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COLOMBO PLAN - AGRICULTURAL AND CO-OPERATIVE
MISSION FROM CANADA

Background paper

Canada participates in two technical assistance programmes designed to increase production and raise the standard of living in the under-developed countries. The first of these is the United Nations Expanded Technical Assistance Programme, the Canadian contribution to which is absorbed into the Special Fund administered by the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies. Because the needs of the people of South and South East Asia for technical assistance are particularly urgent, Canada helped to establish and is now participating in the Colombo Programme for Technical Co-operation, which is actually a part of our bigger effort in helping in the capital development of the area under the Colombo Plan. Although Canada's technical and capital assistance has so far been given almost exclusively to India, Pakistan and Ceylon, neither the Colombo Plan nor the programme for Technical Co-operation is restricted to Commonwealth countries.

Technical assistance under the Colombo Programme involves the training of persons from Asian countries in countries where suitable instruction is available, the provision of experts and instructors to act in advisory or administrative capacities or for the training of personnel in the Asian countries, and the provision of equipment required for training or use by technical experts sent to South and South East Asia.

It is also possible under the Programme to provide for "the establishment, equipment, extension or endowment of training or other institutions of the countries of the region."

Canadian experience in the field of co-operation and agricultural extension services has attracted international attention. The United Nations, the Food and Agriculture Organization and other bodies have sent trainees to Canada to study co-operation and observe co-operative techniques in Canadian communities.

The opinion that Canada might give useful assistance to India, Pakistan and Ceylon in these fields has been reinforced by the importance given to these matters in the First Five Year Plan of the Government of India, in the Report on the Economic Development of Ceylon by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and in the recommendations of the Asian Regional Conferences of the International Labour Office in India (1947), Ceylon (1950) and the Asian Technical Conference in Pakistan (1951), which have led to the setting up of an ILO Asian Co-operative Field Mission in Lahore, Pakistan.

India

The development of the co-operative movement is regarded by the Indian Government as one of the basic factors that can influence the accomplishment of the objectives of India's Five Year Plan for economic development. The summary of the Plan states that: