

THE TECHNICAL CONSTRAINT IN THE PROGRAMMES FOR FARM EMPLOYMENT

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1. *Introduction*

1.1. Employment on farms is a crucial magnitude in many farm-development programmes. It is often treated as a proxy for farm income—as shown, for example, by the common practice of defining the size of family farm in terms of an employment criterion instead of directly in terms of an income criterion—and the chief objective of many programmes is to increase farm employment. Even those, not directly concerned with employment, have often to take into account the consequences of their implementation on employment such as labour rendered surplus as a result of co-operative farming or mechanization of farms. One of the determinants of the employment-effects of the programmes is the technology of production in the area of implementation. The purpose of this note is to present a procedure with a concrete illustration to make explicit in a meaningful manner the constraint on employment expansion implied by the technology of production. The construct most helpful to those in charge of programmes for employment would be the function which relates employment to various measures comprising the programme. This function could provide guide-lines to the programme by indicating the optimum distribution of programme resources among the various measures. Unfortunately, the data needed to estimate this function will ordinarily be quite difficult to obtain in the initial stages of a programme which would limit its usefulness in planning the programmes.¹ We therefore suggest in this note a simpler version of the function which is less difficult to estimate in terms of data and which yields implications about the technology in a form usable in the planning of the programmes. The mathematical features of these two functions, their relationship to production func-

¹ Please see the appendix to the note for further elaboration of this point.