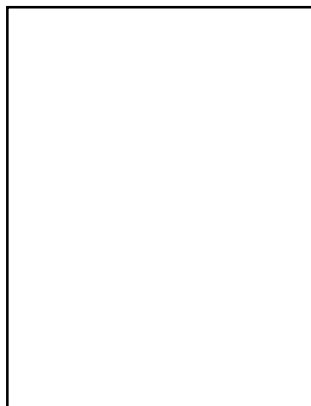


R&D laboratories in developing countries

Guidelines for technology transfer

Nirmala M. Pieris

Research and Development laboratories in developing countries find technology transfer a major challenge. In order to commercialize the technologies they develop, they need to avail of international financing support. This article discusses some key guidelines for them in this endeavour.



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Introduction

Technology transfer (TT) is generally defined as the process through which technical information and products developed by a public or private laboratory are provided to potential users in a manner that encourages and accelerates their evaluation and/or use and permits the commercial production of a marketable product.

While this process can be either very simple or quite complex, it basically involves a technical resource, which is the R&D laboratory developing the technology, a user - e.g., small, medium or large business - and some interface connecting the two.

Any TT requires clear planning and precise action relating to the many steps in the process. This is best done through a close interaction of the technology pro-

vider with industry, which in most instances is the technology seeker.

Some of the mechanisms that make TT possible are joint research, cooperative research and development agreements, licensing, technical meetings, trade shows and exhibitions, and information dissemination through fact sheets, publications, seminars and workshops.

Planning

An R&D laboratory embarking on TT must have a strategic plan. This, in most instances, is more important than any of the remaining R&D activities.

In a TT strategic plan, due consideration must be given to the three major steps in the process as given below:

- Product recruitment - where appropriate market surveys and sales fore