FOURTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

POST-IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW OF THE PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE 2002-2005 INVESTMENT FUND OF THE THIRD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

1. At its November 2006 session, the Board received a "final" progress report on the Centre's Investment Fund (2002-2005) that had accompanied the Centre's Third Development Plan (2001-2005). At that time, the Director promised that the Board, at its next meeting, would receive a document evaluating the Development Plan's and Investment Fund's achievements. This promise was also based on the recommendation of the External Auditor in his report for the year ended on 31 December 2003, stating "that the Centre should carry out a post-implementation review of the projects funded by the 2002-2005 Investment Fund to provide a series of lessons learned and recommendations for the Centre's future projects."

2. In June 2007, the Centre requested Ms Christine Cornwell, a former senior ILO official, to conduct this review. It was conducted between June and August 2007. According to the terms of reference, the purpose of the review was to "determine and verify the actual outputs, outcomes and possible longer-term results of the projects and sub-projects carried out with funding from the Investment Fund." It should also "compare these outputs, outcomes and results with the original objectives as formulated in the Third Year Development Plan (2001-2005) and the associated Investment Fund. Moreover, it should review the ways in which the projects and sub-projects were formulated, designed and managed, taking into account the observations of the External Auditor in his report of November 2004." The review was not meant to be an impact evaluation, as real impact (i.e. the longer-term effects on organizations and persons resulting from actions/behaviour/performance of Turin Centre participants after having participated in Turin Centre training and learning activities) is likely to show up only a couple of years after the actual training has taken place.

3. This document has two parts. The first part is the report by Ms Cornwell. The second part is the Management response to Ms Cornwell's findings and recommendations.

For information.

POST-IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW OF THE PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE 2002-2005 INVESTMENT FUND OF THE THIRD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

by S. C. Cornwell

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Investment Fund for 2002-2005 was composed of 12 specific, time-bound projects which aimed to introduce new or improved products and services that would constitute an investment for future programmes. They were developed against a backdrop of significant changes and reforms in development cooperation circles, in the ILO and of advances in teaching and learning techniques and in information and communication technology. The Fund was financed with 1 US$ million drawn from the reserves, which supplemented the Regular Budget without creating recurrent costs. The projects were in five areas, linked to the strategic directions of the Development Plan: closer association with the ILO (specifically in the areas of the Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and of industrial relations and collective bargaining); gender mainstreaming; quality of training including impact evaluation; information technology; and extended reach.

2. Some of the projects were delayed and a few activities were carried over to 2006. This fact, coupled with the recommendations of the External Auditor in his report to the Board in 2004 which highlighted certain planning, design and management difficulties in the Fund's operations, prompted the Director of the Centre to undertake a post-implementation review of the Investment Fund in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the projects and draw lessons for future exercises. The review, carried out by an external collaborator, was limited in scope and was not intended as a full evaluation. The methodology consisted of a desk review of relevant documents plus interviews or email contacts with the Centre's staff as well as selected ILO officials.

3. The review's findings focussed on both the programme as a whole and the individual projects. The review found that the overall programme had demonstrated a number of strengths: relevance in terms of the context and backdrop of reforms; high quality training materials and other outputs, all available in electronic form; targeting low cost practical improvements; good alignment with the Development Plan; and a high (95%) delivery rate with most work completed on time. The weaknesses were nevertheless significant: absence of both a comprehensive strategy with linkages to on-going or planned work and of benchmarks/indicators to determine the real investment value of the work; structural flaws due to restrictions on how funds could be used; problems with design, monitoring and management; insufficient exploitation of possible collaboration between the Centre and the ILO; and absence of proposed follow-up measures.

4. As for the individual projects, strengths and weaknesses differed according to the objectives and work undertaken. In general the information technology projects were well designed and managed and met their objectives. Additional work is now required but this was beyond the project's scope in 2002-2005. The projects related to a closer association with the ILO as a rule produced high quality, relevant and useful materials or outputs. Most of these dovetail with ILO work. Better collaboration between the ILO technical unit on forced labour and the Centre, however, would have been welcome. Other weaknesses were mainly in the area of design and monitoring: projects started late and outputs had to be adjusted over time.

5. Two of the gender mainstreaming projects met their objectives and produced useful outputs (database, website, gender notes and country profiles). The challenge for this particular work in the future will be sustainability and finding ways to strengthen collaboration with the ILO, especially at the field level, even though this was not part of the project's objective. The third gender project, enhancing gender equality at the Centre, did not have the means and was not the most appropriate tool to meet its objective. This was more of a design problem than one of implementation.

6. The two quality of training projects were quite distinct. The first, enhancing the quality of training, was highly participatory based on voluntary involvement. This approach benefited from motivated and dedicated staff, but did not ensure that programme managers, who would normally be considered as agents of quality assurance, would participate. Outputs constituted not only concrete and practical improvements for organizing and delivering training programmes, but also instilled a greater appreciation of quality among the staff. The main weakness was the absence of clearly assigned responsibility in several instances for implementing or using the results and for follow-up work. The second project, impact evaluation, produced a major study that provides useful guidance for the future. However, the project as originally envisaged was hampered by design flaws; implementation was delayed; outputs were reduced; and the original objectives could not be achieved.

7. The projects related to extended reach produced the intended outputs (alumni network, database and website) and have provided a potentially useful tool for the Centre to involve former participants in a number of areas – advocacy, programme development, evaluation. The drawbacks relate to an under-utilization of the network and an absence of a clear strategy on how to exploit it and where responsibility and management for this will reside.

8. Based on these findings, the review outlined a few lessons that could be drawn from the 2002-2005 exercise. These related to the advantages of comprehensive programming, linked to the Centre's mission and regular budget and extra-budgetary programmes; the critical role of programme management; reviewing the financial structure of investment funds; commitment and communication from top management; individual project planning and implementation; the advantages of early joint Centre/ILO programming meetings; avoiding missed opportunities to exploit fully the potential for collaboration between the ILO and the Centre, even if such collaboration is not an explicit objective; the advantages of participatory approaches to project implementation; and the importance of

planning how project results will be translated into operations and of assigning responsibility for this.

9. Several recommendations concluded the review. These concerned two sets of issues. The first was the follow-up work that would be necessary for a number of the 2002-2005 Investment Fund projects in order either to maximize the investment value of the results or to make certain adjustments in the light of experience. The second set of issues addressed the planning and programming questions of the next investment fund (2007-2011). The main emphasis was placed on collaboration between the ILO and the Centre and on exploring the use of planned outputs in the wider development circles, especially at the field level; on the assignment of management responsibility; on planning, design and monitoring and setting realistic objectives with the proportionate resources; and on communications from management to staff.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

10. The Investment Fund for 2002-2005, presented to the Board of the Centre at its 63rd Session in October 2001, was designed to finance a limited number of specific, time-bound projects as one of several means to attain the objectives of the Third Development Plan (2001-2005)[1]. Resources, totalling US$1 million, were drawn from the reserves thus supplementing the regular budget without creating recurrent costs. The projects were based on the strategic directions set out in the Development Plan, with the intent of sparking new or improved products and services that would constitute an investment for future programmes.

11. The strategic directions on the Third Development Plan and the objectives of its implementation strategy ("The Operationalization of the Third Development Plan"[2]) represented a new outlook for the Centre. They came against a backdrop of significant advances in information and communication technology and on the heels of major developments within the UN system, in development cooperation circles, in learning and training techniques and of a broad restructuring of the International Labour Office focussed on a decent work agenda. The five strategic objectives highlighted in the implementation strategy presented a response to ensuring coherence with the ILO's objectives and target groups as well as to fostering the Centre as a training institution of excellence in the wide domain of labour issues.

12. After review by the Board of the Centre in 2001 and further consultations with the Officers of the Board, a list of 12 projects, each contributing to one of the strategic objectives, was approved in November 2002[3]. The five strategic objectives, the corresponding projects and their funding are outlined below in Table 1.

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[1]   62nd Session of the Board of the Centre (Turin, 2-3 November 2000): document CC 62/4.
[2]   63rd Session of the Board of the Centre (Turin, 30-31 October 2001): document CC 63/4.
[3]   64th Session of the Board of the Centre (Turin, 5-6 November 2002): document CC 64/5/b.

Table 1:   Projects under the Investment Fund (2002-2005)
Expenditures (2002-2006)

Strategic objectives	Investment Fund projects	Amount available (US$)	Expenditures (2002-2006) (US$)
A. Closer Association with the ILO		**235,000**	**293,000**
	A1. Design and production of training materials on fundamental principles and rights at work and forced labour.	120,000	197,000
	A2. Design and production of training materials in the area of industrial relations and collective bargaining.	115,000	96,000
B. Gender Mainstreaming		**45,000**	**45,000**
	B1. Database and website development.	6,000	8,000
	B2. Staff development and enhanced gender mainstreaming in Centre's Programme.	24,000	20,000
	B3. Gender equality in human resources (including staff development).	15,000	17,000
C. Quality of Training		**230,000**	**158,000**
	C1. Staff development.	30,000	29,000
	C2. Impact evaluation.	200,000	129,000
D. Information Technology		**342,000**	**341,000**
	D1. Internet / intranet projects.	297,000	341,000
	D2. Staff development.	45,000	0
E. Extended Reach		**148,000**	**113,000**
	E1. Database and website.	48,000	88,000
	E2. Incentive schemes.	85,000	11,000
	E3. Missions.	15,000	14,000
TOTAL		**1,000,000**	**950,000**

13. While the timeframe of the Investment Fund was initially intended for a four year period (2002-2005), the adjustments in selecting projects and approving funding as late as November 2002 constituted a built-in delay from the start. Most projects none the less were completed by the end of 2005. Three projects were carried over to 2006. The Board was kept informed of progress on a yearly basis through updates and progress reports submitted to each session from 2003 to the end of 2006.[4]

14. The 2006 progress report provided summarized all of the work carried out under the Investment Fund. The report noted, however, that given delays in implementing certain projects and in order to provide a fuller assessment of the work accomplished, a more analytical document would be prepared for the Board's 69th Session in 2007. Such a review exercise would also respond to the recommendations of the External Auditor in his report to the Board for the year ending on 31 December 2003.[5] These recommendations addressed project planning, project implementation and project completion, specifying that the Centre should carry out a post-implementation review of the projects funded by the 2002-2005 Investment Fund.

15. The present document, prepared by an external collaborator, is intended to give effect to the recommendations of the External Auditor, and is not considered as a full evaluation exercise. It summarizes the projects and their outputs, in light of the objectives sought, and examines strengths and weaknesses and lessons learned, both in terms of design, planning, processes and in terms of the relevance and usefulness of the end products for the Centre and the ILO as a whole. Because of this limited scope and the short time that has elapsed since the projects were completed, a fuller evaluation exercise, involving constituents and former participants, was not deemed feasible. Consultations were held with the staff of the Centre associated with the Investment Fund. In addition the collaborator reviewed the outputs of the various projects with staff of the ILO, both at Headquarters and in the field, whose work was related to the technical area of the projects, even if the officials had not been involved in project implementation.

REVIEW FINDINGS

Overall structure and strategy

16. Several aspects of the structure and strategy of the Investment Fund deserve attention. First, the design of the programme as a whole targeted each of the strategic objectives so that an initial boost could be given in each area of the Development Plan. A comprehensive strategy of the Investment Fund as a whole

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[4]   65th Session of the Board of the Centre (Turin, 6-7 November 2003): document CC 65/4; 66th Session of the Board (Turin 4-5 November 2004): document CC 66/4; 67th Session of the Board of the Centre (Turin 3-4 November 2005): document CC 67/5/a; 68th Session of the Board of the Centre (Turin 2-3 November 2006): document CC 68/4.

[5]   "Director's report on the activities of the Centre in 2003-2004 and perspectives for 2005 – Financial Statements and External Auditor's Report for the financial year 1 January to 31 December 2003", 66th Session of the Board of the Centre (Turin, 4-5 November 2004): document CC 66/1/Add.3.

was not articulated in detail. This would have included, for example, a design indicating the relationship to other work programmes and other sources of funding; the bases for project selection; linkages among the projects or options for reallocation of funds as contingency plans; and internal division of responsibility and management processes. Priorities were deliberately not set, although the amounts allocated to different projects indicated the emphasis placed on them. In the end, 12 individual projects were included, some of which were inter-connected, others not. This individual project approach, while consistent with established individual objectives, weakened the underlying focus set out in the Implementation Strategy.

17.   Second, the amount of funds for each individual project, taking into account the four year timeframe, was necessarily small.   In addition, the funds were strictly limited to financing activities or resource persons.[6] They could not finance existing staff time. This restriction meant that time devoted to the Investment Fund projects represented extra work for the Centre's staff as it was not programmed in their work plans and financial targets of contributing to fixed costs. Participation in Investment Fund projects turned out to be a double-edged sword: it enabled certain units to develop products that they might otherwise not have and thus constituted a possible investment for the future, and yet it represented an added burden in terms of planning and work implementation. This fundamental structural issue should be addressed in the future. The views of the External Auditor on the weaknesses of individual projects in terms of insufficient and inadequate planning and design should be seen in this context.[7]

18.   The decision to fund 12 different activities was no doubt justified in the context of the challenges facing the Centre as it formulated its Third Development Plan in 2000. None the less future exercises may well consider adopting a more coherent overall programme with a strategic focus and a well reasoned design, rather than funding a series of activities, however useful their outputs.

Individual project planning, design and management

19.   As noted above, the External Auditor's report submitted in November 2004 described the weaknesses in most of the Investment Fund projects in terms of inadequate planning, design and management as of the end of 2003. The present review exercise noted that some corrective steps had been taken between 2003 and 2006, such as summary project outlines and regular reporting procedures on the status of projects. However, the full range of the External Auditor's recommendations relating to design, monitoring and management of project activities still needs to be adopted by the Centre as it undertakes its activities. The management of the Centre should pay particular attention to this as it prepares the projects of the next Investment Fund.

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[6]   One staff member was hired exceptionally with these funds to develop and manage training courses on child and forced labour.
[7]   Ibid. paragraph 34.

Implementation, outputs and results compared to objectives

20. The actual implementation of each project and the outputs, as they relate to the objectives, are summarized briefly below. In some cases adjustments and changes were made in design and in the definition of the final product.

Table 2:   **Strategic objective A: Closer association with the ILO.**

   A1.   **Design and production of training materials on fundamental principles and rights at work and forced labour.**

Immediate objectives (2003)	Planned outputs[8]	Actual outputs	Start date / Completion date	Comments
Strengthen Centre capacity to carry out training related to forced labour.	Training materials (no indicators of achievement).	Training material for a global alliance against forced labour and related courses.	2003/ materials completed end 2005, mid-2006.	Product conceived jointly with ILO HQ, final version vetted by ILO. However, design and implementation not developed jointly.
(2005) Introduce joint training programme on child labour and trafficking.	Training courses (joint child labour and forced labour) (no indicators of achievement).	10 courses in 2006, of which 9 with IPEC.	2005 / 2006.	Output defined only in 2005. Funds used to hire staff to implement programme.

21. This project was not initially included in the Investment Fund since the work was intended for the regular budget. This explains the absence of indicators of achievement in the Implementation Strategy and the delay in implementation. The training materials on forced labour are of high quality and will meet the immediate objective of the Centre to carry out training activities on this subject. A pilot course was held in 2005; one course was held in 2006; one in 2007; and two more are in the pipeline. The material was reviewed and approved by the ILO Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour (DECLARATION). A French version is being prepared, and Chinese and Spanish versions are under consideration.

22. The draft training material on forced labour was approved by ILO HQ. Even though the project was conceived together by the Centre's and ILO's technical programmes, the development of the product was not carried out with close cooperation of the two units. Both the Centre and ILO units could have made greater efforts to ensure full collaboration. The result has led to a mixed outcome. While the material meets the Centre's objectives for open courses requiring comprehensive documentation, the ILO strategy for advocacy and training in the area of forced labour targets a more focussed and specific audience, for example on a country or sectoral basis. The ILO technical programme finds that the material is very good, but it is not sure at this stage

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how it will use it. A more strategic partnership between the two organizations, for which there is willingness on both sides, will be necessary to meet fully the strategic objective.

23. The work on child labour and trafficking was only initiated in 2005. This was done in full collaboration with ILO HQ (IPEC and DECLARATION).   The appointment of a dedicated staff member in the Centre to carry out this work proved vital. It is unlikely that the outputs could have been produced otherwise. The feedback from ILO HQ has been most positive, in terms of course content, target groups and availability. Differences remain between the two institutions on the number, frequency and the desired mix between open and customized courses.   Moreover, while the training activities were intended as a joint programme on child labour and forced labour, most of the activities have been on child labour. Attempting to manage and combine the training programmes of the two ILO programmes, especially given the size of IPEC's programme, may not have been a viable option.

Table 3:   Strategic objective A: Closer association with the ILO.

A2.   Design and production of training materials in the area of industrial relations and collective bargaining.

Immediate objectives (redefined in 2003-2005)	Planned outputs[9] (2004) (no indicators of achievement)	Actual outputs	Start date / Completion date	Comments
Enhance the skills of constituents in non-adversarial negotiation.	Package on joint union-management negotiations skills (Latin America).	Training package, manual, guide, visuals; tested in the field with ILO offices/constituents and Cinterfor.	Start: 2004. Finish: 2005.	Replaced earlier project proposals identified in 2002.
Promoting social dialogue in Arab States.	Training materials on social dialogue and adapted as a tool for other technical fields.	Translation of English brochure on promoting social dialogue into Arabic, together with accompanying training package. Tested in tripartite seminar in 2005.	Start: 2004. Finish: 2006.	ditto
Enhance the skills of constituents in non-adversarial negotiation.	(2005) Package on joint union-management negotiations skills.	Adaptation and updating, in cooperation with PRODIAF, of existing training materials focussed on Francophone Africa.	Start: 2005. Finish: 2006.	ditto

24. Like the project on forced labour and trafficking, this project was not initially included in the Investment Fund as part of the implementation strategy in 2001. This explains in part the absence of a fully-fledged design and indicators of achievement as well as the delay in implementation. The training materials, again of high quality, were developed in full collaboration with ILO technical

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9   66th Session of the Board of the Centre (Turin, 4-5 November 2004): document CC 66/4.

units and/or field projects. The materials for Francophone Africa and Latin America are appreciated by ILO HQ, field offices or projects that have used them, and by course participants in the validation seminars. PRODIAF, for example, has reported that it has organized workshops using this training material covering 18 countries in 2006 and 2007, targeting 455 direct beneficiaries. In addition about 20 training of trainers programmes have been held in two African countries. It is still premature to assess the relevance and use of the training package for Arab States, although the one validation seminar held in 2005 noted positive results. In any event, the fact that this material now exists in Arabic should be considered as an asset for the Centre's training programme. On the whole, the work undertaken has met the immediate objective set out to enhance constituents' negotiation skills.

25. The difficulties this project encountered at the outset stemmed from a lack of mutual understanding and commitment on the objectives, design and implementation between the Centre and the ILO technical units. The initial outputs concerning social dialogue and corporate social responsibility, workers participation and dispute prevention were changed at the end of 2003, and work on the new set of outputs commenced in 2004. In addition, unlike the work on child labour and trafficking, a dedicated staff member was not assigned to this project. Given the establishment of the Social Dialogue Sector at ILO HQ, the broader strategic objective of this project to work closely with the ILO was well founded. While that objective was not fully met in the initial stages of the project, by 2006 the difficulties had been largely resolved. Joint programming meetings are now being held, involving senior staff in both institutions.

Table 4:   Strategic objective B: Gender Mainstreaming.

B1.   Greater participation of women and women's organizations in the Centre's training.
B2.   Reinforcing gender mainstreaming in the Centre's training programmes.
B3.   Creating a conducive environment to gender equality within the Centre.

Immediate objectives	Planned outputs and indicators of achievement[10]	Actual outputs	Start date / Completion date	Comments
B1. same as title.	▪ Database of women and women's organizations. ▪ Special website on gender issues. Indicators: by 2005, women would represent 40% of the participants from each region.	▪ Database completed. ▪ Website established.	Start: 2002. Completed: 2003 for both outputs.	Well planned and efficiently and effectively executed on time.
B2. same as title.	Training of gender audit facilitators for the Centre. Indicators: by 2005 all core courses would	▪ 5 gender briefing notes on technical subjects. ▪ 9 country gender	Start: 2005, with change of outputs. Completed: 2006.	Due to implementation difficulties outputs were changed. New outputs, which still focussed on the original objective,

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10   Source: 63rd Session of the Board of the Centre (Turin, 30-31 October 2001): document CC 63/4.

Immediate objectives	Planned outputs and indicators of achievement[10]	Actual outputs	Start date / Completion date	Comments
	be gender sensitive and 10% of courses would have a gender focus.	profiles.		were undertaken in conjunction with a separately funded project.
B3. same as title.	Action plan for HR policies/ practices to redress gender imbalances/ family friendly. Indicators: by 2005 40% of P staff will be women.	▪ Survey conducted. ▪ Recommendations submitted to management.	Start: 2003/04. Completed: 2005.	Survey highlighted many areas for change. Status of recommendations not clear.

26. The first project, B1, has met its immediate objectives to a large extent. Since their implementation, experience has demonstrated that the database and the website are useful tools both for advocacy and for networking, which has facilitated obtaining a higher percentage of women in the Centre's courses. As reported last year (CC 68/4, 68th Session), women represented over 42% of the participants in courses in 2005, even though this was not the case for each region. Other measures besides these two outputs would have been needed to address the regional imbalance, and in this sense the indicator of achievement was not fully appropriate. While closer association with the ILO was not an objective for these activities, collaboration between the Centre and ILO on gender related work would seem to be a logical step and beneficial to both institutions with the same or related objectives and the same constituents. Indeed there has been and continues to be good collaboration between the two organizations on gender issues as a whole. For this project, however, the ILO Gender Bureau, field offices and regional gender specialists were not involved.

27. The second project, B2, was well designed, but was hampered by the non-availability of resource persons and of training materials that was beyond the control of the Centre, a situation that could not be foreseen at the time of the project's identification. The gender briefing notes and the country profiles, which replaced the original output and which were developed in conjunction with another externally funded project, have proved to be useful tools for advocacy within the Centre and have provided practical material for course work. A systematic practice was also subsequently put in place whereby programme managers code their activities as to whether they are women or gender specific. It is difficult to determine if the immediate objective of having all core courses be gender sensitive has been attained, but certainly the percentage of women and gender specific activities, as a proportion of all of the Centre's activities, has increased over the past 5 years from 11% in 2001 to 37% in 2005 (CC 68/4, 68th Session). A major challenge remains for this project: to ensure that the materials produced are widely used, retain their relevance and are kept up to date. Again, collaboration with ILO HQ and its field offices was not part of the project's design and the notes and profiles are not yet widely known within ILO circles. The sustainability of the outputs could be reinforced through joint Centre/ILO follow-up work.

28. The design of the third project, B3, presented several difficulties. The objective and the initial output (action plan) were clear but also quite ambitious. The strategy and approach, however, were more limited in scope and did not provide the means to deal with wide-ranging reforms that would be needed following the survey on staff views on gender equality and needs of workers with family responsibilities. The indicator of achievement was not necessarily an appropriate yardstick for measuring how conducive the environment would be to gender equality. The project, completed in 2005, was successful in highlighting a number of important issues that needed Management's attention and that remain valid today. However the project in itself was not able to affect the level of staffing by women or their representation at higher professional grades. The recommendations have been reviewed; some have led to or supported policy changes (e.g. spouse employment, teleworking); others are still under consideration.

Table 5:   Strategic objective C: Quality of Training.

C1.   Staff Development.

Immediate objectives	Planned outputs[11] and indicators of achievement	Actual outputs	Start date / Completion date	Comments
Enhance quality of training, drawing on lessons learned to improve design and management of training activities and work processes. (Follow-up to previous quality management project).	▪ Procedures manual. ▪ 5 quality groups. ▪ Promote staff training. Indicator: by 2005 average evaluation score by participants would be higher than 4.00.	▪ Procedures manual, with many components on organization, presentation and imparting of training. ▪ Initial start for staff training. ▪ Support for collecting and sharing documents and resources on learning/training techniques, intranet and doc. Centre.	Start date: 2002-04. Completion date: 2006.	Project developed incrementally and in stages. Groups constituted on a voluntary basis; highly participatory in nature. Few funds expended, but considerable time and effort spent by staff who participated. Updates provided through annual or semi-annual newsletter.

29. This project took a unique approach by inviting participation on a voluntary basis and then setting up working groups to identify problem areas and possible solutions or ameliorations. While adhering to the overall objective and planned outputs, implementation was somewhat ad hoc, depending on the good will of those who had volunteered. The participatory approach, however, resulted in grouping highly motivated staff, with the added advantage of bringing together training and administrative staff, which hitherto had been rare. The work accomplished was considerable including a checklist for training needs analysis and initial design; guidelines, briefing kits and learning diary related to study

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[11]   Source: 63rd Session of the Board of the Centre (Turin, 30-31 October 2001): document CC 63/4.

tours and study visits, which are part of the procedures manual; and inculcating a stronger appreciation of quality among the staff. Follow-up will still be required for the procedures manual and for ensuring that the progress made to enhance quality is not lost. Given the cross-cutting and Centre-wide scope of the project, strong directives from senior and top management on the importance attached to quality assurance, which could have been better communicated in the past, should be considered for the follow-up work.

Table 6:   Strategic objective C: Quality of Training.

C2.   Impact Evaluation.

Immediate objectives	Planned outputs[12] and indicators of achievement	Actual outputs	Start date / Completion date	Comments
Centre's capacity improved to evaluate impact of training programmes on partners' and constituents' institutional development.	▪ Development and testing of evaluation methodologies. ▪ Selected thematic reviews and impact evaluation exercises. ▪ Guidelines to enhance impact on institutional development. Indicators: by 2005, 10 impact evaluation exercises and 5 thematic reviews.	▪ One major impact evaluation study. ▪ Impact evaluation methodology tested and introduced.	Start date: 2002. Completion date: 2005.	Due to staffing problems, evaluation unit not set up, which limited activities and outputs. Budget reduced accordingly.

30.   The original aim of this project was ambitious. Impact evaluations are extensive exercises and not suited to all activities. In the best of circumstances, with trained full time staff, implementing 10 such evaluations, plus five thematic reviews, in a four year period was not realistic. The project was based on the assumption that one full time staff member would be available. This unfortunately was not the case, and there were no budgetary provisions to hire a full time evaluator. Given the difficulties that the project faced early in the cycle, outputs were revised and the project was reduced. The end product, Impact Evaluation of the Courses on International Labour Standards for Judges, Lawyers and Legal Educators (1999-2003)[13], was a fully-fledged impact evaluation and can be considered as a model for the future. In addition, this exercise tested and proved the validity of an impact evaluation methodology, which will be useful for future work. In this sense the project partly met its immediate objective.

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[12]   Ibid.

[13]   Progress and accomplishments of this project were reported to the 67th Session of the Board of the Centre (3-4 November 2005), document CC 67/5/a, paragraphs 43-49.

31. It was unfortunate that the project had to be reduced as it was intended to be a major step forward in the Centre's work. None the less, the outcome has proved beneficial in several ways. In addition to the methodology mentioned above, the project was a reality test in terms of the work and time involved in impact evaluations. This will be a valuable guide for the future. Second, it demonstrated, as did other projects, how vital it is to have a full project design and management framework in place before embarking on projects. Finally, it provides an excellent test case to see whether the evaluation itself has had an impact on the services and delivery of the Centre's programme. During the next year or two it should be possible to determine whether the recommendations of the evaluation have served a useful purpose.

Table 7:   Strategic objective D: Information technology.

   D1:   Internet/intranet projects.
   D2:   Staff development.

Immediate objectives	Planned outputs and indicators of achievement	Actual outputs	Start date / Completion date	Comments
Website serves as tool for promotion, communication and distance learning; intranet is effective tool for managing and sharing knowledge and information for building Centre's institutional memory.	▪ Reconstruction and maintenance of website. ▪ Development and maintenance of intranet Indicators: operational set of admin and knowledge databases and skills in internet and intranet fashion for maximum access by Centre staff, ILO staff and outsiders.	▪ Feasibility study to determine priorities. ▪ Website developed. ▪ Intranet (design and development of MAP).	Start date: 2002. Completion date: 2006 (for MAP).	Participatory approach to involve staff in identifying needs and testing validity of products. Funds used for feasibility study, production of website and intranet facilities. Regular news bulletins.
Enhanced staff capacity to design, facilitate and manage open and distance learning.	▪ ODL staff development. Indicators: by 2005 all operational staff of the Training Department trained in use of computer applications. All Centre staff will possess a basic ability to use essential computer applications.	Staff trained.	2002-2005, and on-going.	Staff training undertaken with internal resources, without recourse to funds provided in the Investment Fund.

32. The project was well designed and monitored. The participatory approach took some additional time at the start, but was essential in terms of meeting the needs of the users and of the Centre. The project completed most of its work on time. Two applications for the intranet, the electronic manual of procedures and the system for managing activities and participants (MAP), required additional work in 2006.   Indeed both of these applications will require follow-up and continual updating.   Several sections in the manual of procedures still need to be developed; as this work is done on a voluntary, as-time-allows basis (see

paragraph 29 above), time and resources should be set aside to enable completion. MAP is followed closely by a responsible unit, which develops new macros as they are needed as part of its normal workload. The overall project attained most of its objectives. Two areas requiring future attention are improvements in the website (already included in the next Investment Fund) and systems to ensure greater connectivity between the ILO and the Centre's intranets. During this review exercise a number of ILO and Centre staff noted that it was difficult to have full use of the other institutions' intranet and to share documentation and information fully.

Table 8:   Strategic objective E: Extended reach.[14]

Immediate objectives	Planned outputs (set in 2003)[15] Indicators of achievement (2001)	Actual outputs	Start date / Completion date	Comments
Networks of Centre's former participants activated to support programme development and the ILO overall agenda.	▪ IT platform including a database of names and addresses of former participants. ▪ Dedicated website. ▪ Building networks of former participants. Indicator: by 2005, at least 5 sub-regional or thematic associations will be active and provide support and feedback to ILO programmes.	▪ Website set up. ▪ Database (alumni network) set up and linked to MAP. ▪ 5 regional associations formed. ▪ 7 regional meetings held to launch network. ▪ 2006 essay competition.	Start: 2003. Completed: 2006.	Website and database developed in conjunction with IT projects. Essay competition provided incentives for strengthening network and obtaining views on promoting the Centre and the ILO, its products and how the Centre helped participants' careers or their organizations.

33. This project has been partially successful. It has produced the planned outputs, with minor delays and has provided a potentially useful tool for the Centre not only for advocacy but for substantive inputs into its programme, possibilities for feedback, evaluation work and exchange among participants and for enlarging its client base. The essay competition was not only an incentive for registered alumni, but also generated useful ideas. At the end of the project, however, two major issues remained. The first is how the network will be used in the future and what management systems will oversee it. In mid 2006, there were 758 former participants registered. By mid 2007 this had grown to 1,126:

Africa:	212	Asia and the Pacific:	234
Americas:	280	Europe:	263
Arab States:	137		

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[14]   Extended reach defined as the number and characteristics of participants and organizations.
[15]   Source: 65th Session of the Board of the Centre (Turin, 6-7 November 2003): document CC 65/4.

34. At the time of writing there were no specific plans to exploit the network. A number of issues were cited by staff members interviewed: language differences among alumni; raising expectations among the alumni that could not be met – some thought they would have a formal representative role; focus and scope of information that would interest alumni to stimulate active use of the network – should this be general or technical subjects, or thematic or regional issues; and frequency of and responsibility for updating information. The second major issue is how the network can be used to reach the objective of having former participants become active agents promoting the Centre and the ILO. There was little evidence of collaboration with ILO HQ and its field offices as this work progressed and future plans to work with the ILO were not known.

Summary of strengths and weaknesses

I. INVESTMENT FUND AS A WHOLE

Strengths	Weaknesses
1. Responded to challenges and reforms of the day, including objectives to align programmes with ILO.	1. No comprehensive overall strategy to see linkages with programmes under the regular budget and other sources of funding.
2. Targeted many areas where low-cost, practical improvements were needed.	2. Benchmarks or indicators to measure the value of the programme as a true investment not defined.
3. Strategic and immediate objectives were in line with the Development Plan.	3. Absence of project design, implementation, monitoring and management frameworks/log-frames, which affected nearly all projects (except those in IT).
4. Many activities were participatory in nature which motivated staff and reflected genuine needs.	4. Contingency plans in the event of changes in projects not developed in advance.
5. Training materials and other outputs produced are available in electronic form, with potential for wide accessibility.	5. Responsibility for, as well as steps for follow-up to, the projects not clearly stipulated.
6. Delivery of the programme budget was high (95%).	6. Time and effort by staff on Investment Fund represented additional workload, which was not programmed in their work plans and targets for contributions to fixed costs. Consequently work carried out as time allowed. (Exception: some work on child labour and trafficking).
	7. In several areas collaboration between the Centre and the ILO was not optimal.
	8. Sense among staff that management was not fully committed to change/reform in some areas.

II.   INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS

A.   Closer Association with the ILO: Forced labour / child labour and trafficking. Industrial relations and collective bargaining.

Strengths	Weaknesses
1. Forced labour ▪ Met immediate objectives. ▪ High quality training material for the Centre. **2. Child labour** ▪ Training material and courses of value to Centre and ILO and target groups. ▪ Good investment for the future. **3. IR and collective bargaining** ▪ High quality materials. ▪ Relevant and appreciated by ILO field and HQ and by target groups.	**1. Forced labour** ▪ Output not completely in line with ILO technical unit's advocacy and training strategy. ▪ Future use by ILO not clear. **2. Child labour** ▪ Course programme with 1 staff cannot meet demands of both child labour and forced labour. ▪ Agreement between the Centre and the ILO on frequency and mix of courses still needs consultations. **3. IR and collective bargaining** ▪ Late start due to imperfect collaboration/ consultation between the Centre and the ILO. ▪ Value of training package for Arab States cannot yet be assessed.

B.   Gender mainstreaming

Strengths	Weaknesses
1. Database and website ▪ Effectively implemented. ▪ Useful tools. **2. Gender notes and profiles** ▪ Helped meet objective to enhance gender mainstreaming. ▪ High quality material used in Centre's course work and technical programmes. **3. Environment conducive to gender equality** ▪ Prompted or supported some policy changes. ▪ Raised key issues for consideration by management and as basis for negotiations that otherwise might not have been brought to light.	**1. Database and website** ▪ Activity not adequate to meet objective of greater participation in each region. ▪ Database does not benefit from possible inputs from ILO HQ and field. ▪ Information not readily accessible to ILO staff which could limit its usefulness. **2. Gender notes and profiles** ▪ Not widely available or known within ILO circles, a possible liability for follow-up work. ▪ Will require further work/resources to ensure continued relevance and sustainability. **3. Environment conducive to gender equality** ▪ Activity targeted wide range of issues and reforms to which management commitment was not clear from the outset. ▪ Project was not a sufficient tool to bring about change. ▪ Many recommendations still under review.

C. Quality of training

Strengths	Weaknesses
1. Staff development - Small, practical outputs with low cost. - Participatory and hence addressed issues that were priorities for staff and brought together motivated staff. - Created greater appreciation of quality for those who participated. - Laid groundwork for the Turin Learning Approach and staff development programmes. - Good communication on progress to all Centre staff. **2. Impact evaluation** - A major output providing solid methodology for wider use and useful results and feedback on the technical subject. - Useful lessons learned in terms of evaluation in general.	**1. Staff development** - The voluntary basis for participation was not ideal for managing project and did not oblige senior staff / programme managers, who would be central to quality assurance, to participate. - Some work still needs to be continued. Responsibility and management of this are not clear. - Not all products have been widely institutionalized. **2. Impact evaluation** - Original project was unrealistic and over ambitious. - Reduced project scope did not enable the Centre to move significantly forward with its evaluation programme. - No evidence so far that recommendations of the major study have been followed and translated into action.

D. Information technology

Strengths	Weaknesses
- Projects well planned and well designed. - Participatory and took full account of users needs. - Good monitoring and communications. - Met objectives.	- Accessibility of intranet information between the ILO and the Centre not optimal. - Website requires updating with in-house editor.

E. Extended reach

Strengths	Weaknesses
- Network, database and website created for alumni network, which are valuable tools. - Participation is open to all former participants and has scope for growth. - Tools have high potential for wider use.	- Present use appears limited by participants and inputs by the Centre are few. - Plans for future use of the network are unclear (responsibility, focus, follow-up). - Expectations raised that could not be met. - Has not yet met objective to have network serve as advocacy agent of the ILO and the Centre. - Joint ILO/Centre collaboration on project not strong.

LESSONS LEARNED

35. The review exercise has identified a number of lessons that can be drawn from the four-five year period of implementation. Many of these are self-evident and some reaffirm comments made on the strengths and weaknesses of the programme as a whole as well as of the individual projects. Most have been discussed with staff and management of the Centre. They are grouped here under different subject headings.

Programme strategy and formulation

36. **Advantages of a comprehensive programme proposal at the planning stage**. A number of difficulties encountered by the Investment Fund (late approval by the Board, changes in immediate objectives and outputs, reduced scope of projects, failure to obtain solid ILO commitment in certain cases, etc.) may well have been avoided had a more comprehensive programme proposal been developed prior to the preparation of the Implementation Strategy. (It is recalled that the Development Plan was presented to the Board in November 2000; the Implementation Strategy in October 2001; and the allocation of the budget of the Investment Plan was only approved in November 2002). With the benefit of hindsight, it is suggested here that a comprehensive proposal may have clarified a number of issues that later affected the overall programme and the individual projects. These issues include:

   ▪ strategy of the Investment Fund as it relates to the Centre's mission, regular budget and extra-budgetary programmes and the potential added-value (or investment potential) of each project, with justification, together with alternative strategies and contingency plans. Outlining these components may have led to fewer delays in the Board's approval and the subsequent adjustments.

   ▪ modalities for Centre/ILO collaboration addressing the need for commitment at senior levels to enable early joint programming at the working level before objectives and outputs are specified.

37. **The critical role of programme management.** Programmes with well founded designs, implementation and monitoring frameworks including quantitative and qualitative milestones and indicators, clear and assigned management and reporting responsibilities have better chances of success than those that are developed with a loose structure. (See the External Auditor's report, CC 66/1/Add. 3, 66th Session). An overall internal Investment Fund project document, in addition to individual project documents, would have been an asset for the management of the programme.

38. **Financing.** It is not clear that restricting the use of funds for activities, short-term staff and resource persons and prohibiting their use to fund existing staff is a viable policy in the long run. The use of funds for the child labour expert for the child labour and trafficking project proved to be a good investment. It is unlikely that the activities would have been carried out otherwise. This was almost the case for the impact evaluation project, which was changed

substantially because the responsible staff member resigned and was not replaced. For other projects, staff members were confronted with the dilemma of delivering their regular programme, plus contributing to fixed costs, and responsibility for implementing work under the investment fund, which was extra.

39. **Commitment and communication from top management.** Clear signals that the successful implementation of the Investment Fund is a priority would reinforce the work of the projects. The voluntary nature of participation in the quality of training project did not send a strong signal that the outcomes of this project would be taken seriously, especially when many programme managers chose not to join the quality groups.[16] The number of recommendations put forward in the gender equality survey that still require action has left impressions that commitment to reform is not strong. Similarly the absence so far of follow-up measures for some of the work (e.g. recommendations of the evaluation study report, gender notes and profiles, alumni network) undertaken in the projects has raised questions about the value of the work.

Individual project planning and implementation

40. **Design, implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation frameworks and systems.** As noted above for the programme as a whole, and as clearly expounded by the External Auditor, individual projects that are well prepared and managed have a better chance of success than those that have a looser structure. Some projects, for example, had objectives that were too ambitious for the inputs, such as the impact evaluation work, the gender equality survey, the quality of training work. Others experienced implementation difficulties or delays and had to reduce or change outputs that may well have been avoided with better design and project management.

41. **Joint Centre/ILO planning and programming meetings.** The earlier these are held, with the strong support of senior and top management in both institutions, the better chances of defining objectives and outputs of mutual interest and of securing commitment from both sides. This is not a new issue and there have been many successful examples of excellent collaboration in the past. None the less two of the projects with the strategic objective of closer association with the ILO and one project in gender mainstreaming experienced difficulties because of a lack of adequate coordination and collaboration between the two institutions. This demonstrates that rigorous attention must be paid to these consultations prior to embarking on projects.

42. **Missed opportunities for ensuring mutual benefits for the ILO and the Centre in general.** Even if a given project did not have an objective or output that required close collaboration with the ILO, the advantages of eliciting mutual support, of ensuring that information is widely shared and that products are used and valued by a wide ILO constituency should not be underestimated. In several

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[16] In addition, a separate quality improvement exercise was launched outside of the framework of the Investment Fund, which drew in the programme managers. The signals this gave to the quality of training groups were not clear.

projects information-sharing and/or the opportunities to join efforts were not exploited fully– training materials on forced labour, the alumni network, gender database and gender notes and profiles. Moreover there appear to be on-going difficulties for each institution to benefit from the other's intranet.

43. **Participatory approaches.** Projects that invited contributions and participation on an open basis tended to attract motivated staff and focussed on users' concerns. This was the case of the staff development project under quality of training and the information technology projects, which interestingly were those that also systematically issued information bulletins to the staff as a whole.

44. **Follow-up is an important component of project management.** Specific plans for follow-up and the assignment of responsible officials will be essential for completing the work of several projects or to sustain the work undertaken. Specific cases are noted below.

RECOMMENDATIONS

45. A few recommendations are suggested below. They stem from the findings and the lessons learned in earlier sections of the document, but are also directed to future work.

46. **Follow-up to the 2002-2005 Investment Fund.** Management should review what work remains to be undertaken and/or is required to sustain the outputs already produced and to assign responsibility accordingly. While the projects were designed to be time-bound and not represent recurrent costs, they were also intended to be investments for the future. Action is needed in order not to lose the investment. Specific projects include:

   ▪ **A1. Fundamental principles and rights at work: forced labour, child labour and trafficking.** Identifying a stronger alliance with the ILO Special Action Programme on Forced Labour to maximize training opportunities for the Centre; continuation of courses on child labour, bearing in mind the need for flexibility on the mix of open and customized courses.

   ▪ **A2. Promoting social dialogue in the Arab States.** Initiatives are needed to engage the ILO Offices to advocate the promotion and use of these materials and to determine the need for Centre courses.

   ▪ **B2. Reinforcing gender mainstreaming.** Exploring with the ILO field offices different ways to use and update the country profiles so that they are also relevant to the Decent Work Country Programmes.

   ▪ **B3. Environment conducive to gender equality.** Continued management feed back to staff on the recommendations is expected.

   ▪ **C1. Staff development.** Work on the procedures manual should continue. Clarification of a quality assurance policy to staff.

- **C2. Impact evaluation.** Follow-up to see if the recommendations of the major study have had an impact on the courses given by the Centre.

- **D1. Information technology.** The issue of incomplete accessibility of information between the ILO and the Centre should be addressed in order to make optimal use of the results of different projects.

- **E. Extended reach.** Plans and responsibility for the alumni network need further thought and attention, as well as ways to engage the ILO offices.

47. **Planning and programming the next investment fund**. Full account should be taken of the External Auditor's recommendation on programme and project design and management as the next cycle is prepared.[17] Significant steps have already been taken in this respect in the preliminary proposals to establish reference groups and set up preparatory phases before preparing detailed project documents. Some specific suggestions to reinforce the planning and management process include:

- Early meetings (if they have not already taken place) between top and senior management (Executive Director level) of the ILO and the Centre to ensure commitment to collaborate and to lay the groundwork for continued consultations at the working level.

- Designation of an overall Centre programme manager for the 2007-2011 investment programme who should be responsible for leading and monitoring the programme as a whole.

- Designation of a project manager from the Centre with a senior ILO official responsible for coordination/inputs from the ILO for each project in Chapter One. The invitation to the ILO to appoint a senior ILO official to participate in the project should help to assure coherence and collaboration, which are vital to the success of the projects. The Centre project manager, however, should have responsibility for the project.

- Care needs to be exercised in setting objectives and specifying outputs, which in the past have been overly ambitious. In addition, there needs to be a careful analysis of the resources and means put at the disposal of the project to ensure they are adequate for the expected outcomes.

- Specific project formulation should explore how the outputs could be maximized at the field level as well as adapted as advocacy materials to promote the Decent Work Agenda within the wider UN development circles.

- Timeframes for all projects need not necessarily be uniform. They should be determined according to the project design.

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[17] The review exercise took note of the document outlining the 2007-2011 Investment Programme submitted to the 68th Session of the Board (CC 68/6/c), November 2006.

- Staff time and inputs into the projects need to be accounted for in their normal work plans. The use of the funds should not be structured so that staff time is "extra work".

48. **Evaluation.** The new plans for work on evaluation in the 2007-2011 Investment Programme have taken into account the experience learned from the past exercise. However, in line with some of the comments above, the proposed budget may not be sufficient to accomplish the aims of the project. In particular impact studies, even a small number, will be time-consuming and involve substantial costs. If such studies are to be accompanied by in-depth reviews, the amount of funds available may well be a constraint. While additional resources will be sought to develop an "evaluation of training/learning" course, a highly laudable proposal, internal resources will still be required to manage the project. Given the difficulties faced by the previous evaluation project, provision for staff resources should be considered for the overall project.

49. **Commitment and follow-up.** Management's communication to staff on the Centre's commitment to the success of the projects as well as plans for sustaining their outcomes should be foreseen at an early stage and made known as soon as feasible. As noted above (paragraph 39) the past exercise had some drawbacks in this sense, which raised some expectations that could not be met. This should be avoided in the future.

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MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE "POST-IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW OF THE PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE 2002-2005 INVESTMENT FUND OF THE THIRD DEVELOPMENT PLAN"

i)   Management appreciates the thorough way in which Ms Cornwell has reviewed the projects and sub-projects that were made possible by the Investment Fund (2002-2005). It is satisfied by Ms Cornwell's main finding "that the overall programme had demonstrated a number of strengths: relevance in terms of context and backdrop of reforms; high quality training materials and other outputs, all available in electronic form; targeting low cost practical improvements; good alignment with the Development Plan; and a high delivery rate (95%) with most work completed on time."[1] The Management has also taken note of the observed weaknesses: "absence of both a comprehensive strategy with linkages to on-going or planned work and of benchmarks/ indicators to determine the real investment value of the work; structural flaws due to restrictions on how funds could be used; problems with design, monitoring and management; insufficient exploitation of possible collaboration between the Centre and the ILO, and absence of proposed follow-up measures."[2]

ii)   In the following paragraphs, the Management's response is presented according to the review's main recommendations, summarized in the sub-headings.

Follow-up

iii)   Management agrees with the review's observation that the Investment Plan (2002-2005) itself did not have the explicit or specific means to follow up each specific project. However, this does not mean that no follow-up was done or is being done. In fact, the newly-developed training materials have been and are actively used in the relevant Centre courses and activities. They also have been distributed to ILO regional (sub-) offices. Some of them are available on the ILO public website. Of course, the specific "impact" of these materials can only be assessed some time after participants have worked with them. In addition, and as a matter of routine, the use and effectiveness of the newly developed training materials is monitored through the Centre's post-activity evaluation system, which also gathers the qualitative opinions and observations from participants.

iv)   The outputs of other projects are being followed up as part of normal management practices and procedures. This is, for example, the case with the newly-developed website and the system for managing participants and activities (MAP). Initiatives for improving and ameliorating the Centre's internal and external website are underway – to be partially funded by the current Investment Programme (2007-2011). Also, a project to expand and improve MAP is being formulated, to be implemented in 2008 and 2009, using the regular budget.

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[1]   Cornwell, S.C. Post-implementation Review of the Projects Funded by the 2002-2005 Investment Fund of the Third Development Plan, page 1, paragraph 3.

[2]   Idem.

v) Other initiatives, for example related to a structural mechanism for assessing and enhancing the quality of proposed training activities and projects or embedding the former participants' network in the Centre's promotional and follow-up work, have been started or will start soon.

vi) Finally, as part of the current Investment Programme (2007-2011), a special monitoring system has been devised to keep close tabs on the ways in which each of the projects is being implemented. It is also meant to assist in ensuring that the outputs and results of the various investment projects are fed back into the daily operations and the programming cycle of the Centre.

Articulation between Investment Plan, Development Plan and regular Programme and Budget

vii) The review deplores that the projects made possible by the Investment Plan (2002-2005) were not as well articulated with the Development Plan and the Centre's annual programming as would have been desirable. Management wishes to point out that great efforts were made to optimize the articulation between the Third Development Plan and the Investment Plan, as manifested in the document entitled "The Operationalization of the Third Development Plan"[3], and manifested in its quantitative indicators on which management has reported in November 2006[4]. One should note the difficulties experienced in formulating some of the projects and that the time delay between the original formulation and final outputs may have had the effect of somewhat obscuring the rationale and justification of the projects, as meanwhile strategic priorities may have shifted.

viii) On the basis of the experience with formulating and implementing the Investment Plan (2002-2005), Management has taken care to ensure consonance and articulation between the current Investment Programme (2007-2011) and the priorities and initiatives of the Fourth Development Plan. This is exemplified in (a) the projects on CSR, Migration, Non-Discrimination and Tripartism, aligning the Centre and the ILO in terms of strategic substance, (b) the projects on website improvement and evaluation, strengthening the Centre's added value in terms of instructional technology, and (c) the projects on Oracle and HRM computer applications, enhancing the Centre's infrastructure for supporting the business process.

Articulation with the ILO

ix) Management agrees with the review's conclusion that – seen from the year 2007 – the articulation between some of the projects under the Investment Plan (2002-2005) and the various ILO programmes and units could have been better. However, seen from the start of some of these projects, especially those dealing with materials development, the articulation was almost perfect. In all instances,

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[3]   63rd Session of the Board of the Centre (Turin, 30 – 31 October 2001): document CC 63/4.
[4]   68th Session of the Board of the Centre (Turin, 2-3 November 2006): document CC 68/4: "Progress Report on the 2002 – 2005 Investment Fund of the Third Development Plan".

the Centre's project managers went out of their way to implicate their Geneva counterparts in the development and design of the materials, so that these would be as relevant as a possible and would serve the purpose of assisting the constituents in strengthening their own capacities. However, during the period of drafting the materials, and especially when these needed to be verified with the Geneva colleagues, there were many delays and shifts in priority, sometimes to such an extent that the entire project ran the risk of failure. The delay between the first discussions with HQ staff and the first draft materials may have had a negative effect on the extent to which some HQ colleagues (or their successors) felt that they were co-owners of the projects and therefore considered themselves directly implicated in the project's implementation and completion.

x) In order to reduce the chance of such a situation re-occurring under the current Investment Programme (2007-2011), Management has decided that a Reference Group will guide and support the design and implementation of each of the four substantive projects. Each Reference Group will comprise representatives of the Turin Centre as well as representatives of the relevant units in ILO Geneva.

Project planning and project management

xi) Management acknowledges the review's observations with respect to the management of the "project cycle" of each of the Investment Plan projects. It is satisfactory to note that especially the website and MAP projects are considered to be exemplary in terms of (participatory) planning processes. Management is conscious that some of the other projects were not able to reach this standard, also due to the difficulties of involving significant external stakeholders and keeping them involved (see also the previous section). For the implementation of the current Investment Programme (2007-2011), Management has instructed the various project managers to prepare a full-fledged project proposal, using a Logical Framework. Such a proposal will include a description of the background and rationale of the project, its objectives and expected results (ensuring the necessary internal and external articulation), milestones, monitoring and evaluation set-up, budgets, time schedules and reporting schedules. Once approved by the Director, the project document will guide the project's implementation, which is managed by the Project Manager. The Reference Group guides the project's strategic orientation and policy coherence. The Director of Training supervises the project in view of its operational coherence.

Setting realistic objectives in line with available resources

xii) The review observes that in various projects the objectives set were not commensurate with the (too limited) financial resources. In addition, the report notes that the Investment Plan resources could not be used for defraying the costs of existing Centre staff (e.g. by covering part of the staffing time of the project managers) and that this may have hampered the (speed of) execution of some of the projects. Management is cognizant of this problem. Therefore, the current Investment Programme (2007-2011) makes explicit allowance for using a small

portion (up to 25%) of the funds allocated for each of the projects to defray (part of) the necessary staff time costs for managing them. Management wishes to underline that, as was already the case under the Investment Plan (2002-2005), the funds of the current Investment Programme (2007-2011) can be used for hiring additional human resources, irrespective of the specific contractual arrangements.

Assignment of management responsibility for follow-up

xiii) The reviewer has made the observation that no provisions had been made for ensuring that - once completed - the project outputs or results would be integrated or embedded in the Centre's normal operations, procedures and activities. This is not as strange as it might sound. In fact, the Development Plan had the clear objective of making important ILO themes part and parcel of the Centre's programme. Therefore, the choice of the training materials to be developed was determined by the desire to align the Centre's themes and courses with ILO's strategic priorities. Logically, the Manager of the Centre's technical programmes concerned had the responsibility of using the training materials, once they had been finalized and approved. And this is what has happened, and what will happen on future occasions.

xiv) As far as the other projects are concerned, paragraph iv) spells out that their results have been or are being embedded and integrated in the Centre's daily operational management.

xv) On the basis of the experience with the Investment Plan (2002-2005), Management foresees a stronger connection between the project outputs and the use thereof in the Centre's operations during and after the implementation of the current Investment Programme (2007-2011). In particular, with the help of a monitoring system (see also paragraph vi), the Director of Training will have the full overview of all projects pertaining to the Training Department, while the Director of the Centre will have the supervision of the other projects.

Continuous communication

xvi) Management acknowledges the review's argument that during the Investment Plan (2002-2005) there should have been more frequent and more detailed communication about the Plan itself and about all the projects, their objectives, outputs and results, and the role of managers and staff. Management wishes to underline that - especially with respect to the projects related to "gender", "quality", the "web-site" and "MAP" - the managers and staff concerned made great efforts in communicating with those participating in these projects and the staff at large. The actual newsletters and information notes bear testimony to these efforts. Management has decided that, during the new Investment Programme (2007-2011), this much appreciated practice should be continued and expanded. Therefore, regularly, a communication (e.g. through a newsletter) about the plans and progress of the various Investment Programme projects will be circulated among staff and other stakeholders.