

TECHNICAL COOPERATION SPELLS VICTORY FOR NORTH AND SOUTH

It has been said that a mile of road leads nowhere but a mile of runway can lead anywhere. In developing countries it may lead to economic and social development. In some of these countries, particularly ones where railways and roads are often limited or must span vast distances, no other transport system can fill the role of the airplane.

In Gabon in West Africa, for example, with its inadequate road systems linking inland communities, all types of cargo are now airlifted into the jungle interior. Indeed, an entire supermarket might be picked up in the capital city, Libreville, and set down in a provincial community.

Isolation is another obstacle to development. Landlocked States can have little access to world markets. Happily, they can be linked to the rest of the world through air lanes.

The benefits of a strong civil aviation wing are numerous and far-reaching. Jobs are created, crops seeded and fertilized, mineral reserves prospected and mapped, and millions of dollars injected into

local economies by planeloads of tourists.

For poor countries, however, aviation does pose problems. A Boeing 747 operating out of large airports in the North requires the same sophisticated navigation systems, service centres and lengthy runways when it travels to poorer states in the South. All are costly to install, maintain and staff with technically proficient personnel.

That's where ICAO plays a key role, helping to bridge the technological gap between developed and developing countries. To date, most of the Organization's work in this area has been directed toward the development of the ground services required for civil aviation and, in particular, toward airports, air traffic control, communications and meteorological services.

In the past few years, and with the advent of larger and more complex aircraft, requests for assistance in the more sophisticated fields of aviation have been increasing in number. Moreover, ICAO also provides assistance to Member States on the technical aspects of aviation security.

Assistance in general has consisted of advising on the organization of government civil aviation departments and on the location and operation of facilities and services, and particularly in the training of personnel.

Indeed, training remains the Organization's primary concern. For even when the financial



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