

dispatching special missions to countries requesting them; and by making definite recommendations for concerted action and providing a means whereby nations may work together to carry out programs.

**Technical Assistance.**—Although routine activities such as the collection and compilation of statistics and other information are still important functions of FAO, most of the resources at the disposal of the Director-General are used for technical assistance work. Much of this is of a continuing nature and forms part of the Organization's regular activities and is supplemented by special short term projects based on agreements with recipient countries. FAO has also given attention to the training of suitable persons in the underdeveloped countries in order to qualify them to continue the work developed by outside experts sent under the technical assistance program. To accomplish this, emphasis has been placed on training centres and seminars and the provision of fellowships and scholarships to qualified persons for study abroad.

FAO operates technical assistance programs in 55 countries. About 600 experts were in the field at the end of 1955 and the total technical assistance budget for that year exceeded \$7,000,000. FAO has transmitted to governments more than 300 final reports from its experts. These contain concise summaries of recommendations for government action and many set out detailed estimates of the cost of carrying out specific projects. However the implementation of development plans to raise agricultural productivity and improve the nutritional level of their populations remains the responsibility of the national governments.

Some results of the technical assistance program have appeared in the form of increased production but most of the work is of a long term nature—land reclamation, forest conservation and fisheries development. Some illustrations of the progress made are as follows:—

- (a) In the hybrid seed corn program FAO-aided international action against the desert locust in the Middle East has prevented any serious loss to food production in the past three years. Plans for the 1954-55 anti-locust campaign throughout the Arabian Peninsula were laid by an FAO working party.
- (b) In Thailand FAO veterinarians are assisting in a program to control livestock diseases and have extended widely field trials of vaccine used against Newcastle disease in poultry: 80,000 fowl were vaccinated in 1954 compared with 3,000 in 1953.
- (c) Under an FAO-sponsored rice hybridization project at Cuttack, India, more than 6,000 plants combining the best qualities of Indian and Japanese varieties (*indica* and *japonica*) were produced in 1953 and 1954 and their seed distributed to participating countries. India reported that individual selections had been observed with double the yields of their *indica* parents, and Burma and Malaya reported that some of the hybrids showed high resistance to the stem borer pest.
- (d) In India FAO experts helped reorganize government farm machinery workshops in Uttar Pradesh and trained supervisors and foremen in the design and welding of farm equipment. In the Talkatora workshops an estimated 300 p.c. improvement in output was achieved in the first six months of 1954.
- (e) The government of Burma has adopted a national plan for forest development based on an FAO expert's recommendation. In Austria, through advice from FAO on measures to increase forest productivity, an estimated 20,000 additional acres were reforested by the end of 1954.

**Regional Activities.**—The importance of regional activities has increasingly engaged FAO's attention. Fisheries councils have been established for the Indo-Pacific region and for the Mediterranean and regional forestry commissions have been established for Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Near East. The International Rice Commission, although not limited in membership to Far Eastern countries, operates chiefly as a regional body. A European Foot-and-Mouth Disease Commission has been established and an FAO Desert Locust Control Committee for many Middle Eastern countries plagued by locusts. Active co-operation is maintained between FAO and the regional Economic Commissions of the United Nations and senior FAO officers have been stationed at the headquarters of the Commissions to maintain continuous liaison and direct joint programs of work in fields of common interest. A number of regional meetings on agricultural plans,