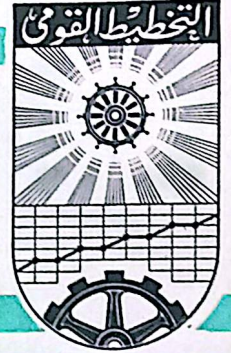


# UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC



## THE INSTITUTE OF NATIONAL PLANNING

Memo. No. 251

(Part I)

Comments on

Memo. No. 239 on

THE ELABORATION OF RESEARCH  
PROGRAMS IN THE INSTITUTE

13 November, 1962

CAIRO  
3. MOHAMED MAZHAR - ZAMALEK

## SUMMARY OF COMMENTS

The comments so far received on memo. no. 239 are those made by:

Prof. Tinbergen  
Prof. Mason  
Prof. Hansen  
Dr. Engert  
Mr. Linneman  
Mr. Solomon  
Dr. Nasr  
Dr. El-Sayed  
Dr. Salama  
Mr. El-Halfawy

This is an attempt to summarize the trend of views expressed in those comments. The texts are also annexed.

Problems discussed can be summarized under five headings:

- I - Types of research
- II - Areas.
- III - Direction
- IV - Organization
- V - Publication and documentation.

### I - TYPES OF RESEARCH:

The types discussed are:

- a- Individualistic
- b- Small teams
- c- One big team
- d- Permanent units
- e- Contractual

1. The third of these is too risky and should be excluded. The first cannot be adhered to solely. It would not help in training assistants.
2. Combination of a, b would help also in training.
3. Many thought of depending on b, having a member of staff assisted by 1 or 2 (probably more) assistants as fact finders and computers. This does not exclude the possibility of cooperation between 2 or more of these teams this might even be helpful.
4. Another alternative is to form groups (which might be large) plus some individual work carried out by staff members. In this case there can be a general subject within which each member chooses a topic.

5. If groups are thus formed, there should be periodical meetings, in which each group discusses the work done by its members.
6. A view has been expressed emphasizing the necessity - from the long-run view-point - of establishing permanent groups. The group should contain one senior staff member, plus lecturers, plus assistants. This in lieu of be or besides it according to resources. For areas of groups see Dr. Nasr's comment.
7. Contractual research is accepted by some, and some assistants can be attached to it. Others warned against difficulties which might arise owing to the short experience of the Institute in research. It might look tempting but there is always the danger of deviating the direction of research to less relevant fields.
8. In any case the choice of program would help in defining the most suitable type.

## II - AREAS:

The areas can be subdivided as follows:

- a- Theoretical problems
- b- Problems of techniques and methodology
- c- Empirical studies related to practical questions
- d- Studies relating to training material and training in research.

The following views were expressed:

1. All agreed on dealing with problems related to development and planning.
2. It is advisable to avoid (a), which needs gifted people. Theory is to be considered as a tool.
3. Problems of techniques might be studied with the objective of improving techniques in the U.A.R.
4. There is general agreement on (c), with some combination of short-run and long-run problems. In this respect, attention might be given to the preparation of manuals on specific planning operations, and not merely general planning problems.
5. Several lists of topics were suggested (see annex), all dealing with definite practical problems. They cover:  
Behavioural relations.  
Problems of policy (implementation).  
Problems of organization and administration, especially in the nationalized sector, etc.
6. There is a lot to be gained from field studies, not simply referring to secondary sources.

7. There is no need to go deeper into problems of techniques and projections, than warranted by the available data and informations.
8. In training for research, assistants can be allocated points within topics chosen by supervisors.

#### III - DIRECTION OF RESEARCH:

1. Some have expressed the impossibility of differentiating long-term and short-term topics. Hence the definition of area is to be based on area of study rather than time span.
2. Many emphasized the importance of determining some general theme within which staff members choose their topics. There is again the possibility of cooperation.
3. But the direction has to be broad enough or flexible. It should be complex, since splitted points lead to lower efficiency.
4. If permanent groups, each should decide upon its program.

#### IV - ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS:

1. It has been suggested by some to construct 2 organizations: one for training and another for research. These would combine staff members, as well as experts from outside.
2. The research organization would study long-term and short-term program, and decide on the type (1). It pursues research and takes decisions on publication.
3. Or it might act as a consultative body, especially with regard to contractual research.
4. Emphasis is made on keeping close contact with planning and research agencies, and interchanging programs and research with international institutions.
5. It is important to fix teaching activities for each staff member far ahead (ap to 3 years) leaving sufficient time for research.

#### V - PUBLICATION & DOCUMENTATION:

1. Publication is to be in separate reports.
2. A periodical is valuable: it brings more contributions. But it should not exceed 2 numbers annually.
3. There is need to systematize documents and evade the haphazardness of memoranda.

4. If a team is involved, it should decide on publication of results of individual researches. Otherwise it would be the director or somebody whom he delegates.
5. Importance of translation of references.

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N.B.: After the preparation of this summary further comments were received from:

Dr. A. Hosny, Operation Research Unit. and Dr. E. Hammam.

COMMENTS OF PROFESSOR J. TINBERGEN

CONSULTANT I.N.P.C.

Dr. I. H. Abdel-Rahman, General Director,  
The Institute of National Planning  
3, Mohamed Mazhar Street - Zamalek  
Cairo - U.A.R.

Dear Dr. Abdel Rahman,

I got your letter of October 7, 1962 and studied with interest the background paper about the research programs of your Institute. I appreciate the difficulties of making a precise choice for the reasons set out in your paper. Yet I hope that the following remarks may be of some use to you.

It is my feeling that purely theoretical research should as a rule only be undertaken by extremely gifted people. For the less gifted this type of work usually will not be very productive. This means that the larger part of a research program should, in my mind, have an empirical element in it and this again makes it desirable that such research be done by teams composed of one economist (or other scientist), assisted by one or two "fact finders" or computers. When I look at the abridged list of possible topics which you give in the Appendix, I am afraid that the subjects mentioned there are not sufficiently precisely defined. This makes it difficult to appraise them. As I see it a few very concrete peaces of work could be undertaken in Cairo which it would seem worth-while to do. I am unable to see whether they are included in your list. Here are my examples:

1. An application of what I once called: the semi input-output method for the appraisal of investment projects. Very briefly it comes to adding to any single project in the sphere of "international industries" a set of complementary projects in the "national industries" and only appraising the whole group. If your criterion of appraisal were the capital-output-ratio, the problem consists of finding the capital output ratio for the combined set. Since you have such a good input-output table for your country, this would, I think, be an interesting exercise.
2. The second subject I always feel deserves more attention, is to make a collection of figures of the optimum size of plans for all industries.
3. The third type of work it seems worth while to do is the investigation of alternative techniques of production as illustrated by Dr. Boon's work.
4. A last example, may be superfluous for your country if you have it already may be to collect figures about exact gestation periods of different types of plants.

I hope these few suggestions may be of some value.

May I take this opportunity of announcing you that I will soon let you have a copy of a new project that we are now starting, so as to inform you about our future program.

I hope Mr. Linnemann's activities are helpful to you.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

(SGD)

J. Tinbergen.

COMMENTS OF PROFESSOR EDWARD S. MASON

CONSULTANT INPC

I have been thinking about the paper you sent me on research activities at the Institute but I am not sure that I have any very useful advice to offer since I am not very well acquainted with the staff capabilities of the Institute. There are, however, a few general observations that I might make.

1. It does not seem to me necessary to decide on an either-or basis for organized research as against individual research. One might well have a couple of organized research units in operation while still allowing a number of individuals to pursue their own interests. That, in fact, is the way in which research is handled here in the Economics Department at Harvard. Leontief has a sizeable research institute, there is a considerable piece of organized research in the monetary field and also in the area of government-business relations in the process of economic development. Most of the members of the faculty, however, pursue their own individual research quite happily side by side with these large research projects.
2. I should think there might be something to be said for organized research as a means of training younger people in research techniques. If you could, for example, put an experienced research man like Bent Hansen in charge of a project on which a number of your younger people were working I should think it would be possible to combine effective research with further training. I would suppose that in connection with such a project a discussion group would be organized in which the younger people would present the result of their research for criticism. It would also be possible to put some of your younger people on one of the research projects undertaken by contract with some outside agency. An FAO or ILO project in which three or four younger members of your staff would be employed would. I should think, be a good way to combine research and further training.
3. I would be inclined to lay a fairly heavy emphasis on field work. It has been my impression in a number of countries that research turns too much around those things that depend on books or on work in a central office. I should think it would be highly desirable to undertake certain projects that put people in the field either in the industrial or agricultural sector where they can get a first-hand knowledge of some of the development problems.
4. The predilection mentioned above for field work leads me to tend to favor projects you have listed under the headings of "Short Term Planning" and "Empirical Studies". I have the impression, though perhaps it is wrong, that you have gone further in Egypt in the direction of working out planning models and projection techniques than the state of the data or your knowledge of basic facts will sometimes justify.

I am doubtful whether these observations will be of any great use to you but I do not feel I know quite enough about the operations of the Institute to go any further than this.

With best wishes,

Edward S. Mason.

Comments of Professor Bent Hansen  
Visiting Professor & Consultant INPC  
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1. Like Dr. Abdel-Rahman, I think it is time now to twist the activities of the Institute more in the direction of research.
2. A prerequisite for increased research activity is that the teaching activities are organized in a way which permits the individual member of the staff to plan his own work for a sufficiently long time ahead. This means that his teaching duties (and other non-research duties) must be well-defined and fixed in advance. How long time in advance depends, of course on the nature of his research work; it may be 3-6 months, and it may be 2-3 years. It means also that the individual staff member must be given sufficient time for research work. What is sufficient depends, of course, both on the individual research project and the individual research worker. But in my opinion some teaching is always useful (even if the research worker himself hates it !)
3. This leads up to the question : Are by now the teaching activities sufficiently stabilized to give the staff members the time and the peace they need for making research work ?
4. Concerning the research activity, it seems to me important to take up things which 1. with relatively high certainty and 2. relatively quickly give positive results. This is partly because resources are limited and partly because it is important for a new institute to demonstrate its usefulness and efficiency.
5. This means that personally I am negative to all big team works in the present stage of the development of the Institute.
6. It also means that in my opinion, quite a lot of research work should be of the "imitating" kind, using well-known, accepted methods for studying well-known problems. This is the most rapid and least risky method of utilizing existing statistics and accumulating empirical knowledge about the country. And it is the best way of training research workers. The work of the assistants should in my opinion almost exclusively be this kind of work.
7. The work of senior research workers must always be more "con amore", which does not mean that direction of the research work is out of question. But it means that area of activity must be, if not broad, than at least quite elastic.
8. A certain amount of team-work will, however, almost automatically emerge through the supervision of the assistant by the seniors. Although the work of the assistants, being to a large extent training, must be individualistic, nothing prevents the senior from persuading the assistant to take up such research as fit into the research of the senior (which does not mean, of course, that the senior should be allowed to abuse the assistants for his own purpose). What from the

assistants' point of view is a limited, self-contained piece of research, may from the view-point of the senior be a detail which he wants illuminated for the sake of his own larger or deeper work. Such small-scale team-work is probably at present the only practical kind of team-work.

9. Also it may happen, of course, that two or more seniors go together "con amore" on a certain project and this is only alright. But such teams should in general not be allowed to absorb too big a share of the resources of the institute.
10. On the research program:-
  - a) Planning and Policy (Implementation) should be the main area, including all research necessary for solving planning and policy problems.
  - b) Stress on the empirical side (you cannot plan for a country about which you know nothing).
  - c) "Empirical" does not mean "national accounting". The value of this kind of empirical work is in my opinion limited, although it does give ideas about orders of magnitude of entities and changes therein, and gaps in the statistics.
  - d) What is needed is probably more empirical research on behavioural relations - absolutely necessary in all problems of implementation.
  - e) Institutional problems important, e.g. the relations between nationalized industries and government - control systems, book-keeping rules of behaviour etc.
  - f) All this needs theory, but theory should be considered a tool.
11. The idea of a periodical is sound and very important. The Memo-system is excellent for preliminary, internal or urgent publication, but experience shows that Memos are not read and observed outside a narrow circle. Stenciled things are not accepted by libraries - they are not printed. Nothing is more stimulating to research than the existence of a periodical which is widely read and which is open to both contributions and discussions.

Comments of Dr. Manfred Engert  
Visiting Expert INPC  
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1. I would like to stress that the first problem is to agree on the topics of research. Which approach will be best, can be answered only with respect to the problems under research. Their scope, volume etc. will decide which method of work suits best either individual or team work or both in a combined manner.
2. Research must meet the requirements of the practical economic life of the nation. Any topic of research, therefore is to be derived from pressing problems of practical planning both in the long and short run. Close co-operation and consultation with responsible field workers will help to act on this line from the very beginning.

A second problem concerns the character of research work to be undertaken by the Institute. We should aim at two objectives:-

(i) to provide the various planning and managing authorities with concrete studies which either can give some ideas with respect to certain principal planning problems and/or solve a particular problem directly. The latter should be worked out on a contract basis;

(ii) to do research work with special reference to the training activities in the Institute.

In many cases, however, it is impossible to distinguish both objectives but we should keep in mind that our trainees are coming from different fields of work. Some of them might be of interest for their training but not necessarily be of equal importance for the respective planning authority. In such cases research work is directly linked with the requirements of training.

3. It is proposed to start research on the following topics:-
  - a) Structure of the national economy of the U.A.R. in the long run.
  - b) Scientific and technical progress in U.A.R. (including, of course, problems concerning mineral deposits.)
  - c) Population and manpower problems.
  - d) Foreign trade problems.
  - e) Principal problems of organisation and management of the nationalized economy in U.A.R. (including, perhaps, regional planning).
4. Priority should be given, as it can be seen from point 3, to rather complex topics thus avoiding any split-up in research which usually is of low efficiency. Such concentration of themes will enable us:
  - (i) to meet the requirements of actual comprehensive planning as well as the fact that the nationalized sector is now prevailing,

(ii) to concentrate efforts of the staff of the Institute and, moreover to pool the different specialized fields of knowledge and practical experience;

(iii) to avoid any waste of research capacities which otherwise might be used for rather limited individual scientific interests which not always coincide with public interest.

5. Each topic should be studied under distinct scientific supervision and responsibility by senior research workers or experts. The responsible top research worker has to work out a concrete program of work (with respect to his topic) including:-
- (i) general scientific conception.
  - (ii) sub-topics to be studied.
  - (iii) responsibility for each sub-topic.
  - (iv) timing of the whole work.

These programs are to be discussed by all members of the team and after this to be approved by the director general of the Institute.

6. Each problem being a rather complex topic should include within its scope of course:-
- (i) basic policy problems.
  - (ii) main developments (forecasting and projection)
  - (iii) techniques, methodology.
  - (iv) resource appraisal.
  - (v) administrative, procedural, organizational and managerial problems.
  - (vi) empirical studies.

7. This substance of work asks for team work as far as the general conception of the topic and discussions on all partial contributions to the general problem are concerned. In addition to this, and adhering to the general line of work many individual activities are necessary, each covering part of the general topic of the team.

A strict system of both scientific debates on all results and strong supervision of the progress of work by the responsible senior research worker is of high importance in order to obtain a result giving a full picture of the respective problem.

8. Any team work needs highly qualified specialized contributions to it. This seems to be possible only in case there is an effective system of division of scientific labour in the Institute. Should we not think about the establishment of several cathedres or, put in a more modest manner, of permanent working groups. Such would cover each a certain, field of economic activity

(in theory and practice) and be responsible for all training and research activities in this field.

In accordance with the activity up till now the Institute should have the following cathedres:-

- a) Economics.
- b) National Planning (general problems, long-term plans, coordination of plans, management and procedural problems, regional planning).
- c) Industrial planning.
- d) Agricultural planning
- e) Manpower planning
- f) Economic (financial planning)

Each cathedre will be headed by a professor or senior expert.

To it would be attached other scientific personel e.g. lecturers research assistants, foreign experts.

7-10-1962

Comments of Dr. H. Linnemann

Visiting Expert INPC

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1. It seems to me that the main aims of the research program to be undertaken by the Institute of National Planning would be the following:-
  - (i) to develop and improve the methodology of planning in the UAR;
  - (ii) to maintain at the Institute an atmosphere that is conducive to independent scientific work, and that allows both national and foreign staff members to keep up their professional status.
2. Some organisational implications of these aims :-
  - (i) close contact with the Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Economy;
  - (ii) contact with other research institutions in the UAR (research departments of the Central Bank and the Universities);
  - (iii) working in small teams, each under the supervision of one senior staff member, seems to be most desirable;
  - (iv) there should be regular meetings of all professional staff in which the state and (preliminary) results of the research projects are reported and discussed.
3. Some observations on the points raised in paragraph 2 of Memo.239:
  - (i) I do not believe that individual abilities of the research assistants are most suitably raised if they act in an individualistic manner, if the latter phrase is intended to mean that individual work on a research project is better than working in a team.
  - (ii) I do not think that the wide diversity in specialisation among the staff of the Institute would be an obstacle to a common line of research. First, each (larger) research project will have several aspects so as to allow (and even gain from) the participation of various specialists. Second, the senior staff of the Institute may be assumed to be experienced enough to be rather "flexible" in its capacities particularly within the field of economic planning.

- (iii) As stated above, rather small teams may be desirable, therefore, a general rule, projects should give results within a period of, say, one year.
  - (iv) This seems to me a very good solution, in principle. A more detailed discussion does not make sense probably. Unless it is done in relation to a specific research project.
  - (v) In my opinion the Institute should be very cautious in accepting contract research obligations. First, the Institute has but little research experience and unexpected difficulties might therefore arise in the course of a project. Second, it might be tempting to accept certain research projects that could be obtained on attractive conditions, but that are outside the special field of work of the Institute, this might endanger the long-term development of the Institute as a breeding place for development planners.
4. I have not yet been in this country long enough to be able to allocate priorities to the various fields of research that are mentioned. I suppose that a research program could best be drawn up in a meeting of all senior staff members, when rather detailed information about the available resources is at the disposal of this group.
5. I should like to stress the point that international contacts with research and planning organisations should be maintained and intensified. Exchange of research programs and research papers could be most helpful to everyone involved.
6. It might be a bit early to decide at the present stage already on the form of publication of the research reports. Personally I would be inclined to prefer publication in the form of separate and individual studies. If there has to be a periodical, the frequency should not be too high (annual or biannual).

Comments of Dr. Jairaj Solomon

U.N. Expert to the I N P C

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I feel that research in the Institute of National Planning could be best organised on a combined approach of individual and team basis, giving due regard to contract research. The research activities of both the staff and the assistants should be centered around a certain nucleus. That is some broad areas should be defined on the basis of short and long term needs, under which the staff could take up specific topics of research within their competence. The senior staff members concerned would direct the research and be responsible for making it a worth while study. The assistants would work under these senior member and engage themselves in investigation, compilation, and computation work, according to their ability.

(It should be worth while in this connection to consider a separate lecture course in research methodology for all the assistants to achieve better standards of research and uniformity).

The Institute of National Planning, as differentiated from a university centre of economic research, should cover areas and topics of research closely related to national economic and social development.

However some directions on the research areas which this Institute could usefully undertake are suggested in the following lines. These may also cover certain areas and specialisations in which we do not have staff members. But this should be included in the plan now. Those areas in which there are no specialists now, may either wait till we obtain qualified researchers or be set aside for contract research by competent local institutions or international agencies.

It seems to me that it would be a good policy to have a standing committee on research programs, composed of senior staff members, nominated officials from government and university departments as well as representing provincial governorates. This body may be consulted from time to time on the research topics chosen in the institute and their relationship to real problems of national importance. This committee could also examine projects for contract research.

Proposed areas of studies  
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1. Analytical studies of macro-economic aséevts of U.A.R. economy with special reference to:-
  - a) Foreign trade and balance of payments in relation to economic development.
  - b) Effectiveness of investment in different sectors of the economy.
  - c) Pricing policies and techniques in the context of planned development.
  - d) Regional disparities.
2.
  - a) Studies of specific aspects of regional development, including development of urban areas and villages and small scale industries.
  - b) Studies of the impact of major projects including major irrigation and industrial projects on regional economy with special reference to subsidiary or ancillary investment.
3. Land Reforms, Rural economics and Cooperation.
4. Problems of social change and welfare in relation to economic development.
5. Problems of organization and administration in relation to planned development.
6. Labour problems:
  - a) Case studies of industrial relations in selected industrial units.
  - b) Studies of incentive schemes and methods of wage payments in different industries.
  - c) Non-wage benefits in different industries.
  - d) Wage patterns within an industry or area.
  - e) Evaluation of impact of mechanisation, automation and modernisation on the work, attitude and earnings of workers in selected industries.

Comments of Dr. Zakaria Nasr

Faculty of Law Ein-Shams University

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- (1) It seems to me that the Research Program that the Institute of National Planning which is to begin depends first of all on the Institutes' resources from research workers & financial allocations. Our following suggestions are based on the fact that both of the two aforementioned resources are limited, a matter that calls for selection, which leads to the priorities problem.

Undoubtly, the scope is very widem because of differentiation of views in this connection, and we are not able to decide- absolutely- that a view is much better than another.

- (2) However, it seems to us that it is needed to distinguish between three topics of research:

A. Individual researches which certain peoples look after them, in limited and fixed subjects and do not need for long duration.

B. Collective researches, that a number of research workers are to participate in and deal with subjects that necessitate many efforts for a more long period.

C. Permanent & continuous researches, dealing with subjects & problems seem to remain at its importance as long as our planning efforts are going on. This last topic requires the establishment of research units of permanent nature.

- (3) It is preferred, from our point of view, to define some limited topics every year from A & B, on the basis of designing a three or five years plan, that includes the selected topics distributed according to what the Institute considers as favourable, in the light of the current problems and what resources it can allocate for this purpose.

The proposed subjects for such researches are - undoubtly- numerous such as the following topics that may be added to the suggestions included in the distributed memo.:

1. Recent principles in planning the budget estimates.
2. The taxation-system planning in the light of the expansion of the public sector
3. Financing with the budget deficit and its limits.

4. The problem of pricing the products of the public projects.
  5. Analysis of project operations (Industrial, commercial and financial projects) and its evaluation.
  6. New methods of project management.
  7. Planning methods in some countries
  8. The basis of designing a credit budget.
  9. The basis of markets research.
  10. The role of agriculture in the process of development.
  11. Developing the agricultural sector productivity.
  12. Analysis of consumption demand .
  13. The distribution of national income.
  14. Regional planning and its methods.
- (4) Concerning the third topic, which in our opinion is the important and suitable one for the Institute's objectives, and the nearest way for serving the planning efforts in a practical manner, needs the close interest from now, to design it on clear basis that make the responsible divisions engaged in it, in an operating status (even on a fair basis at its first stages), in the very near future.

In this connection we suggest that the I.N.P. organize research units, every one for an economic branch, and a general unit that studies the general problems related to the comprehensive planning.

The proposed units may be distributed as follows:

- The comprehensive plan unit.
- Industrial unit.
- Agricultural unit.
- Communications unit.
- Home trade unit.
- Foreign trade unit.
- Monetary & Financial sector unit.
- State accounts unit.
- Labour force unit.

Every unit is to put a program for its activity, on the basis that such activity is to deal with the economic conditions of its concern, so as to discover the weak points and the strong ones in the development of this branch, but its main function should be suggesting arrangements that may be necessary, and designing short-term & long-term plans needed for developing the standards of the branch, and to assist the appropriate administrative sections to overcome any troubles that may be faced.

The function of such units needs a close cooperation

between each of them and different ministries & concerned organizations especially the Ministry of National Planning, so as to avoid lack of direct data & information.

- (5) It is not useful to limit the activities of the different proposed units around practical applied subjects only, but we should ask them, to participate in a scientific activity that can be summarized in studies on methods of research and planning techniques applied in foreign countries.

No doubt . it is useful at this stage of our development, not to neglect any piece of progress or any piece of work carried on by foreign countries especially in the countries that took the way of National Planning, which is based on scientific foundations, however in Western or Eastern Countries.

This scientific activity, in our opinion, is able to provide the work or the unit, from the practical side, with the foundations necessary for developing the standard of its staff, and stabilizing its functions.

- (6) At the end of these remarks, we would like to refer, to two points, that the Institute, undoubtedly, gives careful consideration long time ago.

A) Library position : as we know, Library is the most important tool of Research, a matter that requires to give it a continuous importance, which renders it a center containing every reference in related subjects of planning. In this concern we mean, periodicals specialized in important subject such as the publications of ECLA, ECAFE, OEEC, UN, and planning periodicals in socialist countries.

B) A related subject to training & research : A matter that would have the necessary importance. We mean that most references for daily practical planning problems, in the planning process details of the basis of projects, regions, and the country as a whole, have been written in a different language of our ordinary economic cultural ones. The public theories for planning & methods may be found in english or french references in a sufficient manners, but we can not find in such references the detailed matters . We ask for a rapid solution for such a problem.

We believe that the Institute of National Planning is able or responsible for planning to solve this problem.

Comments of Dr. A.El Sayed

Expert INPC

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The institute was established to serve the planning machinery. Consequently its work is divided into training and research activities. I will comment on both.

Training activities:

I should like to suggest the following amendments for consideration: The long term training course, if it should fulfil its end, must be extended to two years or at least 18 monthsh. Three to four months of this period are to be to introductory and survey lectures. The rest of the period is nearly sufficient for the specialized training courses.

The use, as much as possible, of the seminar system in our training activities in order to encourage group discussions and in still confidence in the trainees. Seminars may be held twice a month instead of weekly so as to give the trainees, ample time to prepare themselves.

So substitute examinations by round table discussions. Professors should meet with their students every two weeks and discuss with them lectures and reading assignments. As a result of this round table discussions a tutor may suggest the expulsion of any student who is not putting enough time and effort into his work. In my opinion such a system would compell trainees to take their studies much more seriously. On the other hand it would allow the institute to interfere in time and exclude those who have proved unsuitable.

As for selecting the subjects to teach I think they should be so dissigned as to serve the immediate needs of our clients.

Our experience with short term training programmes indicates that their value is very limited indeed. This, perhaps, was due to the fact that too much was attempted in too short a time. For example the course given to the staff members of the Banks' organization consisted of many lectures covering a wide range of problems. These lectures were delivered by different individuals. A trainee has said that "they have hear every thing and benefited from nothing" not altogether untrue statement.

In order to devise useful short term training courses it is essential that we should know more, of the exact functions of the candidate; and practical problems confronting them. On the basis of this information a committee of the staff members of the Institute may then draw out a short term course to a well selected homogeneous group which will meet their requirements and qualifications. The course should combine

theoretical and practical issues with emphasis on the latter. Seminars should be held frequently to allow the trainees to raise their own questions and problems. The course must be planned, well in advance to permit lecturers to prepare their notes and have them discussed with the members of the supervising committee.

Finally I suggest that the Institute benefits from the training experience of similar institutions abroad. The Institute may for example arrange short visits for staff members to such institutions to study their training activities and methods.

#### Research activities:

The research activities may be divided into team and individual research activities. The memorandum has given special attention to the former. It seems that the team research work presented in the memo - viz long-term planning, short term planning, manpower planning and empirical research - was decided upon as being readily effected by the means at hand. But the divisions and classification of research adopted raise a serious question. The question is whether it is feasible, let alone useful, to separate long term and short term analysis of planning problems. Any separation between short term and long term analysis of planning problems is highly arbitrary. As we all know, changes in economic variables, fast and slow, affect the future direction and the structure of the economic system. Because of this inter-relationships in partial and structural movements of a developing economy, it will not be possible to conduct research on short term planning problem without reference to long term planning problems and vice versa. Accordingly there seems to me a case for dividing research work into areas of specialization in the same way as the Institute is organized. Such a division will obviously entail an increase in the units of the existing academic divisions of the Institute. Each unit will then be responsible for conducting long & short term analysis of planning problem in its own area of specialization. In this respect I should like to emphasize the importance of co-operation between the various research units of the Institute since two or more units may be engaged in one research each in its own area of specialization.

As regards the selection of topics to be investigated, this should be decided upon with a view to the objectives to be served. Generally speaking there are two types of research. The first is academic research and the other is operational and policy directed research.

The first type of research deals with planning problems in the wider sense in pure theoretical framework. The objective of such research is to examine generally accepted propositions closely and critically and to get acquainted with and follow the development of thought in this field of knowledge.

The second type of research may be sub-divided into two branches:

- i - incipient research on practical problems confronting implementation of the plan. It includes analysis of expected results of the execution of the development projects on the national economy and the technical, financial and administrative problems of execution.
- ii- follow up studies of the execution of the annual plans with a view to discover any possible failings which may need remedial action.

In my opinion, group of research workers together as a team should be confined to this type of research. Staff members of the Institute may conduct research our approved theoretical topics on individual basis, each in accordance with his interest and specialization.

To conclude I should like to mention that the process of expanding our research activities in this manner depends on our ability to increase the staff and research facilities of the Institute.

Comments of Dr. A. Salama  
Research Work INPC  
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In consideration that the period of my energy in the Institute is rather short, I never had the proper occasion to have a respective idea about the different branches of research which could be accomplished by the scientific Department. I suggest that the program of the research can be planned in detail during a committee assembling all the members of this department. The ofresaid plan would'nt be an obstacle to quote the following remarks:-

1. a. The Institute law stipulate in Section 3, aliana 7, that the Institute is in full right to realise its aim to declare its opinion about the projects of laws, decreases and projects relating to national planning.

I noted that the Institute did not put in execution this section, and there is no doubt about the natain profit when the Institute re-approve the planning projects.

- b. The Inegration law of the Institute stipulates that the Institute must translate books and reviews concerning planning and this is most profitable if done.
2. Where as the Institute is in charge to ammelurate the planning researches and studies which relate to the whole national plan of the Republic. I advise that all administrations and associations communicated with the execution of any plan refers first to the Institute through the Ministry of Planning in all problems that could be raised in consideration that the Institute gives its advise based on technical, economical, practical and social ways for the National Plan.
3. To reach a perfect research, the Institute must be in full contacts with the centres of planning research, being in different plans in the Republic, i.e. research centres of planning belonging to the Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Economy and the Central Bank. Also, it must be considered in every research, the mutually collaborations with the universities and the Institute and administration of statistics.
4. I advise that the organisation of the research must be in the same time individual and collective and there will be no contradiction in this. In the collaborated researches, all the collaborated team will be in charge to study a distinguished subject from many angles. In the individual research,

Comments of Mr. M.S.El-Halfawy  
Research worker INPC  
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It is clear from the Director's note that the second function of the Institute as a research centre should be developed. The note asks the academic staff in the Institute to plan research and to examine all its aspects. In my opinion, such research should be characteristic with the functions of the Institute. The responsibility of choosing topics for research and arranging priorities for such researches and planning programmes of work, are the three main questions raised by the note. In order to achieve such goal successively, two organizations should be set up, the first for planning training and the second for planning research. Co-operation between the two bodies is expected. It is clear that there is stress on the treatment of each, i.e. training and research, separately.

What is meant by organization ? The academic staff of the Institute are of different specializations and also of different abilities concerning time and contribution to both training and research. If research in the Institute is to serve PLANNING, as distinct from the pure scientific type of research known in the universities, naturally such type of research has to be organized by a group of thinkers for the short and long-run policies. The co-operation of outside specialists is also expected. It is the duty of the organization of research to decide on the individualistic or the collective type of researches. Progress of research requires continuous consideration and decisions regarding allocation, follow-up, publishing .... etc.

Comments of Dr. A. Hosny  
Senior Expert INPC  
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The research program proposed in Memo. No. 239 can be a good performance of the research function of the Institute, and I think that if the necessary arrangements are made to carry out this program efficiently, it will be a good contribution to the success of the Institute.

The program is a comprehensive one including nearly all the research projects which come to the mind of anyone who is seriously involved in planning.

The success of the program depends on two factors:

- 1- The adaptability of the program to the needs of the planners
- 2- The workability of the program.

The adaptability of the program:

The objective of the program is to contribute to the development of planning. Interpreting the concept of "Planning" operationally; three components are distinguished:

- 1- Analysis and policy measures.
- 2- Planning data.
- 3- Planning techniques.

The three components must be clearly emphasized and the relative weights of the three components should be determined by the structure of the "market", where the research will be delivered that is, the relative needs of the different planning offices.

The appropriateness of methodology is equally important. All the research projects should be of an applied nature. Purely academic research is outside the scope of the functions of the Institute. The approach to planning problems should also be governed by the readiness of the "market" to accept the method used.

In this respect, the issue of determinancy versus reality is a highly relevant one. The search for determinancy impels the research worker to simplify the economic system at the expense of reality. On the other hand, the search for reality impels the research worker to go into the intricacies of the economic system without regard to optimal solutions derived from simplified propositions.

This issue of methodology needs careful consideration and should be openly discussed to find out the methodology of research which would

characterize the Institute's approach in serving the practical requirements of planners in this country.

The choice of methodology is not an easy task, and an objective decision has to be made before starting the implementation of the research program.

To reach this objective decision, a seminar on "The methodology of Planning Research", can be held in next year, to which the Institute invites the prominent experts interested in planning in U.A.R. to exchange views, and if possible, to make recommendations, on the most appropriate methodology. The list of invitations may include: the members of the Board of Directors, the foreign consultants, the academic staff of the Institute, including the foreign experts, University staff, and Representatives of the Ministry of Planning and representatives of the planning offices.

#### The workability of the program:

Taking into consideration the conditions under which the staff of the Institute work, the program seems to be an ambitious one, to the extent that the workability of the program is questioned.

Three considerations should be taken into account before making the final decision.

#### 1) The shortage of the staff:

The Institute is already facing the problem of the shortage of the staff, and the problem may become more acute in the near future.

#### 2) The commitment of the long-term training program.

The Institute is committed to an intensive and extensive training program for 1963. The experience has proved that training is a heavy burden on the permanent Staff, since it requires delivering lectures, supervision of training research, administrative work, etc.

#### 3) The lack of research assistants:

It was the policy of the Institute to train the would-be research assistants for one year. But it has been recently decided to extend the period of training for one more year, during which the research assistants will be engaged in doing their own research. This decision may have its own justifications, but it has the effect that the Senior Staff will be deprived completely from research assistance.

### A Counter-Proposal

These difficulties should not, however, lead to the suspension of the research function of the Institute. I am sure that the success of the Institute will depend mainly on its success in performing this particular function.

Taking all the above-mentioned factors into consideration, I think it more appropriate to postpone the proposed research program until 1964.

In the mean-time, the issue of methodology should be discussed, and the proposed seminar on "The Methodology of Research in Planning" can be held. Besides that, the individual research projects which are now undertaken by the Staff can continue. Fortunately, these projects are relevant to the proposed program.

Comments of  
The Operations Research Group  
INPC

The Operations Research Group of the Institute, agree with Dr. Ibrahim that the following points, represent the basic questions of discussions at this preparatory stage, of planning research activities in the Institute:

- i) The problem of selection of topics of research.
- ii) The problem of choice and combinations of research workers (individual v.s team, by topics or specialities,... etc)
- iii) The procedures of follow up, reporting, revising & critisi-  
zing and publication of results.

The group considers these points successively as follows:

Selection of Research Topics:

We believe that at this stage of national development, at which most planning offices will be engaged, shortly, in preparations of "2nd Five Years Plan", some emphasis should be given to certain lines of research that are expected to produce direct recommendations to planning officers. That is why, it is to our belief, preferable to explore lines of research that can allow for actual experimentation within the institute, possibly through pilot examples.

The experience gained through pilot examples will, no doubt, clear a good part of the practical problems faced by planners in different fields. It will also help, in the course of research, to produce a number of study cases that could be used in training programs at the institute. The approach of research through pilot examples, will also limit the risks mentioned by Dr. Ibrahim regards undesirable loses of time and effort, in case we go for long-term ambitious projects. It is generally possible to limit the size of problems to the level of a pilot example and concentrate on specific aspects such as: means to stream-line procedures and operations; means to set-up estimates for non-existing data of some economic or social significance, means of illustrating directions of use of different planning techniques.

It is, therefore helpful if some general criteria are defined to serve as guide in an effective selection of topics. This is not a dogmatic approach, but rather a means to safe guard loses of limited resources of effort and time in less needed topics of research, at least at this stage of our research in development techniques and aspects, that are most related to our actual problems in U.A.R.

We believe that these criteria may include the following:

- a) The topic should be related directly to problems of development at the national level.
- b) The topic should lead to better practical understanding of existing techniques, or to comparisons between different methods and tools; or to suggest methods of stream line to frequently applied techniques. It is preferable, that research would lead to practical results towards some tool of planning.
- c) It is preferable, that topics chosen, allow for actual working; of pilot examples.

It will be also help, and harmonize activities within the institute, if we adopt the same classification of specialized courses in the long-term training program, in specifying general lines of research, viz

- a) Financial & Economic Planning
- b) Mathematical Techniques of Planning
- c) Agrarian & Rural Planning
- d) Industrial & Urban Planning
- e) Man-Power and Social Planning.

Another point, worth consideration, is concerned with methods of setting up comprehensive plans from partial plans at sectorial level. We found out, from discussions and contacts with fellow planners in some planning offices, that there is always a general feeling of the dilemma, that each office should know something about directions of development and if possible list of essential projects suggested by other sectors before they are able to set up an effective plan for their own sector. This point appears more clearly in some of the services sectors, transportation and some of the industrial branches of the economy. To what extent can a macro-model be an answer to this problem, is still not really known on actual or practical basis. It is definitely useful to consider, among topics of research, the questions of inter-related growth among sectors of the economy or relations between practical plans and in particular how a practical procedure of successive adjustments can be worked out, to achieve a final form of balanced development.

#### The Choice And Combination of Research Workers:

To begin with, there is the obvious advantage in team work, that absence of some personnel, will not stop research activities in certain lines. The team basis of research has also the privilege of training people in research, and creating mutual exchange of experience, knowledge, information regards sources of data....etc. However we believe that,

in a team, there should be a specified plan of work which defines responsibilities and activities for each member of the team. This approach, of specified tasks for each member in a team, initiates competition, and provides a means to evaluate activities of individuals in the team. Each team should have, a responsible secretary, preferably a member of permanent staff of the institute to act as officer of communication with the team. The team should also have a member of young research workers and demonstrators from the institute.

However, there still remains the problem of choice of topics that fits, favourably, with existing personnel at least at the start of research activities. We believe that this, can only be settled, when list of research projects is prepared for discussion between top responsibilities of the institute. The problem of ensuring required supply of information & data to the institute has also an important bearing on possibilities of success of our research in the institute.

Procedure of follow-up, periodical reporting...etc.

In this problem, we believe, that each formed team, should provide, in the preliminary meetings a broad statement specifying:

- a) points of research and operations involved in the topic of research.
- b) schedule for order of work in these points and operations
- c) estimates for time needed to complete each point
- d) approximate dates of submitting progress reports on each point.

It is also, very important that seminars, would be held periodically in the institute, in which members of the institute and from outside are invited to participate in discussing results achieved at each stage of development in research.

The group also welcomes the idea of carrying out research through contracts with local & foreign agents.

This besides being a source of finance to our research in the institute, create an effective contact with planning departments which in the long run brings actual problems of research to the institute and ensures practical contact with real world.

Comments of  
Dr. Ezz El Din Hamam  
Supervisor, Agriculture Economic Group INPC  
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- 1) The best idea to plan for research is to seek at first the advice of outside specialists engaged in practical problems. A temporary committee of outside specialists and internal ones is suggested to be formed to give advice on practical problems which need investigation.
- 2) Contract research either with national or international agencies must be given due importance.
- 3) Team work is appreciated particularly in connection with long term planning problems. A team of research workers can be selected to co-operate in the investigation of a specified problem, no matter whether specialists co-operating are all from the institute or partly from the institute and partly from outside. Each case can be decided on its own.
- 4) Research work carried by the trainees must not belittled . If the trainees are offered better facilities and adequate time than allowed now better results in connection with the standard of their research work can be achieved.

Comments of  
Dr. M. Helmy Murad  
Faculty of law, Ein-Shams University  
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1. Concerning research preparation system. Instead of the collective researches that deal with subjects, chosen for groups of researchers, I prefer individual research ones which leave the selection of research subjects to the research workers themselves. This is because that the individual research let the researcher engaged in to deal with the subject in a complete responsibility for his work, and leave him free from any combination with his fellows. Moreover, the process of leaving the selection of the subject for the researcher himself, gives him another self motive to follow-up his work.

Naturally, such organization, does not prevent, absolutely, to choose a main subject for more than one researcher, and to held a meeting for research-workers engaged in to discuss any results, that may have been reached. It does not prevent, also, to call for meetings for studying related subjects.

2. Concerning Research-subjects: I would like to add:
  - a- Handicap guidance to the subject of manpower planning
  - b- Taxation policy to the subject of short-term planning
  - c- Manpower Statistics to the subject of experimental studies
3. Concerning Research-publication:

I prefer such researches to be published in seperate pamphlets, instead of periodicals. This will leave the INP free of publishing them at main dates; a matter that may impeded giving the necessary time for research finishing. In addition the publication of such researches in a seperate pamphlet for each, entitled with a heading for the subject, will help researchers to find, rapidly, any materials needed for them among the numerous publications of the Institute.