Learning to Listen, Listening to Learn:

A PARTICIPATORY APPROACH TO PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

by JOHN F. E. OHIORHENUAN

In South-South cooperation, the sequencing and style of relationship building among partners goes hand in hand with the substance which flows in the exchange of experience. Sharing capacities is the crucial process and ingredient, and a participatory model of programme development is the surest guarantee of true collaboration and sound results. This approach and an example of its application in one region is described by John F.E. Ohiorhenuan, who was Director of the UNDP Special Unit for Technical Cooperation in 1997-2000.

INTRODUCTION

At this time of unprecedented and rapid global change, UNDP is repositioning itself to be a more effective player, leveraging its unique asset as a trusted and impartial multilateral organization. The essence of this repositioning as elaborated in the Administrator's business plan is "moving upstream". In practical terms this means moving away from support-ing a plethora of small-scale projects that are not linked to policy change, to supporting a more limited but more strategic set of programmes that can have a major impact on poverty eradica-tion, UNDP's overarching goal. Policy-driven, these programmes would aim to assist developing countries develop the kinds of transparent, efficient and inclu-sive policies and institutions necessary

to meet development challenges in an increasingly global, complex, and rapidly evolving world. Upstream activities, such as support for policy processes and institution building, will thus be the hallmark of the new UNDP.

What does this new position mean for UNDP's approach to programme development? The business plan recognized that responding effectively to the increasing demand from programme countries for upstream policy support requires fundamentally rethinking the organization's approach to programming. It means, first and foremost, **listening** much more carefully to our multiple clients; it means renewed commitment to programme country **ownership** and country-driven programming; it means much more emphasis on networking and building strategic, result-oriented **partnerships,** both within and outside the UN system; it means developing new modes and incentives for **learning** and sharing of good practices and lessons learnt; it means stopping some activities which are relatively expensive while reaching only a limited number of people; it means a nonnegotiable commitment to **sustainable results**. In committing to South-South cooperation as a major pillar in the new UNDP, the business plan also suggests a more determined and systematic effort to harness good practices in the South and to foster South-South exchange of capacities, experience and expertise.

The purpose of this paper is twofold. The first is to briefly describe an approach to programming developed by UNDP's Special Unit for TCDC which appears to offer some promise for translating the new UNDP vision into practice. The model emphasizes four elements that are central to the organization's new vision: *listening, ownership, partnering* and *learning*. The second is to present a case study of the application of the model to a particular problem in a domain of growing concern to developing countries.

A PARTICIPATORY MODEL OF PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

Recognizing the primacy of programme countries' own priorities, the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (SU/TCDC) has historically supported a broad spectrum of small-scale activities in response to project proposals on an ad hoc basis. Responding to a continuous stream of proposals has often resulted in spreading limited resources too thinly to have the kind of impact or sustainability that our clients demanded. Moreover, programming on a first-come, first-served basis has often meant that some potentially high impact activities are turned down because funds have already been fully committed.

Against this background, but also because of fundamental changes in the international economic system since the adoption in 1978 of a plan of action at the UN Conference on TCDC, a "New Directions" strategy for TCDC was endorsed by the UN General Assembly

in December 1995. The new strategy called for a reorientation of TCDC to focus on strategic initiatives that would have a major development impact on a large number of developing countries. It also recommended a thematic focus on trade and investment, debt, environment, poverty alleviation, production and employment, and macroeconomic policy coordination and management.

Over the last five years, the work programme of the SU/TCDC has been informed by the New Directions strategy. In particular, from 1997, the Special Unit has rigorously rethought its approach to programme development to focus on a limited number of "flagship" interventions, each with the potential to impact on a sizeable number of developing countries. Recognizing that impact depends critically on effective commitment by the programme countries, the flagship initiatives are predicated on their active participation.

The natural starting point of any programme is the clear determination of objectives and their location with the broad matrix of priorities of a country or region. This is the basic rationale for the emphasis by UNDP and other partners on "dialogue" with client governments and other stakeholders as a fundamental requirement in programme or project development. The United Nations has, since the late 1980s, increasingly shifted its assistance from a project to a programme approach. General Assembly Resolution 44/211 (1989) urged the United Nations system to adapt its programming by basing it on a comprehensive, country-driven and coherent national programming process. Emphasis is placed on national dialogue among multiple stakeholders at the country level to analyze problems and constraints in an integrated and multidisciplinary manner, to determine policies, strategies and objectives, to agree on specific areas where UNDP has a comparative advantage, and to mobilize resources. UNDP formally adopted this programming approach in 1992, but its application has been uneven across the organization. More recently, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the World Bank's Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF) represent tools for the clarification of strategies and objectives, the determination of resource constraints, and the identification of required support from external partners.

The model advanced by the Special Unit for TCDC is not only fully compatible with the spirit of these and similar instruments, it is predicated on their existence. This model includes two main innovations. First, it highlights the critical TCDC requirement of sharing capacities. It attempts to advance, demonstrate, and document a participatory model of programme development that is centered on building South-South alliances through all phases of the process. Second, the model clearly demarcates the stages of programme

development to ensure that no critical link is missed. It should be noted, however, that in practice, significant overlap would be normal. This model unfolds in five basic phases focused on listening, partnering, piloting, learning and replicating proven development practices.

Listening

Programme development starts with listening to the relevant major players: programme countries, UNDP country offices, specialized institutions and agencies, and donors in order to determine:

- realistic development goals and modalities of implementation;
- problem areas that are best approached through South-South alliances;
- the extent of effective demand for assistance and of beneficiaries' own commitment;
- existing related interventions to achieve complementarity and avoid duplication; and
- possible partners, donors and experts in the South.

The listening process may be facilitated by an expert or consultant who designs such tools as survey questionnaires, and/or a concept paper to spur informed discussion on the programme area. Also essential is the identification of individual Southern experts, policy makers and centers of excellence which can be convened to analyze the problem at hand, consider strategies, review possible partnership arrangements, identify

TCDC entry points and ascertain inter-country and interregional linkages. It is important to set up discussion groups as early as possible in the listening phase. Through the creative use of information and communication technology, this need not be a costly endeavour.

Partnering

Broad consultations are essential to winning support for the programme from multiple partners. Experience has shown that while many individuals and institutions are open to cooperative arrangements, they tend to resent being co-opted into activities they did not participate in planning. To secure commitment to the programme, the discussion groups set up earlier in the listening phase, are built on through face-to-face negotiations and consultations. Broad-based consultation during planning helps determine:

- Strategic partners and their comparative advantages
- The appropriate "anchor(s)" for the programme in the South
- Needs and capacities existing in the South
- Roles for different partners to play in twinning arrangements

The emphasis at this stage is on allocating leadership roles to specific institutions, agreeing on programme results and resource commitments in cash or kind, and determining ways to make the programme sustainable.

Piloting

The information gained through broad consultation enables the Unit to respond to a specific challenge by matching capacities and needs among subscribers to the initiative. A programme document is prepared and critically reviewed in house as well as by the key external partners. The initiative is launched when the document is cleared by participants and funding is secured. The document specifies the capacities to be reinforced as well as the various roles and twinning arrangements to which the partners have agreed. The emphasis in preparing the programme document is to map out all processes in a manner that facilitates future replication of the programme.

Learning

The documentation of success, failure, difficulties and experience gained in the formulation and implementation of the programme forms an important part of the pilot programme process. Care is taken in the earlier phases to build in mechanisms for learning and the distillation of important lessons, and to encourage a spirit of openness and sharing among all partners. To do so, it is crucial that any assessments or learning events not be tied to future funding, and that all partners buy into the importance of the learning itself. In implementation, learning is pursued through:

- continuous review and feedback
- information exchange and sharing of experience among participants,

taking advantage of the new information technology
- periodic collective assessments at workshops and similar learning events

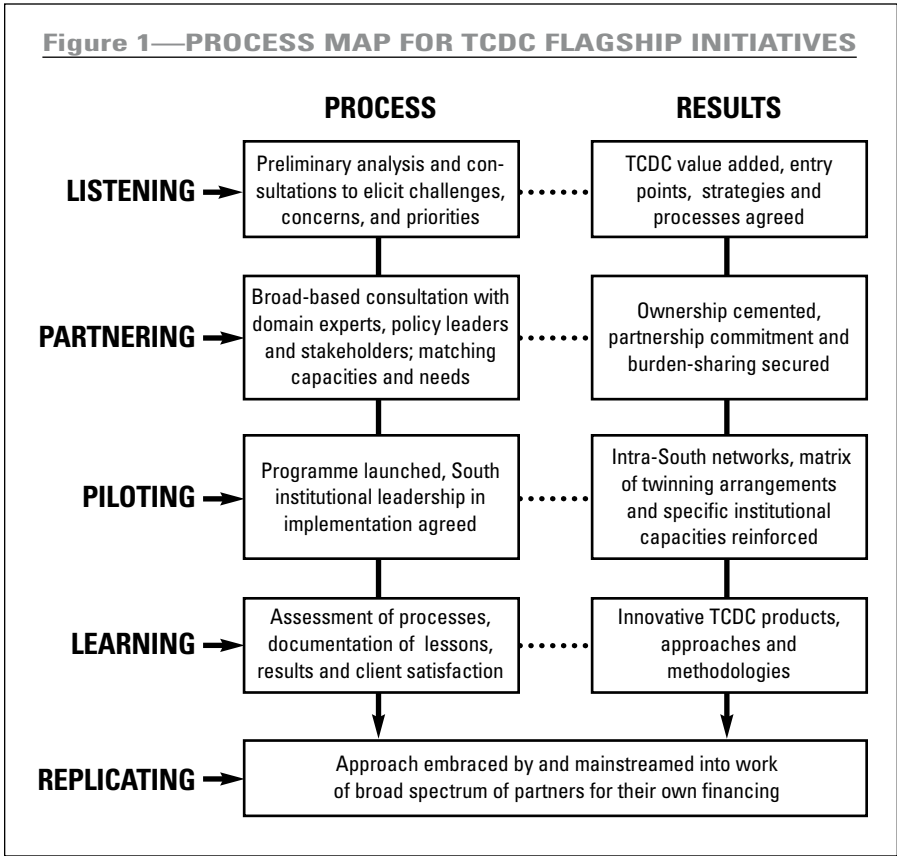Once documentation is completed, it is essential that the lessons learnt are shared as widely as possible.

Replicating

The ultimate purpose of documenting this approach to programme development is to encourage replication and avoid "reinventing the wheel" in development work. It is hoped that with rigorous documentation of processes, specification of results, and highlighting implementation problems, future programming will benefit. Successful programmes can be adapted to other places or other problems, and other partners may adopt this approach in their work programmes by using their own resources.

PUTTING THE PARTICIPATORY MODEL TO WORK

The Special Unit for TCDC has recently applied its new approach to one specific programme which is aimed at strengthening the competitiveness of Arab region economies through harmonization of production standards, and ensuring that the region's industrial products meet international quality standards and regulations. In essence, this programme is focused on policy reform and institutional capacity building in the area of standards and conformity assessments, often referred to as

Figure 1—PROCESS MAP FOR TCDC FLAGSHIP INITIATIVES

PROCESS	RESULTS
LISTENING → Preliminary analysis and consultations to elicit challenges, concerns, and priorities	TCDC value added, entry points, strategies and processes agreed
PARTNERING → Broad-based consultation with domain experts, policy leaders and stakeholders; matching capacities and needs	Ownership cemented, partnership commitment and burden-sharing secured
PILOTING → Programme launched, South institutional leadership in implementation agreed	Intra-South networks, matrix of twinning arrangements and specific institutional capacities reinforced
LEARNING → Assessment of processes, documentation of lessons, results and client satisfaction	Innovative TCDC products, approaches and methodologies
REPLICATING → Approach embraced by and mainstreamed into work of broad spectrum of partners for their own financing	

"national quality infrastructure".[1]

The rationale for the programme rests on two interrelated facts. First, within the context of globalization, standardization and conformity assessment policies and mechanisms have an important impact on trade flows, and hence economic development in the South. In the current global trade regime, standards and conformity assessment can either facilitate trade or frustrate and impede its expansion. Second, the potential to use standards as hidden trade barriers is immense. As tariff levels drop dramatically, nontariff barriers to trade assume greater significance. These include technical barriers to trade deriving from differences in national standards and conformity assessment procedures. Countries risk being marginalized in global trade if they fail to institute and enforce internationally recognized rules and standards in the regulation of local markets. The lack of a well-defined and internationally acceptable national quality infrastructure is clearly of paramount importance to developing countries in their pursuit of competitiveness. Nearly all product and service sectors of the 136 member countries of the

WTO are governed by one or more WTO agreements. Moreover, the principles established within the framework of WTO apply not only to WTO members, but also to nonmembers if they wish to do trade with member countries.

The challenge for the Arab world in this regard is particularly daunting, given the fact that integration of the region as a whole into the world economy remains relatively low. In fact, apart from the 1970s, the region's integration has lagged behind most other low and middle-income regions. Between 1986 and 1996, the trade integration ratio for the Arab states as a whole declined, while most other regions saw a sharp increase in international trade. Although some countries in the region — Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Jordan, Egypt and Yemen — showed robust export growth in the early 1990s, by 1996, the trend had reversed and become negative.[2] In real terms, the Arab world's goods and services exports as a percentage of total world exports have declined since the oil boom period in the 1970s, from 10.5 percent in 1980 to 2.1 percent in 1997.[3]

Rooted in the TCDC modality which seeks to harness the best capacities in the South in support of the development of other Southern countries[4], the programme development process was divided into five stages, closely in line with the model described above. Some stages however have been modified to suit the actual situation on the ground, as described below.

Assessing demand and capacities in the South

To help determine demand for capacity building on national quality assurance policies and institutions, a survey was conducted through a questionnaire, which was sent to all countries in the Arab States region covered by UNDP. The questionnaire had two purposes. First, to gauge demand and interest in initiating a programme in this field by government authorities and the UNDP country offices, providing a basis for selection of participating countries. Second, to provide a general assessment of the strengths and capacity gaps in the selected countries of the Arab region.

Involving key players at the earliest stage of programme development was seen as key for the success and sustainability of the programme. To that end, the questionnaire was sent with a technical background note to the Minster of Industry and Trade in each country, via the UNDP country office. This ensured the involvement of the country office in the proposed programme from the very start. It also ensured political awareness of the programme at the highest national level in the respective countries.

In addition to enabling the SU/TCDC to select countries based on demand, replies to the questionnaire provided important data on the current status of the national quality infrastructure in the selected countries. Analysis of the questionnaire replies was complemented by studies carried out previously

by key actors in this field, the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the UN Economic and Social Commission for West Asia (ESCWA). The presentations made at a programme formulation workshop in Rabat (see below) were also analyzed.

The responses revealed a number of capacity gaps in the eight Arab countries which completed the questionnaire[5]. After careful analysis, it was decided to focus the programme on the following three capacity gaps, which lend themselves particularly well to being addressed through a TCDC modality.

Gap #1. The lack of well-defined national quality policies

A national quality policy is crucial for setting the broad framework for overall decision-making regarding the organization of the national quality infrastructure in a country. But most countries in the region do not yet have well-defined national quality policies. To be effective and inclusive, such a policy must be developed through a process of consensus among all interested parties — the government, the private sector, consumers and exporters. Among other things, this policy has to encompass the organization of the technical regulatory activities (including the roles of the various ministries and authorities concerned with standardization, accreditation, certification, inspection, testing and metrology); the establishment of a legal framework with enforcement mechanisms; and the fostering of a national quality movement with training and education of the public.

On the basis of the policy, a strategic action plan is established for future work on quality infrastructure development in the country. This plan can also be used to channel resources available for development work, including support provided by different donor organizations. It also provides a tool to monitor progress, assess the status of national quality infrastructure at any given time, and direct government and donor agency resources more precisely to relevant areas.

Gap #2. Lack of current staff skills in accreditation and standardization bodies

An expert assessment of the skill and knowledge levels in the five participating institutions from the Arab world, indicated that knowledge, skills and competencies are particularly lacking in three areas: (1) the preparation, adoption and application of technical regulations and standards, in line with the World Trade Organization agreements on Technical Barriers to Trade (WTO-TBT), recommendations of the International Standards Organisation (ISO) and the OECD Code for Good Regulatory Practices; (2) international standards and guidelines regarding the independence, impartiality, competence and organization of accreditation bodies; and (3) certification as established in international guides.

Extensive training is needed to support the growth of industry and trade based on a culture of quality and standards. In participating institutions, selected decision-makers, senior staff and other personnel need to know about the new concepts and techniques in standardization and quality management. This is a prerequisite for these organizations to restructure and revise their mandates or legal identity in line with new international requirements. Developing a critical mass of trained personnel is essential for countries to effectively implement their National Quality Policies and Strategic Action Plans, and to set up national and regional accreditation schemes. Some of the training, particularly on-the-job and coaching, should naturally take place at national level via twinning arrangements; and some training could take place at subregional and regional levels to minimize costs and foster sharing of experiences.

Gap #3. Lack of a regional accreditation scheme

Accreditation is one of the most important components of national quality infrastructure. Accreditation enables laboratories, certification bodies and inspecting bodies to prove that their operations are reliable according to international standards and guidelines established and approved by international accreditation organizations. Existing cooperation between accreditation bodies in many regions of the world

ensures that individual national bodies operate according to international principles. Mutual recognition agreements are established within many regions, leading to interregional agreements. In this way, operations of all accreditation bodies of the world become more harmonized so as to work together better and receive international recognition.

No regional cooperation on accreditation is currently taking place in the Arab world. Some countries in the region are starting to establish full-fledged accreditation activities at the national level, but this is hindered by two shortfalls. First, the large numbers of specialized human resources required for accreditation in all fields and sectors are not available in most of the countries. Second, there are not enough laboratories, certification bodies and inspection bodies in each country to operate fully functional accreditation bodies providing services in all fields and sectors.

A regional accreditation scheme would thus be of great use to the region. Experiences in other regions of the world show that it benefits all countries in a region or subregion to establish a common approach to accreditation. This can be done by forming a network where the technical competence in all the countries is used to support the operation of national accreditation schemes, in line with internationally recognized principles for conformity assessment. Such cooperation would ensure optimal use of scarce resources in the region. It

also would greatly facilitate the expansion of intra-Arab trade — a major economic goal of the region, which has been given a boost by the recent agreement to set up the Arab Free-Trade Zone.

Countries and institutions in the South were identified as which could be possible resources for filling the three capacity gaps. This was done through consultations among technical consultants from SU/TCDC, ISO, UNIDO, ESCWA, and the Arab Industrial Development and Mining Organisation (AIDMO). The selected countries are: Colombia, Malaysia, Namibia, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Turkey. These six have a variety of capacities to share. South Africa, Namibia and Sri Lanka all have well-developed national quality policies and strategic action plans that are in line with international requirements and have been developed through a highly participatory process. The relevant institutions in Colombia, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka have strong training facilities and capacities in the fields of standards and accreditation. The SADC region, of which South Africa and Namibia are part, offers one of the "best practices" from the South of a cost-effective regional accreditation scheme that is internationally recognized (the Southern African Regional Accreditation Committee).

Building strategic partnerships

Within UNDP, the programme development process benefited from early dis-cussions with colleagues in the Regional Bureau of Arab States (RBAS) in New York, and the bureau was kept fully informed of developments during the design process. The head of the RBAS regional programme participated in the final programme formulation workshop held in Rabat. Impressed by the participatory approach to building capacity in this field, RBAS expressed willingness to support the SU/TCDC programme substantively and financially, building synergies with existing RBAS programmes in the same field.[6]

Links were also established with UNDP country offices at the Resident Representative level in the region. All correspondence is channeled through them. Technical notes and discussion papers developed in this programme are shared with them. In the spirit of partnership, they were informed of the outcome of the Rabat workshop and encouraged to interact with the returning participants, through a letter sent jointly by the Director of RBAS and the Director of the SU/TCDC. The basis for a synergistic and mutually beneficial relationship between RBAS and the SU/TCDC has thus been established and is expected to continue and be further cemented during the implementation phase.

Early in the design process, consultations were held with key external partners involved in this field and important documents, data and experiences were exchanged. A concerted effort was made to build on the work of other organiza-

tions and avoid duplication. A strategic partnership around the goals and expected results of the programme was developed at the highest level with UNIDO and ESCWA, whose representatives participated in the programme formulation workshop. UNIDO has committed to finance elements of the proposed programme within its ongoing programmes and funds in all the participating countries. ESCWA has similarly indicated willingness to cooperate in the programme, particularly for setting up a regional accreditation scheme, and has committed funds to the programme.

To ensure continued partnership during the implementation phase, representatives from AIDMO, ESCWA, UNIDO and RBAS will serve on the Advisory Committee of the programme, which will be chaired by the SU/TCDC.

Fostering commitment, ownership and sustainability

The unit made a concerted effort to identify an appropriate "anchor" for the programme in the Arab world, which would provide it with the necessary political backing, foster ownership and ensure sustainability. Consultations with various partners identified AIDMO as a key intergovernmental organization in the Arab world in this field. A specialized agency of the Arab League, AIDMO has been engaged in a systematic effort to enhance quality infrastructure in the Arab region over the past 20 years, and is thus well positioned to take a lead role as

the SU/TCDC partner in this initiative.

AIDMO agreed to host the programme formulation workshop at its headquarters in Rabat, Morocco. The organization covered all costs of logistics and local transportation for the workshop, and temporarily released the director of its standards department to act as liaison and coordinator for the workshop. It encouraged and achieved extensive local media coverage to help build public awareness of the issues discussed at the workshop. The role of AIDMO has attracted important political backing to the programme. It is particularly important that the June 2000 high-level Council of Arab Ministers of Trade and Industry officially endorsed the programme. Its resolution "supports the proposed programme with the SU/TCDC, UNDP, which aims to enhance and develop national standards and conformity assessment policies in the Arab region and establish a regional accreditation body" (Resolution number 293 of the Inter-ministerial Council, June 10-12, 2000).

South-South twinning and partnership agreements

The fourth building block in the programme development process was the creation of a platform for exchanging expertise and experience between the participating "resource" and "beneficiary" countries, and for negotiating twinning arrangements to bridge capacity gaps. This took place during the workshop organized by the SU/TCDC and

hosted by AIDMO in Rabat, May 8-10, 2000. The workshop was opened by the Moroccan Minister of Trade, and was attended by 22 participants from 13 countries representing four developing regions (Asia, Latin America, Africa and Arab states). Participants were representatives of the standards and/or accreditation bodies in their respective countries at the director or deputy director level.

The workshop concluded with a number of agreements instituting twining arrangements for collaboration among partners at national, regional and global levels. The anticipated activities in these alliances aim to:

- Build national capacity for the formulation of national quality policies and strategic action plans in the beneficiary Arab countries. Twinning arrangements for this purpose were agreed upon between Lebanon and Namibia, Lebanon and Columbia, Yemen and Sri Lanka, Tunisia and South Africa, Morocco and South Africa, as well as Algeria and Malaysia. Study tours, attachments and on-the-job training are among the means by which capacity building is planned through these twinning arrangements.
- Build national capacity of standardization and accreditation bodies in select countries. Short-term training (and training for trainers) programmes for personnel in relevant institutions have been agreed upon between Morocco, Algeria,

Yemen and Turkey. Similar agreements were reached by Yemen, Lebanon and South Africa, as well as Yemen, Algeria and Malaysia.
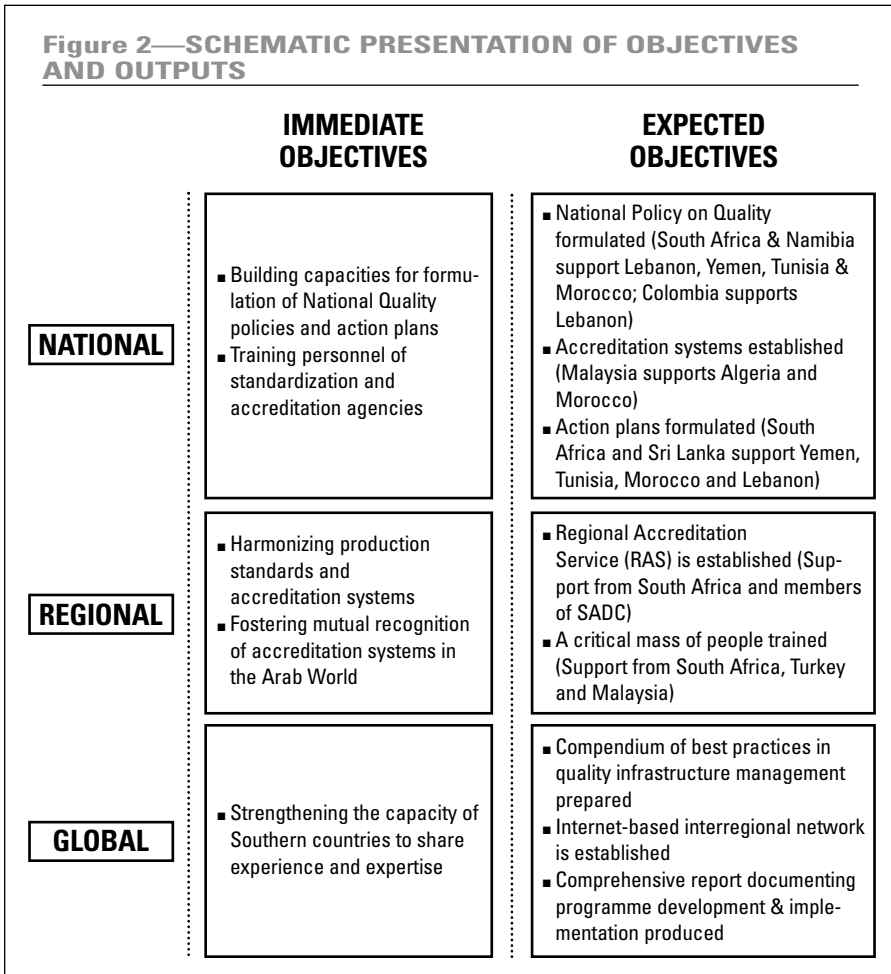
- Promote mutual recognition and accreditation systems in the Arab world. A regional accreditation services agency is to be set up utilizing the expertise and experience of the South African Development Community (SADC) in setting up a regional accreditation scheme.
- Strengthen the capacity of Southern countries to share experience and formulate common negotiating positions at international forums. An interregional networking facility is to be set up to facilitate knowledge networking among institutions and experts in the South. It is envisaged that the "Web of Information for Development (WIDE), an Internet-based information system owned by UNDP, would be a viable medium for such collaboration.

Figure 2, below, provides an overview of the objectives and expected outputs of this programme.

Learning: Participatory monitoring and documentation

The fifth and final stage is participatory monitoring and documentation during the implementation phase. Mechanisms for documentation activities have been built into various stages of the programme so as to capture and distill lessons learnt

Figure 2—SCHEMATIC PRESENTATION OF OBJECTIVES AND OUTPUTS

	IMMEDIATE OBJECTIVES	EXPECTED OBJECTIVES
NATIONAL	■ Building capacities for formulation of National Quality policies and action plans ■ Training personnel of standardization and accreditation agencies	■ National Policy on Quality formulated (South Africa & Namibia support Lebanon, Yemen, Tunisia & Morocco; Colombia supports Lebanon) ■ Accreditation systems established (Malaysia supports Algeria and Morocco) ■ Action plans formulated (South Africa and Sri Lanka support Yemen, Tunisia, Morocco and Lebanon)
REGIONAL	■ Harmonizing production standards and accreditation systems ■ Fostering mutual recognition of accreditation systems in the Arab World	■ Regional Accreditation Service (RAS) is established (Support from South Africa and members of SADC) ■ A critical mass of people trained (Support from South Africa, Turkey and Malaysia)
GLOBAL	■ Strengthening the capacity of Southern countries to share experience and expertise	■ Compendium of best practices in quality infrastructure management prepared ■ Internet-based interregional network is established ■ Comprehensive report documenting programme development & implementation produced

(both shortcomings and successes), refine the methodologies used, and share these lessons both inside UNDP and with the larger development community. An analytical framework for the documentation will be drawn up early on in the implementation process. An on-line discussion forum will be set up to facilitate exchange of implementation experience among programme partners throughout the duration of the programme. Midway through the programme, partners will be brought together at a workshop to share their experiences and to document the lessons learnt from the programme design to its final implementation. Based on these discussions, a comprehensive report will be prepared to share the experience that these 13 countries have gained in confronting the challenges posed by the need to ensure the conformity of their services and products to internationally recognized standards and rules.

CONCLUSION

This paper has described a participatory model of programme development centred on fostering South-South exchanges of capacities, expertise and experience. In efforts to mainstream the TCDC modality, it is important to share information on feasible approaches and good practices. In such exchanges, it is crucial that processes be laid out in some detail to facilitate learning and experimentation.

The application of the model to an issue of great interest to developing countries is probably important in itself. But it is perhaps of greater significance in illustrating that, with some creativity, even apparently complex programme challenges can be tackled as South-South exercises with reasonably robust outcomes. As a final observation, it must be stressed that the model is not static. It is adaptable enough to accommodate refinements specific to the particular problem being tackled. ■

N O T E S

[1] The national quality infrastructure of a country refers to the mechanisms to ensure the conformity of products and services to internationally recognized rules and standards. The mechanisms include procedures for the establishment of rules governing products and services as well as the procedures for ascertaining conformity with the rules so established. The Quality Assurance Infrastructure covers the following activities: (1) preparation, adoption and application of technical regulations; (2) preparation, adoption and application of standards; (3) accreditation; (4) certification; (5) inspection, (6) testing; (7) metrology; and (8) enforcement methods. See: Ettarp Lars. "An Overview of International Conformity Assessment Systems," The Swedish Board for Accreditation and Conformity Assessment (SWEDAC), April 1999.

[2] Ready-made garments, leather and leather products, footwear, furniture, wood and wood products, rubber, plastics and related products, and processed foods are some of the main industrial exports of the region.

[3] See: Bernard Hoekman and Hanna Kheir El-Din, editors, *Trade Policy Developments in the Middle East and North Africa*, Mediterranean Development Forum, World Bank, 2000.

[4] The programme utilizes four specific TCDC modalities: (a) capacity and needs matching exercises, (b) workshops, (c) study tours, and (4) twinning arrangements.

[5] These are Lebanon, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, and the United Arab Emirates.

[6] UNDP, Regional Bureau of Arab States, 1996. Project RAB/96/001/01, "Follow-up to the Uruguay Round—Support to Arab Enterprises in the Fields of Quality and Information-related Aspects of the TBT."