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**The Integration of Social and Technological Innovation
as a pre-Condition of Sustainable Development.**

In the last decades, the relationship between the adoption of new technologies and economic and social growth has been increasingly questioned. Approaches based on the promotion of various kinds of technological “big push” have been criticized on at least three counts. Critics have claimed that the adoption of technologically-rich processes does not take into account the local absorptive capacity. As example, the introduction of sophisticated technologies in the developing world has often exacerbated traditional territorial and social cleavages, widening the divides between rural and urban, locals and cosmopolitans, poor and rich. Other critics have argued that the availability of ready-made technologies increases the dependency of developing areas from (volatile) external aid and political conditions. Still some others have anticipated that the large-scale use of technologies in developing areas is mostly a kind of conspicuous waste, bound to be un-sustainable in the long run. The paper will acknowledge that these critiques highlight some (previously neglected) risks, thus sensitizing observers to the “dark side” of technology transfer. At the same time, the paper will stress how the management of technological innovation is a necessary component of any developmental strategy. As a matter of fact, any realistic notion of sustainable development requires more, not less, technological innovation. What is necessary is a wider understanding of the meaning of innovation, supported by the strengthening of the local infrastructures to to evaluate, select and adapt different technological options.