

A regional mechanism is required to co-ordinate the implementation of the Plan of Action. This mechanism would seek to ensure the effective allocation of regional resources so as to facilitate the implementation of human resources development activities at both the national and regional levels. It would also promote regional co-operation and enhance complementarity among national plans of action for human resources development.

Proposals for action

- (51) A regional co-ordination network for human resources development should be formed to facilitate creative interaction among national and regional human resources development institutions.
- (52) A regional focal point should be designated to support the regional co-ordination network for human resources development.
- (53) The regional focal point should devise a system to facilitate the exchange of human resources development experiences, information and expertise among countries in the region. In particular, this system should focus on the special training, information and other needs of those countries with the lowest levels of human resources development.

III. HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Recommendation 19. Basic education for all

Education is an essential foundation for human resources development. In addition to literacy and numeric skills, basic education for human resources development involves the inculcation of attitudes and abilities that will promote both a demand for, and the capacity to undertake, further human resources development. Literacy and numeracy and at least a rudimentary understanding of scientific principles and methods are essential pre-conditions for a productive and adaptive population that can utilize and adjust rapidly to new technologies and other exogenous changes. *Efforts should therefore be intensified to provide universal basic education.* In particular, Governments should ensure that basic education is extended to disadvantaged population groups.

Proposals for action

- (54) Appropriate measures should be introduced to provide for universal basic education in those countries where this has not yet been achieved, and to enhance its quality in all developing countries of the region.
- (55) The qualifications of teachers, especially those responsible for primary and basic adult education programmes, should be upgraded to enable them to provide students with a sound educational foundation for a lifelong process of human resources development.
- (56) Curriculum development should be undertaken to enhance the quality of primary school education, including the acquisition of learning skills, rather than rote knowledge alone, as a basis for lifelong human resources development.
- (57) The potential of modern educational technologies, including the use of the electronic media, should be developed to improve access to basic education for all. In this regard, special attention should be given to the opportunities afforded by advanced communications technologies as educational infrastructure for the least developed, land-locked and island developing countries and for isolated communities and disadvantaged population groups in other countries.

Recommendation 20. Upgrading secondary and higher education

Access to secondary and higher education should be ensured to all qualified candidates and its quality should be improved. In view of the need for the

region's secondary and higher education systems. to attain international standards of excellence, action should be taken to improve curricula, strengthen teachers' capabilities and upgrade support facilities. Steps should also be taken to provide opportunities for all qualified students to continue their education to the higher levels in order to realize the full potential of each individual member of society.

Proposals for action

- (58) Curricula in all educational fields, particularly at the secondary level, should be revised to emphasize the understanding of humanistic values, scientific principles and analytical methods of thinking in order to develop in the population a capacity to adapt to change and participate in lifelong education for human resources development.
- (59) Action should be taken to counteract the current reliance on formal paper credentials, rather than actual capabilities, in identifying human resources qualifications.
- (60) The adequacy of teacher-training methods for secondary education should be reviewed and improved methods should be devised and instituted to upgrade the qualifications of teachers at this level. Special emphasis should be given to the training and upgrading of science, mathematics and technical teachers at the secondary level.
- (61) Steps should be taken to facilitate the intercountry exchange of educational personnel in the region, especially at the post-secondary level and among teacher-training personnel, as a means of sharing country experience and educational approaches and generating an internationalist human resources development perspective in educational systems.

Recommendation 21. Vocational and technical training

Vocational and technical training should be made relevant to current and prospective employment conditions. Its capacity to prepare graduates to adapt to technological and other changes in the workplace should be enhanced. To meet these needs, *access to vocational and technical training should be increased and the quality of such training as a basis for productive employment should be improved.*

Proposals for action

- (62) Recent advances in science and technology appropriate to the conditions in individual developing countries should be incorporated

into the vocational and technical training curricula of their educational systems.

- (63) Vocational and technical training programmes should be encouraged to emphasize a broad approach to human resources development and promote the capacity of skilled manpower to adjust to changes in labour demand. Narrow specialization in technical training should be avoided where possible. Similarly, vocational and professional training should be designed to expose students to a wide range of skills.
- (64) Work-study programmes and apprenticeship schemes should be incorporated into vocational and technical training programmes to increase the relevance of training to actual employment conditions.
- (65) Short-term vocational and technical training and retraining programmes should be designed to retrain workers whose skills have become redundant as a result of changing production requirements. Training modules directed towards specific skills groups within the labour force should be developed to meet this need in the context of rapidly changing employment conditions.
- (66) Vocational and technical education curricula should be broadened to inculcate entrepreneurial values and positive work ethics. Curricula should be designed to include exposure to the full range of skills required for the operation of small-scale enterprises.

Recommendation 22. Non-formal education and training

Formal education, even if available to all school-age children and youth, cannot alone sustain human resources development because such development is a lifelong process. Furthermore, many young people are excluded from formal education owing to various circumstances. *Non-formal educational channels, including adult education, should therefore be developed and strengthened.* Within the non-formal educational system, innovative programmes should be devised to develop skills, attitudes and capabilities not covered by formal educational curricula. Priority in the development of such programmes should be directed towards the needs of disadvantaged population groups not adequately served by the formal educational system.

Proposals for action

- (67) Adult education programmes should be developed to teach basic literacy and numeric skills and elementary science to those with

little or no formal education, especially women, as a critical means of improving their prospects of employment and enhancing their quality of life.

- (68) Continuing education programmes should be developed as non-formal adjuncts to the formal educational system to support lifelong education. They should be designed to facilitate the upgrading of under-utilized human resources and enhance the capacity of all individuals to adapt to changing social and economic circumstances.
- (69) Women's educational self-help networks should be supported to provide women, especially those wishing to enter the labour force, with basic education and vocational training. Vocational training programmes should be related to existing and emerging employment opportunities to increase women's active economic participation.
- (70) Innovative programmes should be developed to increase the awareness of local-level government officials and service delivery personnel regarding the special needs of disadvantaged groups and to enhance their capabilities for implementing human resources development programmes for disadvantaged groups.
- (71) Out-reach training programmes should be developed for workers and the self-employed in the informal sector. Such programmes should be structured as field exercises, focusing on training for income and employment generation for those population groups that would not ordinarily seek out formal training opportunities.

IV. HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

Recommendation 23. Research on an integrated approach to human resources development

A firm conceptual basis is needed to support an integrated approach to policy-making and planning for human resources development. *Research should therefore be undertaken on the concept of an integrated approach to human resources development and on the means of applying this concept in order to support the formulation, implementation and appraisal of plans of action on human resources development.*

Proposals for action

- (72) The interface between macro-economic development policies and human resources development processes should be examined to

identify the human resources implications of different policy options.

- (73) Research should be undertaken to provide a conceptual basis for demand-oriented strategies for human resources development. Because of the importance of socio-cultural and other non-economic factors in determining the level and composition of demand in relation to human resources development, such studies should incorporate an interdisciplinary approach.
- (74) The relationships between the employment and manpower development, science and technology and quality-of-life dimensions of human resources development should be studied with a view to devising appropriate intersectoral strategies for human resources development planning.
- (75) Research should be conducted on techniques of assessing the relative rates of return on alternative investments in human resources development and the relative rates of return on such investments directed towards alternative population groups.

Recommendation 24. Research on human resources development indicators

Indicators of human resources development are required to determine planning priorities and to monitor and evaluate plan implementation, among other matters. *Research should therefore be undertaken to develop macro- and micro-level indicators of human resources development and to facilitate their use in human resources development policy and planning.* Particular emphasis should be given to quality-of-life indicators because of the inadequacy of existing baseline data in this area.

Proposals for action

- (76) Studies should be undertaken to devise operational indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, of employment trends. Appropriate indicators should be formulated for monitoring and assessing labour market dynamics and their impact on human resources development.
- (77) Quality-of-life indicators should be formulated in order to facilitate planning, monitoring and evaluation of the quality-of-life aspects of human resources development.
- (78) Comprehensive sets of human resources development indicators should be developed for particular target groups among the disadvantaged sections of society to facilitate an informed approach to

the incorporation of those groups into human resources development policy and planning.

- (79) Indicators of women's socio-economic status, including their labour force participation with particular attention to their role in agriculture and the informal sector, should be developed as a basis for special programmes to strengthen women's participation in human resources development.

Recommendation 25. Research on forecasting human resources development

Growing uncertainty and volatility in labour market conditions and related aspects of human resources development have increased the need to develop more effective forecasting systems for particular areas of concern. Conventional forecasting has been confined largely to manpower projections, and the manpower requirements approach that has been used is proving increasingly inadequate for dealing with the issues at hand. *Research should therefore be undertaken to devise improved manpower forecasting methods and procedures and to expand their scope to cover the broader aspects of human resources development.*

Proposals for action

- (80) General systems models should be developed to improve the reliability of forecasts of the labour market and related human resources development variables.
- (81) Improved methods of technological forecasting should be explored, and appropriate procedures for incorporating such forecasts into human resources development policy and planning should be devised.
- (82) Techniques should be improved to facilitate medium- and long-term forecasting of critical quality-of-life variables in human resources development.

Recommendation 26. Research on socio-cultural aspects of human resources development

Among the major determinants of human resources development are socio-cultural factors such as behavioural norms, values, attitudes and stereotypes defining the roles of particular population groups on the basis of characteristics such as gender, ethnicity or social status. Certain socio-cultural conventions constrain human resources development, especially for particular disadvantaged groups. Others have the potential to facilitate human

resources development. A better understanding of those factors would assist policy makers and planners in devising more effective human resources development programmes. *Research should therefore be undertaken to examine both the constraining influences and potential supportive roles of socio-cultural factors in human resources development.*

Proposals for action

- (83) The impact of social and legal conventions on human resources development, particularly in respect of disadvantaged groups, should be assessed.
- (84) Policy-oriented research should be conducted on the changes in socio-cultural values and attitudes, as well as legal conventions, needed to promote human resources development.
- (85) The social and economic conditions and human resources status of particular disadvantaged population groups should be examined. Alternative approaches to enhance their participation in, and contribution to, the development of their human resources should be explored.

V. HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Recommendation 27. Information collection

A data base on the employment and manpower development, science and technology and quality-of-life aspects of human resources development should be compiled. Such information, both statistical and qualitative, is required to support research, policy and planning, plan implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of integrated human resources development at both the national and regional levels.

Proposals for action

- (86) A system to generate up-to-date information on human resources conditions should be established to provide a firm data base for the planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation of human resources development.
- (87) The collection of labour market information should be expanded. Existing data series should be strengthened in terms of both coverage and reliability. Additional data, including qualitative information,

should be generated to permit more effective analysis of labour-market dynamics.

- (88) In view of the paucity of information on the informal sector, special efforts should be made to collect data on all aspects of human resources development in that sector. Statistical concepts and data-collection methods concerning the informal sector should be refined to support such efforts.

Recommendation 28. Information processing and analysis

Human resources development data are often inadequately utilized owing to limited processing facilities and expertise. *Data processing and analytical capabilities should be upgraded in order to incorporate all relevant available data into human resources development policy-making and planning.*

Proposals for action

- (89) Data processing facilities and analytical capabilities for human resources development information systems should be modernized. Special attention should be paid to the training and allocation of qualified personnel for human resources development information processing and analysis.
- (90) Data processing and analysis at the sectoral level should incorporate an integrated human resources development approach in order to facilitate the use of sectoral research outputs for national human resources development policy-making and planning.

Recommendation 29. Information dissemination

Systems should be developed to ensure the dissemination of a wide range of information concerning human resources development as a basis for improved policy-making and planning and increased popular participation. The public dissemination of relevant information would facilitate informed decision-making by all parties participating in human resources development efforts, including government officials, private sector and non-governmental organization personnel, and the public at large.

Proposals for action

- (91) The role of the mass media in increasing public awareness of human resources development issues should be fully utilized through regular

dissemination of information and views concerning important policy and planning matters.

- (92) The mass media should be supported in their efforts to disseminate human resources development information relevant to the informal sector, paying special attention to the information needs of disadvantaged population groups in that sector.
- (93) Information and training materials on human resources development should be disseminated in readily accessible form to enabler and target groups at the grass-roots level. Where necessary, such materials should be translated into the local languages and disseminated at reduced cost or cost-free as public service information.
- (94) All information disseminated by the mass media should be examined to identify and eliminate stereotypes that inhibit the full participation of disadvantaged population groups, including women, ethnic minorities and disabled people, in human resources development.

Recommendation 30. Information networking

The effective collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of human resources development information depend on the active participation of all organizations and agencies dealing with human resources development information. *Networking of these organizations and agencies should be undertaken at the national and regional levels in order to facilitate the generation of comprehensive and consistent information on human resources development.*

Proposals for action

- (95) National information networks on human resources development should be established to ensure that a comprehensive and consistent body of information is available for policy-making, planning and informed popular participation.
- (96) A regional human resources development information network should be established to facilitate the exchange of relevant information among ESCAP members and associate members and to support the activities of national networks in the region.

VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Recommendation 31. Monitoring and evaluation of human resources development policy and planning

Policy-making and planning for human resources development is an ongoing process, requiring continuing review and appraisal to ensure that optimum programme effectiveness is achieved and maintained. *Procedures should therefore be instituted to monitor and evaluate human resources development policies and planning on an ongoing basis.*

Proposals for action

- (97) Procedures should be devised to monitor the implementation of human resources development plans and programmes on an ongoing basis.
- (98) Evaluation exercises should be undertaken at regular intervals to assess the relevance, impact and effectiveness of policies, plans, programmes and projects in meeting human resources development aims and objectives.
- (99) Periodic reports on the implementation of national human resources development plans should be prepared and disseminated widely in order to increase awareness of the progress of human resources development and strengthen multisectoral participation in pursuit of its aims and objectives.

Recommendation 32. Monitoring and evaluation of expenditure on human resources development

Expenditure on human resources development should be monitored and its social returns evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that the allocation of funds is adequate to meet requirements and consistent with planned priorities. Particular attention should be given to the monitoring and evaluation of expenditure on programmes and projects aimed at specific disadvantaged population groups.

Proposals for action

- (100) National budgets should be monitored to ensure that the financial resources allocated for the implementation of human resources development plans are adequate and that allocations for specific programmes and projects are consistent with planned priorities.

- (101) Sectoral budgets should be monitored to ensure that financial allocations for specific programmes and projects reflect priorities in favour of specific target groups and that adequate support is provided to enabler groups at the local level.
- (102) Monitoring and evaluation of private sector expenditure on human resources development activities, particularly those relating to education and training, should be carried out to ensure complementarity of public and private expenditures on human resources development and provide a basis for appropriate policy and planning adjustments.

Recommendation 33. Monitoring and evaluation of major sectoral issues

The range of human resources development activities is so wide that in-depth monitoring and evaluation of individual sectoral issues are required to supplement the more general exercises. *Appropriate techniques and procedures for monitoring and evaluating specific sectoral human resources development issues are therefore required.*

Proposals for action

- (103) Regular procedures should be instituted for monitoring and evaluating labour-market dynamics and their wider human resources development implications.
- (104) The impact of technological change on manpower requirements should be monitored regularly and evaluated periodically, and the results of those evaluations should be taken into full account in human resources development policy and planning.
- (105) Effective techniques should be devised for monitoring and evaluating the quality-of-life aspects of human resources development. Specific sectoral indicators and monitoring procedures should be developed to permit a regular flow of information for programme adjustment to enhance the quality of life as a contributing factor in human resources development.
- (106) Regular exercises should be undertaken to monitor and evaluate the effects of national plans of action for human resources development on disadvantaged population groups, particularly those specifically targeted in the plans.

Part Three

ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

I. PARTICIPATION

1. Various participants must play closely co-ordinated, complementary roles in the execution of the Plan of Action if it is to have a significant influence on human resources development in the region. First and foremost, participating member and associate member Governments will need to devise national plans of action containing fully operational programmes and projects in conformity with the recommendations and proposals listed in the Plan of Action. The participating Governments will, in this connection, need to ensure adequate budgetary and other resource inputs for the implementation of the national plans of action. Furthermore, they will need to establish the necessary institutional infrastructures, including planning and executing bodies and national co-ordination mechanisms, to permit the full and effective discharge of their national responsibilities in accordance with the provisions of the Plan of Action.

2. Second, private sector and non-governmental organizations, as well as the public at large, must be mobilized, where appropriate, to play supportive roles in the formulation and execution of national plans of action. The national plans of action, in turn, will need to be devised in such a manner as to provide for the active participation of all concerned sectors in the execution of their constituent programmes and projects. The various concerned sectors will also need to develop projects complementary to, and supportive of, the national plans of action. Such multisectoral participation is essential not only to ensure the most effective use of scarce budgetary and manpower resources but also because the various sectors possess accumulated experience and expertise that can complement government efforts on behalf of human resources development.

3. At the regional level, the participation of intergovernmental organizations, including United Nations bodies and agencies active in the region, is required to support national efforts. Specific activities must be devised by these organizations and agencies to extend technical assistance to participating members and associate members in accordance with the recommendations and proposals contained in the Plan of Action. In addition, activities need to be developed by these organizations and agencies to enhance regional co-operation, including technical co-operation among developing countries (TCDC). Finally, it will be necessary for ESCAP to serve as the regional focal point for co-ordinating the execution of the Plan of Action. This will be in addition to its role as an ex-

cuting agency for implementation of the Plan of Action at the regional level and support of activities at the national level.

4. All concerned donor countries and agencies will need to give special attention to the possibilities of providing financial assistance to ensure the full and effective execution of programmes and projects designed in conformity with the Plan of Action. In view of the magnitude of the task, the severe constraints impeding the realization of its aims and objectives, and the high priority placed on its achievement by the member and associate member Governments in their promulgation of this Plan of Action, it is urged that donor countries and agencies accord the highest priority to the allocation of adequate resources in support of activities for implementing the Plan.

II. CO-ORDINATION

A. Co-ordination at the national level

5. To ensure the full and effective implementation of the Plan of Action at the national level, each country would need to establish a national co-ordination mechanism for human resources development. Simplicity should be a guiding principle in the establishment of such mechanisms. Wherever possible, existing institutional arrangements should be relied on in preference to the creation of additional entities in an already complex governmental policy-making and administrative structure.

6. The recent experience of some countries of the region in developing such mechanisms provides useful prototypes for other countries to consider. In designing national co-ordination mechanisms for human resources development, it would be necessary, however, to take into full consideration the widely differing circumstances prevailing in the region, including differences in the organizational framework of government and in intersectoral relationships.

7. As a general rule, it would be necessary for each national co-ordination mechanism to consist of several elements. A national focal point should be established at the highest possible policy-making level, preferably as an inter-ministerial committee serving in an advisory capacity to the chief executive. The national focal point would oversee the co-ordination of all national activities concerning human resources development. It would also serve as the national counterpart in the region-wide system to co-ordinate the implementation of the Plan of Action.

8. The national focal point would require a secretariat, perhaps incorporated in an existing ministry for human resources development or established as a special unit within the national development planning ministry or equivalent body. It would be responsible for formulating the national plan of action

on human resources development within the framework of the Plan of Action. It would be empowered to promote the active participation of all sectors, including private enterprise, non-governmental organizations and all population groups and communities, as appropriate, in the implementation of the national plan of action. It would also have responsibility for monitoring and evaluating plan implementation on a regular basis.

9. While the determination of the terms of reference of the national co-ordination mechanism would be the sovereign right and responsibility of each country, it would be useful for each country to give special consideration, in establishing its national mechanism, to the means whereby national co-ordination might best ensure conformity between national planning efforts and the framework for regional co-operation and international support provided by the Plan of Action. Such conformity could be ensured by entrusting the national focal point with the national liaison function in matters concerning regional co-ordination of human resources development activities in implementation of the Plan of Action.

B. Co-ordination at the regional level

10. Overall responsibility for co-ordinating the implementation of the Plan of Action as a regional effort, as distinct from the implementation of national plans of action at the individual country level, would rest with ESCAP. Under General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, ESCAP was directed to serve as the main general economic and social centre within the United Nations in the Asian and Pacific region, exercising team leadership and responsibility for co-ordination and co-operation at the regional level. Important elements in the co-ordinating role of ESCAP would be its assistance to countries of the region in their efforts to formulate and implement plans of action at the national level and its ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Plan of Action. This would serve as a basis for the secretariat's regular reports to the Commission on the progress in implementation of the Plan of Action.

11. In order to promote active participation in implementing the Plan of Action, provide opportunities for the exchange of information and sharing of views on human resources development issues and ensure effective co-ordination among all countries in the region, it would be appropriate to convene inter-governmental consultations and meetings from time to time. Periodic consultations would be held, in accordance with this arrangement, among the various national focal points to ensure effective co-ordination between the respective national plans of action within the framework provided by the regional Plan of Action. In addition, meetings of senior officials and ministerial conferences

could be convened from time to time to consider special issues related to the implementation of the Plan. The Commission could, furthermore, consider the implementation of the Plan as a regular agenda item at its annual sessions.

12. It would also be necessary for the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, along with other intergovernmental bodies and international non-governmental organizations, to co-ordinate their various activities in support of human resources development in the Asian and Pacific region so as to ensure the most effective application of the scarce resources available. To deal with this need, an interagency task force could be formed which would meet periodically to strengthen co-operation and complementarity in work programme formulation, budgeting and execution concerning human resources development issues.

III. PRIORITIES

13. While the Plan of Action incorporates an integrated approach to human resources development, it is not comprehensive in scope. Its 33 policy recommendations and 106 proposals for action represent a carefully defined set of priorities, in keeping with the main human resources development concerns of the countries of the region and the main issues addressed in the recent deliberations and decisions of the Commission.

14. In particular, the Plan of Action has been framed in keeping with the criteria for priority-setting endorsed by the Commission at its thirty-ninth session. These criteria are: (a) major importance to developing countries of the region; (b) promotion of economic growth and social development leading to alleviation of poverty; (c) assistance to the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and developing South Pacific island countries; (d) promotion of regional and subregional co-operation; and (e) support from members and associate members.

15. Further delineation of these priorities within the overall framework of the Plan of Action will follow the formulation of specific programmes and projects in accordance with the proposals for action. Such priority-setting will be the responsibility of the various government ministries and other agencies and organizations in both the public and private sectors charged with programme and project formulation at the national level, and of the various United Nations bodies and agencies and other intergovernmental organizations participating in the implementation of the Plan of action at the regional level.

IV. TIME FRAME

16. The Plan of Action requires a time frame covering a sufficient number of years to ensure its effective implementation. As the development of human

resources is inherently a long-term process, requiring an extended gestation period for investments in human capital to bear their intended returns, an appropriate time span for the Plan would be the 13-year period 1988-2000.

17. Taking the year 2000 as a convenient time horizon, the plan period leading up to that year would be appropriately divided into three phases: 1988-1991, 1992-1995 and 1996-2000. These periods would accord with the phasing of the medium-term plan and biennial work programme cycles of the United Nations system. Viewed from the year of inception, these time periods could be designated, respectively, as the short-, medium- and long-term phases of the plan period.

18. The first phase, covering 1988-1991, would serve to lay the basis for subsequent plan implementation. It would realistically be limited to activities that could be undertaken within relatively fixed budget constraints, dictated by existing planning and programming cycles. Among the major activities to be undertaken during this phase would be the establishment of the necessary institutional framework at the national and regional levels, formulation of national plans of action in conformity with the regional guidelines and preparation of preliminary studies and pilot projects.

19. The second and third phases would see the formulation and implementation of a co-ordinated series of human resources development projects at both the national and regional levels. The medium-term period, covering 1992-1995, would allow scope for expanded budgetary allocations to cover additional programmes and projects as human resources development concerns highlighted under the Plan of Action could be accommodated increasingly within the region's overall development effort. The third, long-term phase, covering 1996-2000, would permit broader structural adjustment and institutional change arising out of the policy-making and planning activities implemented during the earlier phases of the Plan of Action.

