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Key Issues in Rural Development: A University Graduate Course

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KEY ISSUES IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT:

A UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COURSE

by Mark A. Meassick

December, 1987

Master's Project
to fulfill CIE requirements
for M.Ed. degree

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Abstract	1
2. Proposal Outline	2
3. Chapter 1 - Rural Development is not Urbane	5
4. Chapter 2 - Learning Style Learning Theory	12
5. Chapter 3 - Putting Style into the Classroom	26
6. Chapter 4 - Facilitating Style	33
7. Chapter 5 - Creating a Course with Style	39
8. Chapter 6 - Learning Modules	46
9. Bibliography	47
10. Lesson 1 - Establishing Balance	53
11. Homework 1 - Formulating the Problem	55
12. BRAC Case	56
13. Lesson 2 - Identifying Development Problems	166
14. Homework 2 - Observing Others	168
15. Oliver, "Human Nature"	169
16. Rogers, <u>Diffusion of Innovation</u>	193
17. Vogeler, "Dialectics of Understanding the Third World"	214
18. Shah, "The Story of Fire"	227
19. Lesson 3 - Intervening and Motivating Who for What?	230
20. Homework 3 - Affecting Others Effectively	231
21. Hewes, "Political and Administrative Aspects of Rural Development"	232
22. Heilbroner, "The GNP"	245
23. Lesson 4 - Differentiating Help and Hindrance	259
24. Homework 4 - Designing a Rural Development Approach	261
25. Gurley, "Rural Development in China"	262
26. Gudeman, "Implications for a Rural Development Strategy"	283
27. Lesson 5 - Learning Style	289
28. Homework 5 - Establishing Trust	290
29. Hildebrand, "The Sondeo Approach"	291
30. Marcotte, "Farming Systems Research"	301
31. Lacroix, <u>Integrated Rural Development in Latin America</u>	310
32. Tendler, <u>Inside Foreign Aid</u>	340
33. Letham, "Identification and Design of Project Related Technical Assistance	353
34. Lesson 6 - Building Trust	361
35. Homework 6 - Managing Rural Development	362
36. Heaver, "Bureaucratic Incentives"	363

37. Lesson 7 - The Green Revolution Game	400
38. Homework 7 - Managing for Solutions	401
39. Lesson 8 - Managing Ambiguity	402
40. Homework 8 - Organizing Management	403
41. BRAC, "Unraveling Networks of Corruption	404
42. Dunn, "Nature of Social Learning"	415
43. Kortzen, "Learning Process Approach"	418
44. Johnston, "Organizing the Rural Poor"	425
45. Shah, "Fatima the Spinner and the Tent"	462
46. Lesson 9 - Empowering Yourself	464
47. Case - "The Road to Hell"	465
48. Homework 9 - Empowering Others	471
49. Alfonso, "Empowering Rural Communities	472
50. Hall, <u>Beyond Culture</u>	483
51. De Franco, "Interdependency in Nicaragua"	496
52. Lesson 10 - Ending Gracefully	505
53. Homework 10 - Analyzing your Case	506
54. Evans, "Analyses of Case Histories	507
55. Batten, "Obtaining, Selecting, and Editing Cases	510
56. Thongyu, "Reflections of a Village Development Worker	517
57. Oxfam manual for development workers	520
58. FUNDEAC (Colombia) Case	534

ABSTRACT

A graduate course on rural development issues is presented that focusses primarily on the processes involved in development both at a personal and abstract level. A theoretical foundation for the course is outlined based on David Kolb's theory of experiential learning. This model is transcribed into learning environments necessary to focus participant awareness of issues surrounding their own learning style. The role of the facilitator who demands attention to learning style as well as content in rural development is defined, utilizing Malcolm Knowles' andragogical concepts. Finally the course curriculum is presented, followed by lesson plans and readings supplemental to the text books.

Mark Meassick
October, 1987

Master's Project
Proposal Outline

Key Issues in Rural Development:
A University Graduate Course

The Problem

The Center for International Education needs a course to address issues in rural development. Many center graduates return to the field and get involved in some aspect of rural development. Many incoming students have expressed a desire to take such a course. There is no course within the University that addresses rural development as a field.

Rural development is a very broad field, grappling with issues that require knowledge in sociology, economics, anthropology and education. The artificial academic delineations of these disciplines often fail to reflect the complex reality, the interrelationships and the interdependence of issues that people in rural communities face in defining and solving their problems or in just living their lives. The central problem in developing a course to deal with this complexity is to integrate the process as part of the course content. This integration provides the opportunity to experience the ambiguous nature of rural development activities.

A development worker living in a rural community must be able to fit the different bodies of knowledge together in a way that is appropriate to address a specific issue. Different parts from different disciplines are needed for different problems. Is that ambiguous enough? Skills to confront ambiguity are the types of skills that a course curriculum in rural development should provide.

Purpose

Primary Question

How would a course curriculum on rural development for university graduate students be structured and what would the content include so that thinking- feeling- and action-oriented learning styles are interwoven to create a vibrant experiential setting in the classroom to learn different aspects of rural development?

Implementing questions

1. What is the rationale for a course in rural development and how does this rationale affect the course structure?
 - 1a. What issue/topic/areas of rural development will provide a useful a framework for the curriculum?
2. What are the factors that typify different learning styles that people use and why are they important for a course in rural development?

3. What kind of classroom activities and case study usages will achieve the shifts in different learning styles within each participant?
4. What is the role of the facilitator/teacher to create a situation that participants can learn in, learn from and learn through?
5. What kind of curriculum design will fuel learning utilizing the different learning styles?
6. What will each session include and how will each session be structured in view of the above considerations?

Significance of Study

This study is intended for three distinct audiences. Professors in the field of international education who have not been in the field for significant amounts of time to adequately experience the current ambiguities surrounding issues in rural development will be able to use the techniques in this course. Participants will be able to assess the merits of a course designed deliberately to shift their style of learning. Other curriculum development researchers may benefit from the approach outlined in this study.

Review of the Literature

Two primary sources will be used in this study. Case studies and analyses of rural development from different perspectives will provide the substance of the course. Resources on simulation and games, learning theory in the classroom, and curriculum design will serve to develop the rationale and structure for the course. Specific resources on economics, foreign aid, technology transfer, diffusion of innovation, management and non-formal education will provide course readings and substance for class discussions.

Clarification and Delimitation of This Study

Assumptions - The primary assumption of this study is that people learn best through praxis. As a result it is necessary to create experiences in the classroom that provide a basis for reflection. I also assume that techniques oriented toward praxis transfer skills and create opportunities for paradigm shifts within individuals. The study also assumes that reflection can be facilitated through writing about experiences.

Methodology

This study will primarily be a review of the literature. The final product, a course manual, may be tested later on, but that assessment is not a part of this study.

[see next page]

Implementing Questions	Sources	Data Gathering Method(s)	Units/Variables for Analysis
#1	Experience of others Research critiques	Interviews with UMass faculty and students R. of Literature	
#2	Curriculum design sources, simulation studies, adult learning theory	R. of Literature	
#3	Adult learning theory	R. of Literature	
#4	Learning theory leadership lit.	R. of Literature	
#5	Books on Rur.dev. Films, videos, tapes, slides.	R. of Literature	
#6	Current course Syllabi on R.D.	R. of Literature	

Outline of Chapters

Chapter 1 - Rural Development is not Urbane

Chapter 2 - Learning Styles Learning Theory?

Chapter 3 - Putting Style into the Classroom

Chapter 4 - Facilitating Style

Chapter 5 - Creating a Course with Style

Chapter 6 - Learning Modules

Chapter 1

RURAL DEVELOPMENT IS NOT URBANE

A Working Definition of Rural Development

There is no definitive strategy to promote rural development. Rural development describes a variety of unrefined methods and strategies to change some behavior or pattern in a group of people or in a community in some particular way to produce an outcome, usually called an improvement. Many observers of rural development agree that improvement is dependent upon many factors inherent in and external to the people affected. This systemic definition offers a new and exciting way to approach rural development that incorporates an appreciation for relativity. There is a relationship between various endogenous factors that affect development strategies, between different exogenous factors and between factors endogenous and exogenous to the community. Calling it "appropriate" relativity better illuminates the point. Like all terms prefixed with "appropriate" the key is to know where to use what when, or when to use what where.

In other words it is crucial to look at the interrelationship between the setting of an event (or a behavior or pattern), the event and intervening in the event. Looking at the interrelationships is only the passive part of the story. Being an effective, creative and positive innovator, instigator, catalyst, change agent, motivator, animateur or interventionist

requires an act. When one is in such a role not to act is to act. Hence the need for proper tools for action, and the equipment and processes necessary for tool production.

I still have not offered a precise definition of rural development. Every definition in the literature of rural development is suitable to the definer. Unfortunately, there are many people affected by rural development who are not yet in the literature. What do they think? For those people rural development is not rural it is "my" development or "my families" development or "my neighbors" development. "Rural" is the term used by outsiders to label a group of people who have a certain characteristic. It is not a label those groups frequently use to describe themselves.

Rural development includes the myriad of needs of all people involved in rural development. It is not just the needs of the rural people themselves, their leaders, their neighbors, their families and friends. A definition of rural development must include the needs of outsiders who define events and phenomena in their own language, who give money as charity or for opportunity as they perceive it, who earn a living, who conscientize others, who work for social change, or who desire to gain a new experience. These needs all contribute to what rural development is.

Rationale for a Course in Rural Development

The Center for International Education and the University of Massachusetts have periodically conducted courses in rural development. There has been no such course during the past five

years. Many students in the CIE program in particular have expressed a desire for such a course. Most international programs usually address some aspects of rural development, whether it is in planning educational programs, improving literacy, improving health or assessing employment opportunities. This makes a compelling case for the re-introduction of such a course at CIE.

This course is designed to help outsiders question their assumptions about rural development, rural poverty and rural people. I assume that everyone who would take this course can no longer be considered a rural person. Each person may have a different understanding and appreciation of rural lifestyles but by pursuing graduate study they have removed themselves from the people of rural areas and now approach the problems in their lives differently.

I want the course to equip participants with the skills to analyze different rural situations, with the knowledge to be able to ask informed questions for assessment and evaluation and with the self-awareness to persistently question the assumptions they bring to the rural setting. This last goal leads to an important assumption of the course. I am assuming that engaging in the self-analysis process is a skill that can be used as a training tool to promote rural development. An underlying strategy will be to create situations for self-analysis and to become aware of how this process occurs.

Course Structure

Getting people to question their assumptions initiates a process that has been described by others as transcendence or as

paradigm shifts. An environment that allows the opportunity for self-reflection which may or may not promote these shifts requires careful planning and innovative techniques. The goal of this course is not to force paradigm shifts within individuals. This is not only very improbable in any setting, but also not a desirable primary goal in this course.

While I want the opportunities for participants to change to be created in the course of the course, I also want them to experience other levels of learning. I, as the course designer, can only mark out a path to be explored; the followers of this path will perceive the landmarks in their own way. In this case the critical lesson is to learn that what one perceives as a landmark may merely be a stone and the real landmark may be the path itself. Praxis can create a diversification in an individual's interpretation of events. An important part of this course will be to create experiences that are "hands on," through reading, discussion or games that allow individuals to reflect on how they interpret events.

Transferring information in such a way that people learn new viewpoints and alternative world views of others is also as important as questioning one's own assumptions. It could be argued that the international experience that many participants will bring to the course demonstrates that people have the ability to view the world from another perspective. I assume that, while the experience may have been an opportunity to learn new perspectives, participants may not be aware of how such changes may be induced or imparted to others. After all, inherent

in rural development is some perceived need for people to change and adapt to new circumstances that rise in the course of history. One way to promote opportunities for these self-questioning moments with useful information is to create a learning environment that incorporates thinking-, feeling- and action-oriented activities that push the participants to experience the issues of rural development.

How can this learning environment be created? One method, justified in the next chapter, involves blending different learning techniques around each topic. The blend allows the learning style focus to shift at intervals so that participants have the chance to shift how they view and interpret a certain situation and material. These "shifts" by the facilitator will in some small way simulate shifts in perspectives that are necessary for development workers who must incorporate multiple perspectives and explore wide varieties of considerations when engaged in effective development activities. There is no justification for this idea; it is my intuition and part of the experiment of this course.

An important implication that arises is how can a participant recognize when such a shift has occurred? I will assume that through a process of identifying a particular development problem and analysing it from a variety of perspectives presented throughout the course, participants will be able to discover changes in their perceptions. This will require tightly structured learning assignments that build into a final documentation of the development in each person's thought

surrounding some issue in rural development. Each participant will produce an account of a rural development problem of special interest to them, applying new concepts and ideas as they are presented throughout the semester. Hopefully, the evolution of thought will be apparent in the document.

Course Objectives

1. To allow participants to analyze their attitudes, knowledge and experiences surrounding rural development and to assess and evaluate these as new material and ideas are presented and experienced.
2. To broaden class participants' understanding of various roles played by practitioners, participants and other actresses in rural development.
3. To provide a foundation for analytical skills for participants to act effectively as practitioners in sustainable rural development programs.
4. To examine rural development from a multi-disciplinary perspective so that participants are aware of the economic, political, sociological, anthropological, and educational perspectives on rural development; and to discern the artificial convenience of these delineations.
5. To evaluate a course design that promotes learning through the use of techniques that shift focus from thinking-oriented to feeling-oriented to action-oriented learning styles so that different learning opportunities are created within and between each participant.

Primary Issues

1. Perspectives - A brief historical outline of rural development approaches, and a case study to illuminate the interests of various groups involved in rural development activities and to provide a common reference point for the participants.
2. Intervention, motivation, and justification - analysis of the need for rural development efforts and particular strategies to discover the implications it has on the people affected.
3. Designs of rural development strategies - survey and analysis of previous strategies and generation of possible alternative strategies for sustainable development in the future.
4. Management and administration of rural development - analysis of different management strategies and their implications for

design and participation.

5. Empowerment, participation and liberation - analysis of how rural development activities affect and are affected by these ideas and by different definitions of these ideas.

6. Development of guidelines for effective and sustainable rural development strategies - a look at evaluation criteria and influences in the decision-making process that inhibit and enhance effectiveness, including the generation of new ideas to improve the effectiveness of rural development programs.

Secondary Issues to Provide Perspectives on Primary Issues

1. The economic and political perspectives on rural development.
2. The gender perspectives on rural development.
3. The anthropological perspectives on development.
4. The educational perspectives on rural development.
5. The technological perspectives of rural development.

A Final Word

Each of these secondary issues will be considered in all of the primary issues under discussion. By presenting a wide variety of points to view on each topic I hope that the participants will develop the skills to integrate information from a variety of fields to address the rural development problem that they have identified and are exploring.

Chapter 2

LEARNING STYLES LEARNING THEORY

A Brief Perspective on Learning Theory

Most of the literature addressing learning theory has at least three primary biases: it focuses on how children learn, with mere brief allusions to adult learning; it is highly specialized, usually directed to cognitive learning or motivation or the structural aspects of learning; and its experimental research is centered in Western cultural contexts. In spite of this skewness, learning theory has provided valuable, far-reaching and extensive insight into how human beings learn things. The skewness however also presents problems in adapting the knowledge generated by learning theory to specific groups. The difficulty is not making reasonable generalizations based on research findings, but in translating this knowledge into useful tools for adult education.

In the past there has been specific focus on adult learning needs. These have been present in the writings of William James, John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Erik Erikson and Kurt Lewin to name the most important. It was Erikson and Lewin whose writings placed prominent importance on how adults learn and what environments facilitate adult learning. Kolb has taken these ideas and formulated a theory of experiential learning that provides the skeleton for this course in rural development.

Kolb's ideas are important because they focus primarily on how adults perceive and process information. This chapter will

outline Kolb's theory of experiential learning alluding to why this approach is appropriate for a course in rural development. It will not elaborate on the development of the theory or discuss the contributions of the aforementioned scholars. It is important to demonstrate that this learning skeleton can support muscle for conceptualizing ideas and circulation for processing information about rural development in particular.

Experiential Learning Theory

"Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience."¹ There are six important characteristics of experiential learning:

1. Learning is best conceived as a process, not in terms of outcomes.
2. Learning is a continuous process grounded in experience.
3. The process of learning requires the resolution of conflicts between dialectally opposed modes of adaptation to the world.
4. Learning is an holistic process of adaptation to the world.
5. Learning involves transactions between the person and the environment.
6. Learning is the process of creating knowledge.

Learning as a process rests on the assumption that "ideas are not fixed and immutable elements of thought but are formed and reformed through experience."(p.26) Defining learning in terms of outcomes becomes "a definition for nonlearning in the sense that the failure to modify ideas and habits as a result of experience is maladaptive."(p.26) The purpose of education should be to stimulate inquiry and skill in the process of

¹ Kolb, David A. Experiential Learning: Experience as The Source of Learning and Development. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc. (1984), p. 38. No other footnotes will be recorded, all of the information in this chapter is excerpted from this work.

knowledge getting, not to memorize a body of knowledge. This is also referred to by Freire as the "banking" concept of education.

It is through the interaction of expectation and experience that learning occurs. Hegel said that "any experience that does not violate expectation is not worthy of the name experience." (p.28) "The fact that learning is a continuous process grounded in experience has important educational implications. Put simply, it implies that all learning is relearning. How easy and tempting it is in designing a course to think of the learner's mind as being as blank as the paper on which we scratch our outline. Everyone enters every learning situation with more or less articulate ideas about the topic at hand. Thus, one's job as an educator is not only to implant new ideas but also to dispose of or modify old ones."(p.28) It is critical that educators recognize that it is not enough to merely set people off in small groups to discuss issues or to lecture them. The educator must engage and direct the learner in an educational process that "begins by bringing out the learner's beliefs and theories, examining and testing them, and then integrating the new, more refined ideas into the person's belief systems"(p.28) if the learning process is to be facilitated.

The resolution of conflict has been referred to by Freire as "praxis" and by Piaget as accommodation and assimilation. For Freire this conflict is resolved through dialogue. "Learning is by its very nature a tension- and conflict-filled process."(p.30) Effective learners need four different kinds of abilities: concrete experience abilities, where the learner can be involved

fully, openly and without bias in new experiences; reflective observation abilities, being able to reflect on and observe experiences from many perspectives; abstract conceptualization abilities, being able to create concepts that integrate their observations into logically sound theories; and active experimentation abilities, where learners are able to use theories to make decisions and solve problems.(p.30) Integrating these four abilities is difficult since they are polar opposites. "Learners must continually choose which set of learning abilities he or she will bring to bear in any specific learning situation." (p.30)

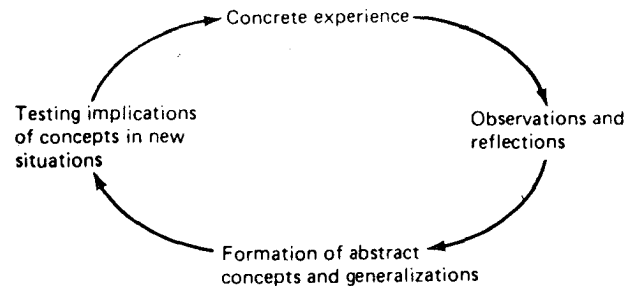


Figure 2.1 The Lewinian Experiential Learning Model

Learning is holistic in the sense that it "involves the integrated functioning of the total organism - thinking, feeling, perceiving, and behaving."(p.31) Most research about human behavior has been very specialized and to integrate it all into a holistic framework would be simplistic and impossible. "Yet if we are to understand human behavior, particularly in any practical way, we must in some way put together all the pieces that have been so carefully analyzed. In addition to knowing how we think and how we feel, we must also know when behavior is governed by thought and when by feeling. In addition to addressing the nature of specialized human functions, experiential learning theory is

also concerned with how these functions are integrated by the person into a holistic adaptive posture toward the world."(p.32)

"The transactional relationship between the person and the environment is symbolized in the dual meanings of the term 'experience' - one subjective and personal, the other objective and environmental."(p.35) "The concept of transaction implies a fluid interpenetrating relationship between objective conditions and subjective experience, such that once they become related, both are essentially changed."(p.36)

Learning must also be understood in terms of the nature and forms of human knowledge and processes that create knowledge. Epistimological considerations offer explanations for solving problems that are rooted in conflicting assumptions about the nature of knowledge and truth. "Experiential learning theory provides a perspective from which to approach these pracital problems, suggesting a typology of different knowledge systems that results from the way the dialectic modes of concrete experience and abstract conceptualization and the modes or active experimentation and reflective observation are characteristically resolved in different fields of inquiry."(p.37)

These primary characteristics of experiential learning can be viewed as being parallel to characteristics of rural development. Over time experience in rural development has demonstrated that it is indeed a process and that there are no quick remedies. This process is continuous; there is no clear point at which a community becomes developed. Thirdly, effective rural development necessitates the resolution of conflicts

between many opposing factors; macroeconomic planning vs. microeconomic and social consequences; outside assistance vs. community self-reliance; urban-oriented interpretation of need vs. local rural knowledge; or, providing needed services vs. developing sustainable local institutional capabilities.

In view of the many conflicts present it is important to employ a holistic approach that attempts to address the interrelatedness between conflicts and within conflicting approaches to rural development. Adaptation of approaches based on results must occur and change through time and space. There is much distinguishment between short-term performance of a strategy or idea, the medium-range learning that occurs in communities and agencies, and the long-term development of communities and people involved in rural development. These three perspectives create different types of knowledge, each restructuring priorities and understanding of the knowledge creator. This knowledge will form the basis of further action and hence determines the specific approach to be employed.

If agents of rural development can begin to become conscious of their own assumptions and knowledge perspectives, they can better integrate information about rural development for themselves and help others to integrate information. One way that will promote this is an understanding of learning patterns and learning styles.

Learning Styles

Kolb delineates the four types of learning that depict the adult learning cycle. They were described earlier as concrete

experience (CE), reflection and observation (RO), abstract conceptualization (AC), and active experimentation. These learning types symbolize a process and a style of learning. "This is not a four step process. Each of these stages involves some overlap, interaction and flexibility. A creative tension exists between Active Experimentation and Reflection and Observation that, if nurtured helps the learner to have a more enriching learning experience. This is equally true for Concrete Experience and Abstract Conceptualization."²

Juxtaposed between these learning processes are styles that depict the way learning abilities manifest themselves. "Through socialization experiences in family, school and work, we come to resolve the conflicts between being active and reflective and between being immediate and analytical in characteristic ways, thus lending reliance on one of the four basic forms of knowing: divergence, assimilation, convergence, and accommodation." (Kolb, p.77) Each individual develops a learning style that incorporates these four styles, though some aspects are stronger or weaker than others. Each of these styles can be described as follows:

The convergent learning style relies primarily on the dominant learning abilities of abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. The greatest strength of this approach lies in problem-solving, decision-making, the practical application of ideas and where there is a single correct answer or solution to a question or problem. Convergers are controlled in expressing their emotions and they prefer dealing with technical tasks and problems rather than social and interpersonal issues.

The divergent learning style has the opposite learning

2 Mullinex, Bonnie. "Rebuilding a Tree of Knowledge: Adult Learning in Theory, Fact and Practice," Comprehensive Examination Paper, University of Massachusetts-Amherst (May, 1987), p. 44.

strengths from convergence, emphasizing concrete experience and reflective observation. The greatest strength of this orientation lies in imaginative ability and awareness of meaning and values, being able to view concrete situations from many perspectives. The emphasis is on adaptation by observation rather than action. Divergers are better in situations that call for alternative ideas and implications, are interested in people, and are imaginative and feeling-oriented.

In assimilation, the dominant learning abilities are abstract conceptualization and reflective observation. The greatest strength of this orientation lies in inductive reasoning and the ability to create theoretical models and in assimilating disparate observations into an integrative explanation. Assimilators, like convergers, focus more on ideas and abstract concepts rather than people. Ideas, however are judged less in this orientation by their practical value. It is more important that the theory be logically sound and precise.

The accommodative learning style has the opposite strengths from assimilation, emphasizing concrete experience and active experimentation. The greatest strength of this orientation lies in doing things, in carrying out plans and tasks and getting involved in new experiences. The adaptive emphasis of this orientation is on opportunity seeking, risk taking and action. Accommodators are adept at adapting themselves to changing immediate circumstances. They tend to solve problems in an intuitive trial-and-error manner, relying heavily on other people for information rather than their own analytic ability. They are at ease with people, but are sometimes viewed as impatient and pushy. (Kolb, p.77-78)

The figure below illustrates the relationship between the learning processes and the learning styles.

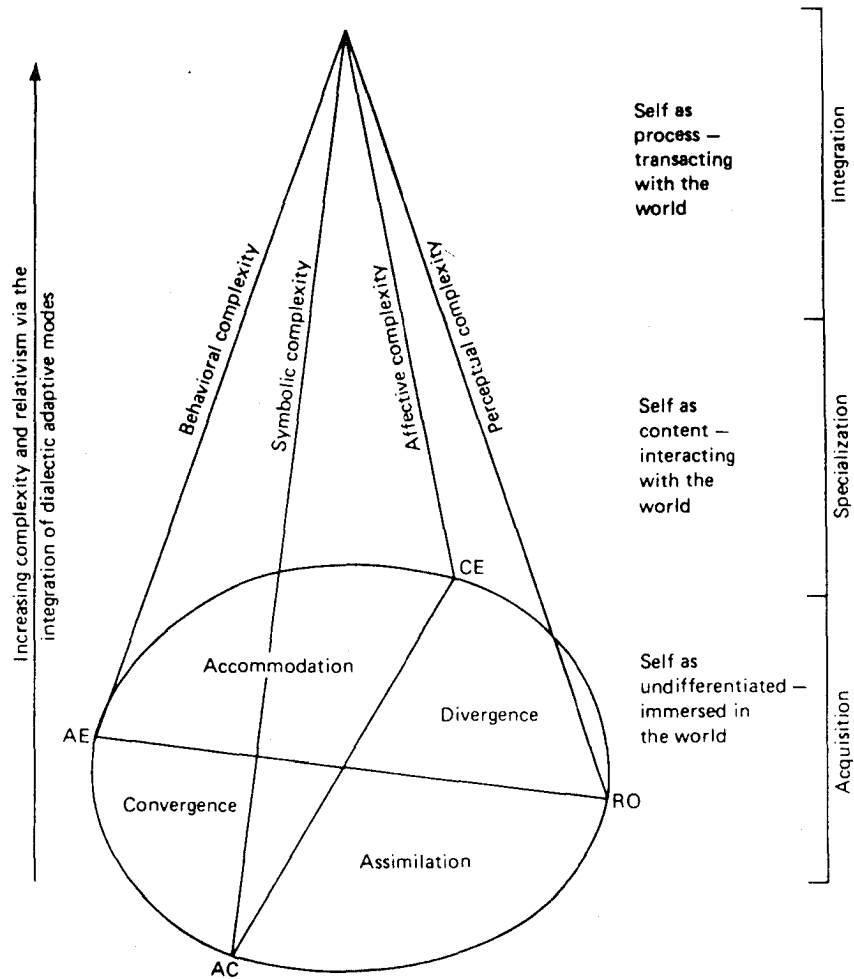


Figure The Experiential Learning Theory of Growth and Development

Human Development

The diagram's third dimension will complete our discussion of experiential learning theory. This dimension provides focus on the human development process. "Development on each dimension proceeds from a state of embeddedness, defensiveness, dependence and reaction to a state of self-actualization, independence, proaction and self-direction. This process is marked by increasing complexity and relativism in dealing with the world and one's experience and by higher-level integrations of the dialectic conflicts among the four primary learning modes." (p.140) Progress through the stages of acquisition, specialization and integration will vary depending on learners' individual personality and cultural experience. "Even though the stages of the developmental growth process are depicted in the form of a simple three-layer cone, the actual process of growth in any single life history probably proceeds through successive oscillations from one stage to another. Thus, a person may move from stage two to stage three in several separate subphases of integrative advances, followed by consolidation or regression into specialization." (p.141)

Acquisition is the stage of acquiring basic learning abilities and cognitive structures. "Development is marked by the gradual emergence of internalized structures that allow [one] to gain a sense of self that is separate and distinct from the surrounding environment." (p.142) It is developing the capacity to learn, not necessarily the actual learning of specific skills. Kolb focuses this stage mainly in childhood, though it may be

interpreted differently, depending on cultural considerations.

Specialization describes how "people shaped by cultural, educational, and organizational socialization forces develop increased competence in a specialized mode of adaptation that enables them to master the particular life tasks they encounter in their chosen career (in the broadest sense of the word) paths." (p.142) "Stability and change in life paths are seen as resulting from the interaction between internal personal dynamics and external social forces, emerging from which is the tendency for there to be a closer and closer match between self characteristics and environmental demands." (p.143) Most importantly of all for a classroom course is that "development in general tends to follow a path toward accentuation of personal characteristics and skills, in that development is a product of the interaction between choices and socialization experiences that match these choice dispositions for later experience." (p.143)

The personal styles tend to gravitate toward specific kinds of experience while interpretations of experience, already pre-selected (not as deliberately as the word), tend to reinforce that specific personal learning style. "The self in this stage is defined primarily in terms of content - things I can do, experiences I have had, goods and qualities I possess. The primary mode of relating to the world is interaction - I act on the world (build a bridge, raise the family) and the world acts on me (pays me money, fills me with bits of knowledge), but neither is fundamentally changed by the other." (p.143)

The specialization level accomplishments of security and achievement often place personal fulfillment needs in the background. "This drive for fulfillment is thwarted by the needs of [Western?] civilization for specialized role performance." (p.146) One's style serves to define and shape the flow of experience providing more direction and structure to one's development. The question becomes, how does one break this mutually reinforcing pattern of experience and style and choose other types of experiences and define them differently?

"Integrative consciousness introduces purpose and focus to this random process." (p.144) "To achieve integrative consciousness, one must first free oneself from the domination of specialized interpretative consciousness." Jung called it the process of individuation. Actually saying what integrative consciousness is presents an impossibility; "integrative consciousness by its very nature cannot be described by any single interpretation." (p.158) Integrative consciousness has a transcendent quality of "climbing out of the specialized adaptive orientations of our worldly social roles." (p.158)

Kolb describes integrative levels of predominantly affective, perceptual, symbolic and behavioral interpretations of experience:

The integrative levels of affective complexity begin with the relativistic appreciation (in the fullest sense of the term) of value systems and conclude with an active value commitment in the context of that relativism. Integration in perceptual complexity begins with a similar relativistic appreciation of observational schemes and perspectives and concludes with intuition - the capacity for choosing meaningful perspectives and frameworks for interpreting experience. With integrative consciousness, symbolic complexity achieves first the ability to match creatively

symbol systems and concrete objects and finally the capacity for finding and solving meaningful problems. Behavioral complexity at the integrative level begins with the development of an experimental, hypothesis-testing approach to action that introduces new tentativeness and flexibility to goal-oriented behavior - tentativeness that is tempered by the active commitment to responsible action in a world that can never be fully known because it is continually being created. (p.159)

The Skeleton for Supporting Rural Development

Experiential learning theory as outlined above has many obvious analogies with rural development theories. While it may be accused of having a cultural bias, gender bias, class bias or value bias, it does offer some explanation for learning that is much more holistic than other approaches. It can establish a foundation to allow participants in a course to build their own model of rural development and learning. By consciously developing and alluding to parallels between learning styles, human development and rural development issues and approaches, an interactive environment can be created that demands integration of not only information but processes. Attempting some holistic approach to teaching may lead to more holistic learning. Analogy and metaphor are useful tools to illustrate complexity, to facilitate exploration at many levels and to maintain perspective of "the big picture."

Many of the analogies are obvious. Different learning style biases could be construed as analogous to different approaches to rural development. Many development efforts have stemmed from a convergent learner bias, that there is a right answer. This could be interpreted as typifying the modernization model of development which views development in mostly technical terms.

The outlook purveyed by dependency theorists could be viewed as the creation of people having a more assimilative learning style. Dependency theorists place importance on the soundness of their theory and is less focussed on people's living standards or conditions (unless it adds to the preciseness of the theory).

I am not hypothesizing that these analogies are true, but illustrating that these parallels imply that experiential learning theory can create a solid framework to address rural development issues and concerns. Why is this parallel important and how is it useful? Marshall McLuhan said that "the medium is the message." If an approach to teaching rural development issues can be found that mirrors the processes involved in rural development, then the opportunity for lasting learning is created. For instance, if participants are in a course that attempts to present information so that it caters to each of the four primary learning styles, they may gain insight in how to be more effective in their own work later on as facilitators and improve their abilities to assess learning opportunities for others. They may not, but at least an opportunity has arisen that might otherwise have been missed.

Determining how to best transfer the foundations of experiential learning theory, learning styles, human development and rural development into the classroom will be the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 3

PUTTING STYLE INTO THE CLASSROOM

The theory of experiential learning has created an overall framework of learning goals for this course. Linking performance, learning and development within the individual and within the content of rural development issues, questioning assumptions and integrating different learning styles becomes the skeleton of the course. Transferring these goals into achievable objectives will require consideration of learning style, growth and creativity of each participant. These process objectives will later be viewed in conjunction with the content objectives of the course.

The Stylizing of the Classroom

There are two factors Kolb outlines that inhibit the consideration of learning styles in the classroom; accentuation and specialization. "Feldman and Newcomb describe the accentuation process as it affects the college experience:

Whatever the characteristics [learning styles] of an individual that selectively propel her toward particular educational settings-going to college, selecting a particular one, choosing an academic specialization, associating with a particular group of peers-these same characteristics are apt to be reinforced and extended by the experiences incurred in those settings. (Kolb, p.164)

"Thus, if students with a particular learning style choose a field whose knowledge structure is one that prizes and nurtures their style of learning, then accentuation of that approach to learning is likely to occur." (Kolb, p.164)

Specialization in learning style is a direct result of accentuation. Robert Altmeyer demonstrated the affect of the

accentuation process and that it did indeed lead to specialized learning styles. In a study of engineering/science and fine-arts students "the surprising finding was that engineering/science students decreased in creative thinking and fine-arts students decreased in analytic reasoning over the college years." (Kolb p.166) So not only does accentuation lead to strengthening certain specialized learning styles, it also tends to weaken the other learning styles.

There have been many new techniques employed in the classroom to improve management of the learning process. These include: "computer-aided instruction; experienced-based learning materials in math, science, and psychology; programmed instruction; games and simulations; and small group work." (Kolb, p.196) "The weakness of nearly all these techniques is the failure to recognize and explicitly provide for the differences in learning styles that are characteristic of both individuals and subject matters." (Kolb, p.196) The task of this course is to make explicit reference to learning style so that learners have the opportunity to make their own learning style more flexible and adaptable.

"Any educational program, course design, or classroom session can be viewed as having degrees of orientation toward each of the four learning modes in the experiential learning model, labeled as affective, perceptual, symbolic, and behavioral, to connote the overall climate they create and the particular learning skill or mode they require. Thus an affective environment emphasizes the experiencing of concrete events; a

symbolic environment emphasizes abstract conceptualization; a perceptual environment stresses observation and appreciation; a behavioral environment stresses action taking in situations with real consequences. Any particular learning experience can have some or all of these orientations to differing degrees at the same time." (Kolb, p.197) Unfortunately, these styles are rarely if ever made explicit in the classroom setting.

There seem to be four cues that can serve to assess the environmental orientation of a course:

1. The primary source or use of information;
2. The rules guiding learner behavior;
3. The facilitator's role;
4. The provision for feedback. (Kolb, p.197)

Each of the four learning environments in their absolute sense elicit a picture that can be described using these four cues as follows:

Affective complex learning environments are ones in which (1) the emphasis is on experiencing what it is actually like to be a professional in the field under study. (2) Learners are engaged in activities that simulate or mirror what they might do as graduates, or they are encouraged to reflect upon an experience to generate these insights and feelings about themselves. The information discussed and generated often comes from expressions of feelings, values, opinions by the learner. (3) The facilitator serves as a role model for the field or profession, relating to the learner on a personal basis and as a colleague. (4) There is accepted discussion and critique of how the course is proceeding, making events emergent rather than prescribed.

Perceptually complex learning environments are ones in which (1) the primary goal is to understand something: to be able to identify relationships between concepts, to be able to define problems for investigation, to be able to collect relevant information, to be able to research a question. To do this (2) learners are encouraged to view the topic or subject matter from different perspectives (their own experience, expert opinion, literature) and in different ways (listen, observe, write, discuss, act out, think). If a task is being done or a problem is being solved, the

emphasis is more on how it gets done, the process, than on the solution. Learners are left to conclude answer define criteria of success for themselves and individual differences are allowed and used as a basis for further understanding. In this process, (3) the facilitator serves as a mirror or process consultant. He or she is non-evaluative, answers questions with questions, suggests instead of critiquing and relates current issues to larger ones. (4) There is planned time spent looking back at previous steps, events or decisions in order to guide the learner in future activities.

Symbolically complex learning environments are ones in which (1) the learner is involved in trying to solve a problem for which there is usually a right or best solution. (2) The source of information, topic or problem being dealt with is abstract, in that it is removed from the present and presented via reading, data, pictures, lecture inputs, etc. In handling such information the learner is both guided and constrained by externally imposed rules of inference, such as symbols, computer technology, jargon, theorems, graphical keys, or protocols. (3) The facilitator is the accepted representative of the body of knowledge - judging and evaluating learner output, interpreting information that cannot be dealt with by the rules of inference, and enforcing methodology and the scientific rigor of the field of study. (4) Success is measured against the right or best solution, expert opinion, or other wise rigid criteria imposed by the teacher or accepted in the field of study.

Behaviorally complex learning environments are those in which (1) the emphasis is upon actively applying knowledge or skills to a practical problem. The problem need not have a right or best answer, but it does have to be something the learner can relate to, value and feel some intrinsic satisfaction from having solved. (2) Completing the task is essential. Although there may be an externally imposed deadline or periodic checkpoints for which reports or other information are required, most of the learner's time is hers to manage. She is thus concerned with what effect her present behavior will have vis-a-vis the overall task to be done. The learner is always left to make decisions/choices about what to do next or how to proceed. (3) The teacher can be available as coach or advisor, but primarily at the learner's request or initiative. (4) Success is measured against a criteria associated with the task: how well something worked, feasibility, sellability, client acceptance, cost, aesthetic quality, etc. (Kolb, p.198)

Of course every learning environment has some degree of each of these characteristics. While the language Kolb has used to describe the learning style environments, along with the

experiential learning theory, seem to create a sense of artificiality, the ideas and concepts described by the words have some intuitive validity for me. Someone else may discount these descriptions on the basis of the lack of cultural considerations, gender considerations or value considerations. This is equally valid. However, it is extremely necessary to attempt to create some theoretical construct to practice learning management. Without some kind of evolving framework learners and facilitators do become entrapped in their own styles of learning. By taking this model and attempting to apply it to a classroom setting a dialectic between theory and practice, action and reflection will allow an opportunity to refine the model and to refine the experience. Without the model refinement is more remote.

The obvious challenge to face is inventing a course design that allows all of these different environments to be experienced by the learner. The details of this design will be elaborated later. The application of learning styles adds an important dimension to the classroom setting. A dimension of learning process is created with learning content. A creative tension is developed between the learner and herself. This operates concomitantly with learner and facilitator and course content and learner. The class learning atmosphere is multi-dimensional. New possibilities are always being created. Knowledge can be created. Personal power can be developed and oppression can be reduced. Opportunities for human development may be revealed.

Integration in the Classroom

How to view learning styles in the classroom gives

facilitators and participants insight in how to promote the learning process. These insights must be considered along with the other learning objectives of individual growth and creativity. Here "in making students more well-rounded, the aim is to develop the weaknesses in the students' learning style to stimulate growth and their ability to learn from a variety of learning perspectives. The aim is to make the student self-renewing and self-directed; to focus on integrative development wherer the person is highly developed in each of the four learning modes: active, relfective, abstract and concrete. The student is taught to experience the tension and conflict among these orientations, for it is from the resolution of these tensions that creativity springs." (Kolb, p.203)

How to achieve this aim in the classroom or in the university environment is unclear. Promoting integrative development and adaptive learning behavior will not result in radical changes or improvements in one course. The entire program needs to review its reward systems, selection and evaluation criteria. The program, not just the course needs to have a specific reference point. (Kolb, p.206) It may be that the reference point is that the goal of the program is the students' development as self-directed learners. Its focus becomes more concerned with learning capacities and abilities so that learners become more balanced in their learning style preferences. (Kolb, p.206)

Revealing the Hidden Curriculum

The major task of this chapter is to explicitly state the

underlying orientation of this course. There will be a conscious effort to focus on learning style adaptability. The hidden curriculum is implicit in what the facilitator does, and as Bloom says, "it is probably better learned and longer remembered than the explicit objectives of the manifest curriculum." (Bloom, 1981, p.148)

This aspect of teaching has been seriously neglected by professors at the Center for International Education. While professors have been respectful of students' abilities to learn, they have not provided education in how to expand learning capacity. This is often described by students as a "lack of direction." Most of the time professors tend to teach to their own style of learning. While they may be quite adaptive in their own learning style, their teaching is more often than not dominated by one style rather than accommodating to all styles. Again, this is not deliberate, but unconscious. It needs to become a critical area of consideration in course design and instructional approach.

Considerations of facilitator roles in this course will follow in the next chapter. These issues can certainly be generalized to other aspects of courses at the Center for International Education.

Chapter 4

FACILITATING STYLE

The Facilitating Function

Building on our metaphor of the rural development course as a human body, this chapter will examine the facilitator as the heart of the course. The circulation of information, the supply of vital tools to the central nervous system, which symbolizes the participants is performed by the heart. It has a consistent, steady beat and the electric impulses that students feed back to monitor its pulse link it inextricably with the nervous system, the participant group. It is divided into four chambers that deal with four different functions. One chamber takes in old, used information and sends it through another chamber to receive new life and to become revitalized. A third chamber takes in this newly rejuvenated flow of enriched information, leading to another chamber that pushes this new perspective out into the rest of the body. Nothing is unaffected.

Notice that it is not the heart that actually rejuvenates the blood content. It merely acts as a receptacle to channel the flow of information, creating a division between new and old, discovered and undiscovered, from which the nervous system benefits. The heart is very unobtrusive, always beating and facilitating renewal. Yet if it goes into distress, if it skips a beat, or fibrillates, the entire organism becomes disoriented and dizzy. Listen to your heart beat. No really stop and try. The pulse is very subtle, very steady and very distinct from the

blood itself.

The Role of Instruction

Bloom distinguishes between curriculum and instruction as two separate activities separated by a fundamental difference. Changes in instruction technique and method can usually be seen much more immediately than changes in curriculum.¹ "The major task facing an instructional specialist [is] the identification of those teaching-learning activities which are to be used. An additional task [is] the sequencing of these activities."² These tasks can vary widely.

The way a teacher approaches these tasks could be described as the teacher's style. Bloom explains that "group instruction produces errors in learning at each stage of a course - no matter how effective the teacher is [my emphasis]."³ Mastery learning strategies require three things: group instruction, that created by the teacher; feedback, providing participants with information and means to assess what they have learned; and individualized help, so that participants may understand concepts that they may have missed. Without any one of these components instruction will not reach its potential effectiveness, and the learner will experience frustration. Each participant has different needs and as a result will need different types and qualities of instruction to assist them in mastering material.

¹ Bloom, Benjamin S. All Our Children Learning: A Primer for Parents, Teachers, and Other Educators. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1981, p.121.

² Bloom, p. 122.

³ Bloom, p.140.

Bloom outlines five variables to be considered when designing instructional approaches toward a strategy for mastery learning:

1. Learner aptitude for a particular kind of learning or the learning style of the learner.
2. The quality of instruction or the degree to which the presentation, explanation, and ordering of elements of the task to be learned approach optimum for a given learner.
3. The learner's ability to understand instruction, that is his or her ability to understand the task to be learned and the procedures to be followed in the learning of the task in a group atmosphere.
4. Perseverance, the time the learner is willing or can spend in learning a particular task.
5. The time allowed for learning by the instructor, which will be too much time for some learners and too little time for others.⁴

These variables merit analysis, and are especially critical in graduate study. Too often instructors ignore the learning styles of their students and assume that students are self-directed because they are older or more mature. This approach assumes that the learning abilities of students are the same. Instructors abdicate responsibility for improving students' learning abilities. This is fallacious andragogy. It is important to respect students' learning capacity, but learning is a skill and a students' ability can be refined and expanded given proper attention. The role of instruction in this course will be to facilitate the improvement of learners' learning skills, by using the content of rural development as a medium for learner experimentation.

Principles of Teaching

Knowles focus on andragogy has led to the application of

⁴ Bloom, pp.156-65.

teaching principles to specific conditions of learning that facilitate growth and development. These conditions are produced through the teaching-learning transaction. The link between learning conditions and teaching principles outlined below produces effective opportunities for growth and development:

Conditions of
Learning

1. The learners feel a need to learn.

2. The learning environment is characterized by physical comfort, mutual trust and respect, mutual helpfulness, freedom of expression and acceptance of differences.

3. The learners perceive the goals of a learning experience to be their goals, aspirations and present level of performance.

Principles of Teaching

1. The teacher exposes the learners to new possibilities for self-fulfillment.

2. The teacher helps the learners clarify their own aspirations for improved behavior.

3. The teacher helps the learners diagnose the gap between their comfortable and conducive to interaction (preferably no person sitting behind another).

4. The teacher helps the learners identify the life problems they experience because of their gaps in knowledge and skills.

5. The teacher provides physical conditions that are

6. The teacher accepts the learners as persons of worth and respects their feelings, ideas and experience.

7. The teacher seeks to build relationships of mutual trust among the learners by encouraging cooperative activities and refraining from inducing competitiveness and judgemental attitudes.

8. The teacher exposes his or her own feelings and contributes resources as a colearner in the spirit of mutual inquiry.

9. The teacher involves the learners in a mutual process of formulating learning objectives in which the needs of the learners of the institution, of the teacher, of the subject matter, and of the society are taken into account.

4. The learners accept a share of the responsibility for planning and operating a learning experience, and therefore have a feeling of commitment toward it.

5. The learners participate actively in the learning process.

6. The learning process is realted to and makes use of the experience of the learners.

7. The learners have a sense of progress toward their goals.

10. The teacher shares his or her thinking about options available in the designing of learning experiences and the selection of materials and methods, and involves the learners in deciding these options.

11. The teacher helps the learners to organize themselves (project groups, learning-teaching teams, etc.) to share responsibility in the process of mutual inquiry.

12. The teacher helps the learners exploit their own experiences as resources for learning through the use of such techniques as discussion, role playing, case method, etc.

13. The teacher gears the presentation of his or her own resources to the levels of experience of particular learners.

14. The teacher helps learners to apply new knowledge to their experience to make the knowledge more meaningful and integrated.

15. The teacher involves the learners in developing mutually acceptable criteria and methods for measuring progress toward the learning objectives.

16. The teacher helps the learners develop and apply procedures for self-evaluation according to these criteria.(Knowles, p.57-8.)

This course will try to incorporate all of these principles into the methods used. The facilitator role will necessitate a keen sensitivity to learning style. It is only with this sensitivity that the facilitator may even approach becoming effective to every learner in the classroom. Furthermore, it is only through demonstrating the usefulness of these techniques that the facilitator can urge others to adopt them. An essential

part of this course will be to discuss the use of techniques that adhere to the above principles, using formative evaluation sessions conducted throughout the course.

The next chapter will demonstrate how the concepts of experiential learning theory and this framework for the facilitator manifests into a coherent course design.

Chapter 5

CREATING A COURSE WITH STYLE

Designing a course is art. Just as the sculptor cuts and fits wood together to form shapes, so the course designer cuts and pastes readings and materials to form a coherent workable environment. Both have many tools at their disposal, but what makes the sculptor and the course designer an artist is knowing when to use the right tool for the right material or medium. Nails do not penetrate oak and boring instruction does not penetrate wandering minds. Another feature of the artist is perceiving a message in something that may not be readily apparent to someone else. Thus, a block of wood becomes an exquisite work of art that can be appreciated and felt by others.

Designing This Course

I have tried to take a large unmanageable body of knowledge, rural development, and remove the outer layers to create a sculptured course that will give participants a look at its essence. Only they will be able to judge whether this approach is significant. I have attempted to not only create a work of art in the design, but through experiencing the design I am trying to create a larger framework for learning. The course focus on learning style, learning ability and learning capacity will hopefully provide learners with the opportunity to integrate their learning style, improve their learning ability and come closer to their learning capacity.

The processes in the classroom have been recast into actual

course content. Ample time has been created throughout the course so that participants may reflect on their own approaches to learning. Each session pays careful attention to shift presentation styles to appeal to different types of learners. A lecture, small group discussion, large group debate and a formative evaluation session may be part of one class session. I have tried to consider techniques best suited to particular objectives (see Knowles, p.240 for synopsis). Often the evaluations of the course are linked to time for participants to evaluate their own behavior in class. This type of reflective activity provides fuel and substance for the course. Rural development issues create opportunities for experimenting with ideas and insights that participants generate.

The Course Requirements

The course will present some initial constraints that the participants must confront, just as they would deal with constraints if they were to enter into a rural development situation. There will be four agreements that all participants must agree to if they want to stay in the course. They have not been created to be oppressive or demanding, but to create constraining circumstances that most people might face in a new rural development situation. The four agreements are:

1. Agree to come to every class on time.
2. Agree to complete all work assigned before class.
3. Agree to stay at each session until it is over.
4. Agree not to gossip about what is said in this class.

The agreements also reflect my expectations as the

facilitator. Without these minimum requirements from the participants the learning objectives set out for the course cannot be achieved. Some may seem obvious, but it is important to obtain specific agreement with each participant to ensure that we understand each other. These will not be negotiable.

Everything else about the course will be negotiable. If participants have suggestions about improving the course in any way, such as increasing participation, these can be discussed and necessary changes can be made. The sessions have been planned to focus on processes of rural development. The specific content I have chosen can easily be altered to include other aspects that cater to specific learner interest.

The course sessions are outlined as follows:

- Session 1 - Establishing Balance
- Session 2 - Identifying Development Problems
- Session 3 - Intervening and Motivating Who for What?
- Session 4 - Differentiating Help and Hindrance
- Session 5 - Learning Style
- Session 6 - Building Trust
- Session 7 - The Green Revolution Game
- Session 8 - Managing Ambiguity
- Session 9 - Empowering Yourself
- Session 10 - Ending Gracefully

Session 7 will take a full Saturday to complete. It is a simulation of a rural development project with all the players involved in a typical model. It should provide a synthesizing experience for all of the previous material and bridge the ending sessions of the course that deal with liberation issues. The detailed objectives and activities of each session can be read in the next chapter, the course syllabus.

To provide a thread to link these processes together each participant will be asked to develop and write a case on a rural

development issue/topic/problem which is of special interest to them. The paper will initially be written in parts as they relate to each of the course sessions. The facilitator, myself, will provide feedback on each part. Then at the end participants will be expected to submit a final paper that identifies a problem/topic/issue and then analyzes it in view of the different processes of development that we discuss and experience at each session. The course sessions will cater directly to each of the four learning styles. The paper will focus primarily on conceptualizing and reflection.

Accompanying each session will be a homework assignment. Each assignment will have reading and writing. The readings have been linked to the writing so that they provide a framework to develop the case study. The readings have been selected because of their particular content or perspective. There are articles dealing with economics, anthropology, sociology, education and development.

Specific case studies have also been included to look at sectors as interrelated wholes, rather than entities that can be analyzed separately. While it is essential that each sector, be it agriculture, health, water, appropriate technology, business, or education be the focus of inquiry so that it may develop as a field, it is equally essential that the rural development worker view the application of these sectors in terms of their interrelatedness. Case studies help to present this viewpoint.

The Course Materials

There are four texts that are required for this rural

expectations, hopes, fears and ignorance. The facilitator of this course must be genuinely concerned with the development of his or her learners because this is the kind of attitude that is needed from practioners active in rural development.

Course Evaluation

The standardized evaluation forms will be used to evaluate the course at semester's end. During the last session there will be time devoted to course and facilitator feedback. Time will also be spent for learners to evaluate their own progress and performance in the course, focussing on their flexibility and adaptability as learners. This is outlined in the last session.

development course:

1. Moris, Jon R. Managing Induced Rural Development. Bloomington, IN: International Development Institute, 1981.

This book provides a brilliant overview of rural development issues from the perspective of the practitioner. It looks at broad policy questions as well as specific management problems at the local level. It also includes a guide to the current literature that addresses rural development issues as well as theoretical questions about development.

2. Chambers, Robert. Rural Development: Putting the Last First. Essex: Longman Group UK Limited, 1983.

Specifically concerned with the role outsiders play in rural development, Chambers offers insight into how outsiders acquire and use knowledge. He discusses issues of empowerment and the research needs of rural development as a field.

3. Hyden, Goran. Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania: Underdevelopment and an Uncaptured Peasantry. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980.

This is the predecessor of Hyden's new book, No Shortcuts to Progress, which is a more general treatment of rural development policy. This book presents one of the most comprehensive analyses written on the Ujamaa development strategy in Tanzania, one of the most important episodes in the rural development field. It provides an excellently detailed case that can be discussed throughout the course.

4. Bureaucracy and the Poor. Ed. David C. Korten and Felipe B. Alfonso. Hartford, CT: Kumarian Press, 1983.

Presents many cases that are written from a management perspective. Korten has outlined a new development strategy that he entitles "People-Centered Development." These essays are written to include discussion of participation, empowerment and local institution building.

Supplementing these primary texts are other readings drawn from the fields of anthropology, economics and politics. They encompass a wide variety of perspectives, from World Bank to Oxfam, from micro to macro. The readings are included in the next chapter after each session outline.

I have spent great lengths of time arduously piecing the

readings together so that each reinforces certain aspects of the other, and so that all of them relate to the development process under discussion at the next class. I have also been careful to provide adequate class time to discuss the readings. It is a common complaint that readings rarely are discussed in class and that this deficiency creates uncertainty in participants about the purpose and their interpretations of the readings.

The Green Revolution Game will be played during session 7 on a Saturday. I have not played the game, but I have read reviews of it and Chambers recommends it in his book. I am awaiting a copy of it from England. When it arrives, I will ask various people to participate in the game next semester in order to assess it and modify it as necessary.

If there is any more time than the ten sessions in the semester I hope to be able to show a film. I have not utilized other mediums of communication because quite frankly I have not researched this at all. I have considered showing The Mission to demonstrate how intervention strategies for development may not mean much in view of systemic problems and barriers.

Course Instruction

As discussed in the previous chapter, andragogical principles will guide the facilitator's behavior. The role model aspects of learning will be an important characteristic of the instructional style. The facilitator must be a flexible, adaptive learner and actively demonstrate this capacity. This means conceptualizing experiences and providing practical examples of concepts. It means the facilitator shares his or her feelings,

Chapter 6

LEARNING MODULES

Course Sessions

- Session 1 - Establishing Balance
- Session 2 - Identifying Development Problems
- Session 3 - Intervening and Motivating Who for What?
- Session 4 - Differentiating Help and Hindrance
- Session 5 - Learning Style
- Session 6 - Building Trust
- Session 7 - The Green Revolution Game
- Session 8 - Managing Ambiguity
- Session 9 - Empowering Yourself
- Session 10- Ending Gracefully

Homework Assignments

- Homework 1 - Formulating the Development Problem
- Homework 2 - Observing Others
- Homework 3 - Affecting Others Effectively
- Homework 4 - Designing an Approach
- Homework 5 - Establishing Trust
- Homework 6 - Managing Rural Development
- Homework 7 - Managing for Solutions
- Homework 8 - Organizing Management
- Homework 9 - Empowering Others
- Homework 10- Analyzing Your Case

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LESSON 1

ESTABLISHING BALANCE

Learning Objectives

The participants will:

1. Understand the structure of the course;
2. Understand the agreements to take the course;
3. Know what the presenter expects of the participants;
4. Recognize what issues in rural development are important to them;
5. Develop specific questions surrounding issues in rural development that they would like to address.

Activities

1. Introductions and list of addresses/telephone nos. (20 min)
2. Outline of course content and syllabus (15 min)
 - a) Emphasize multidimensional aspect of course and interdisciplinary nature.
 - b) Opportunities to reflect on their own learning styles will allow participants to become more flexible learners.
3. Outline of my goals for the course (25 min)
 - a) To create opportunities for participants to become more aware of their own learning style preferences.
 - b) To facilitate participants to acquire skills to become effective development workers.
 - c) To provide information to improve participant knowledge about the rural development field.
 - d) To apply andragogical learning concepts rather than pedagogical ones.
4. Course agreements (20 min)
 - a) Discuss the nature of agreements and why they are essential.
 - b) Discuss why they need to be explicitly agreed upon- that the course is designed assuming that these agreements have been kept.
 - c) The agreements:
 1. The participant agrees to come to every class on time.
 2. The participant agrees to complete all work assigned before class time.
 3. The participant will stay in each class until it is over.
 4. The participant agrees not to gossip about this class.
5. Course requirements (10 min)
 - a) Case analyses
 - b) Personal case development and analysis process.
 - c) Free to stop class at any time to make observations about

- group process occurring in class.
- d) Please buy the books.
 - e) Negotiations- everything in this course is negotiable except the agreements.
6. Break (10 min)
 7. Organize triads (10 min)
 8. Brainstorming (20 min)
 - a) Write down all the issues concerning rural development that you think are important and should be covered in this course.
 9. Question/problems development (20 min)
 - a) Each triad writes down ten problems in question form that they would like answered by the end of this course.
 10. Process consultation (30 min)
 - a). In large group each person takes five minutes to free write their impresssions of this first session focussing on:
 1. Impressions of first class group dynamic.
 2. Perception of facilitator.
 3. Perceptions of overall course.
 4. Perception of work in small group triads.
 11. Handout homework number 1 - Formulating the Development Problem.

HOMework 1

FORMULATING THE DEVELOPMENT PROBLEM

1. Read Ahmed BRAC case. Note down issues he discusses that relate to the ones generated by your triad.
2. Read Moris, chapters 1 and 2.
3. Read Hyden, pp.1-36.
4. Writing.
 1. Formulate a single question surrounding a specific topic/issue/problem of rural development that you would like to explore during this course.
 2. In no more than one of a page explain why this issue/topic/problem is important to you.
 3. Utilizing the reading and the class discussions ask at least 20 questions that would guide your exploration of the problem/topic/issue that you identified.
 4. Please make a photocopy to hand in at the next class.

A PROJECT TO HELP PRACTITIONERS
HELP THE RURAL POOR

Case Study No. 2

PLEASE RETURN TO
NONFORMAL EDUCATION
RESOURCE CENTER
268 HILLS HOUSE SOUTH
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS
AMHERST 01003

BRAC

Building Human Infrastructures
to Serve the Rural Poor

MANZOOR AHMED
(With the cooperation of M. Ashraf Ali
and Mohammed Selim)

International Council for Educational Development
Essex, Connecticut USA

PREFACE

Any development practitioner looking for fresh ideas and practical lessons concerning integrated, community-based programs for meeting the basic needs of poor rural families will find this report on the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) of considerable interest.

This case study is the second in a series of critical examinations of unconventional family-centered rural programs that form the core of empirical evidence for an international project on this subject being conducted by the International Council for Educational Development (ICED) in cooperation with a variety of developing countries and external assistance agencies. The purpose of the overall project is to develop and disseminate a body of pertinent information, illustrations, and operational guidelines drawn from actual experience that can be useful in a wide range of developing countries in connection with designing, implementing and evaluating multipurpose community-based programs for improving the quality of family life among the rural poor.

The reader will see that BRAC is a strictly home grown, locally staffed and managed program, born as an emergency relief measure in the turmoil of a great national struggle for independence. It has since evolved--and is still evolving--into a unique multifaceted rural development program whose experience to date offer a variety of positive lessons for others along with some equally important negative ones that the leaders of BRAC are quick to point out without a trace of defensiveness. BRAC's managers have maintained from the outset an experimental attitude and flexibility of mind and a demonstrated readiness to convert past weaknesses into future strengths. Through this open-minded process of trial and error and learning-by-doing, the BRAC program has grown steadily in strength and in its dimensions and effectiveness. Even as this preface is written, further important changes born of experience are in process of being introduced.

The principal author of this report--Manzoor Ahmed, deputy director of the ICED project--has frequently expressed the great difficulty of capturing in written words the spirit and vitality of this living, growing multifaceted program. The relatively small scale of BRAC's activities, its freedom as a voluntary organization from the often irresistible rigidities and inertia of large public programs, and the uncommon enthusiasm and dedication of its leadership and workers have found expression in a continuous surge of fresh ideas and plans and in a dynamism to which no written report can do full justice.

While it is undoubtedly true that these special assets and qualities cannot readily be duplicated on a nationwide scale, this by no means rules out the possibility that various specific lessons from BRAC's experiences can be usefully applied to larger public programs and in quite different contexts.

What this report presents--to borrow the language of the cinema--are some revealing snapshots of BRAC as of early 1977, with a series of selective flashbacks to significant episodes in its earlier career. The report also undertakes to assess the significance of these past and current experiences, the impacts that BRAC has had thus far on the lives of villagers and villages in the area it serves, and the new directions expected to emerge in subsequent months and years. The concluding section of the report attempts to place in perspective a number of lessons from BRAC's experience that would seem to be of particular interest and value to development practitioners elsewhere in Bangladesh and

in other developing countries.

A brief explanation is in order about how the study was conducted. As in all field research studies, choices had to be made regarding the most significant types of evidence to be collected and analyzed, the most appropriate and efficient methods for doing so, and the most effective uses of the limited time, manpower, and financial resources available.

The investigators made extensive use of available quantitative data and documented information such as earlier project plans and proposals, service records, periodic reports, and the results of limited previous evaluation efforts. These were supplemented by a sample household survey conducted in 10 villages in the so-called Sulla Project area to collect basic reference data on the socioeconomic circumstances of families, the extent of their participation in BRAC activities, their knowledge of the program, and their own assessments of what BRAC had done, or could do in the future, to improve their own lives. In addition the investigators visited all the project sites, joined the daily cycle of activities of some of the field workers, and spent many hours interrogating workers and project leaders in the field and at the headquarters.

A special comment should be added regarding the relative roles of quantitative and non-quantitative evidence in an operationally-oriented study such as this. It is obviously important to collect and analyze whatever statistical evidence may be available on such matters as the inputs into the program, the services delivered, the costs and sources of support, and the measurable impacts of the program on various facets of family and community life. It must be recognized, however, that reliable quantitative evidence of this sort is frequently very difficult to come by, especially in home grown programs such as BRAC that never ran the gauntlet of preparing a proper plan and submitting a persuasive proposal to some external assistance agencies whose sophisticated program analysts insisted on baseline surveys and built-in evaluation provisions as a condition for providing support. The plain fact is that the entrepreneurs of such home grown programs, whose sophistication is of a more down-to-earth variety, are usually so anxious "to get on with the job" that they see little point in diverting scarce talent and energy into recording statistics that might some day warm the hearts of professional evaluators.

In all events, even an ideal supply of quantitative data, if available, would still not provide answers to some of the most important questions on the minds of practitioners--questions that by their very nature defy quantitative treatment. This applies, for example, to the important task involved in each ICED case study of identifying key internal or environmental factors that have either facilitated or inhibited the successful performance of a particular program, which can be extremely useful for planners of other programs to be aware of. These factors typically turn out to include such things as the calibre of leadership, the validity of the underlying assumptions of the program, the adequacy of the initial diagnosis and planning, the organizational arrangements and relationships, the motivation of staff and receptivity of the interested clients, the relevance and adequacy of the educational components, and not least of all the nature of the socioeconomic environment and general political climate. These kinds of factors obviously cannot be measured with a slide rule or computer, but they can nevertheless be identified and reasonably evaluated in a scientifically objective manner through the application of sensitive, informed, and systematic observation and judgment. In short, to equate scientific method narrowly with quantitative

measurement, especially in the social sciences, is to rule out the possibility of providing valuable fresh insights to practitioners and reasoned and responsible answers to some of their most urgent questions.

Although full responsibility for the content, interpretations and findings of this report resides with the author and ICED, we wish to express our appreciation to all of our colleagues in Bangladesh who contributed so importantly to this study. In particular we are grateful to Dr. Mohammed Ashraf Ali of the Institute of Education and Research at Dacca University for conducting the household sample survey and writing up sections of the preliminary draft report; to Saleh Chowdhury, a journalist with professional training in social work, for helping in the sample survey and sharing his insights into rural life; to Dr. Mohammed Selim, Director of the Institute of Education and Research and more recently Educational Advisor to the Ministry of Education, for his sage advice, encouragement, and interest in the study; and to UNICEF officials in Dacca, particularly Carl Schonmeyer and Joseph Acar, for their help with both logistical support and substantive comments.

Above all we express our appreciation to the Executive Director of BRAC, Mr. F. H. Abed, and his numerous co-workers both in Dacca and in the field for their generosity with time and patience in meeting all requests of the investigators and for their unstinting cooperation with the study. Overworked project managers who already have problems enough can be forgiven if they are wary of outside investigators who do not only impose on their time but may end up making gratuitous criticisms and recommendations that create still further problems. It must be said of Mr. Abed and his colleagues that their reaction to ICED's proposed case study was quite different. They actively welcomed a searching independent review of BRAC's activities, the shortcomings along with the virtues, believing that they as well as others might profit from it. When asked to review and comment on a draft of the report and to set the author straight on any erroneous or offensive statements, they raised no objection to the fact that it candidly singled out apparent weaknesses along with the evident strengths of the program. Their reaction instead was to agree, and to point to actions they were already taking or planned to take to remedy these shortcomings. Perhaps this attitude toward honest criticism is a good part of the explanation of why BRAC has progressed so far so fast, notwithstanding formidable obstacles.

October 1977

Philip H. Coombs
Director of the Project

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
PREFACE	iii
Chapter 1 THE BACKGROUND AND AN OVERVIEW	1
Background and Setting	1
Major Program Elements	3
Goals of the Study	5
An Overview of BRAC	6
Chapter 2 FUNCTIONAL EDUCATION	10
A Conventional Beginning	10
The Functional Approach	10
Methodology and Materials	11
Training Instructors and Supervisors	13
Reading Materials	14
The Results	15
Implications of the Early Experience	16
Reconciling Literacy and Functionality	20
Chapter 3 HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING	22
The Health Situation	22
Services Other than BRAC	24
BRAC Health Care and Family Planning Approach	24
Organization of the Services	25
Health Personnel	28
Services Provided	31
Financing the Health Program	33
Recordkeeping and Evaluation	36
Outlook for the Future	37
Chapter 4 AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT	43
Components of the Agricultural Program	44
The Third Phase Plans	47
Fishery Development	48
Concluding Points	49
Chapter 5 PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN	52
Serving Women Through General Programs	52
Mother and Child Care Clubs	54
Vocational Training and Cooperatives	55
Women Staff Development	56
The Jamalpur Project	58
Concluding Points	59

		<u>Page</u>
Chapter 6	RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF STAFF	62
	BRAC Personnel	62
	Recruitment Criteria and Procedure	63
	Staff Training	64
	Training and Resource Centre (TARC)	66
	Maintaining Motivation and Morale	68
	Concluding Comments	68
Chapter 7	DEVELOPMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES	71
	BRAC Organization and Staff Structure	71
	Cooperatives and Other Local Organizations	72
	Community Participation	75
	New Organizational Approach in Sulla	80
	Local Self-Sustaining Institutions in Manikganj	81
	Concluding Comments	82
Chapter 8	COSTS AND FINANCES	86
	The Pattern of Costs	86
	Major Program Items	88
	Overall Size of Operation	90
	Dependence on External Sources	91
	Overall Cost Feasibility	91
	Future Outlook	92
Chapter 9	CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS	94
	The Integrated Development Approach	95
	Community Participation	98
	Education	100
	Reaching the Poorest	102
	Role of Voluntary Organizations	103

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 3.1	Incidence of Diseases Treated by Paramedics	23
Table 3.2	Primary Reasons for Discontinuation of Contraceptive	34
Table 3.3	Physical Symptoms Mentioned Most Frequently	35
Table 6.1	TARC Program for the Month of December, 1976	67
Table 7.1	Distribution of Benefits Related to Education	76
Table 7.2	Distribution of Benefits Related to Land Ownership	76
Table 7.3	Contribution to BRAC Project Activities	77
Table 8.1	Categories of Budgeted Expenditures	87
Table 8.2	Major Items of Expenditures for Three Sub-projects	89
Figure 1	Simplified Organization Chart of BRAC	71A

CHAPTER 1

THE BACKGROUND AND AN OVERVIEW

The Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), an indigenous voluntary organization, functions in selected rural areas of Bangladesh. It attempts to bring a limited amount of external assistance and the idealistic impulses of a group of educated young people to bear on the problem of extreme poverty and deprivation among the rural people in Bangladesh. It has designed a program with a combination of activities that aims at:

- (a) improving the economic situation of the rural families by helping them adopt more productive farming practices and increase earning from nonagricultural sources, including income-supplement activities of women;
- (b) providing basic preventive and curative health care and family planning services at an affordable cost;
- (c) building local institutions and expanding the basic educational opportunities, so that the people can actively participate in their own affairs and the development activities can become increasingly self-managed;
- (d) making an impact on the living condition of the poorest and the most disadvantaged rural families, who often fail to become the beneficiaries of rural services not specially geared to the needs of the poorest.

The significance of the BRAC program and the reason for ICED's interest in examining it lie in the broadness of BRAC's vision that, nonetheless, focuses on the basic needs of the deprived rural families and recognizes the value of an integrated approach to meeting these needs.

Background and Setting

The program began in 1972 in a cluster of villages in the Sulla, Derai, and Baniyachang thanas (sub-districts) of Sylhet district in the aftermath of the war of liberation as a relief effort for those war victims whose homes, cattle, and boats for fishing and transportation had been destroyed and whose fields had lain fallow for a year. Being on the international boundary between Bangladesh and the Indian states of Meghalaya and Assam and having a 60 percent Hindu population, the project area of about 200

villages (120,000 people in 160 square miles of territory) suffered more than its share during the war. With the assistance of Oxfam of England and Canada, BRAC provided construction materials to rebuild the houses, timber to build boats, and other assistance to help the people resettle in the villages. BRAC soon discovered that the villagers, back from refugee camps to their homes, while no more dependent on charity for their daily ration of food, were in a state of destitution not very different from that in the refugee shelters. It was clear that sustained development efforts, not mere temporary relief measures, were needed to have any tangible impact on the living condition of the people in the area.

The Sulla area is unique in some ways but similar in others to the rest of the Bangladesh countryside. Topographically the area falls in the depressed haor (semi-permanent lake) region, which means that most of the area is submerged for six to eight months in a year. The total cultivable land in the project area is about 64,000 acres, of which 60,000 acres are suitable for only one deep-water rice crop in the winter. For over six months in the year, the area takes on the appearance of a sea --a watery expanse extending to the horizon in all directions with little scattered islands sheltering people and animals in thick clusters of huts made of bamboo and corrugated iron sheets.

The topography of the area sets a limit to its agricultural prospects and increases its isolation from the urban centers and the rest of the country. On the other hand, fishing is an important occupation in the area. It is the primary means of livelihood for 20 percent of the families and a secondary occupation for most of the rest.

The density of population in the area is close to 700 per square mile --less than one-half of the national average only because much of the land area is not habitable. With over a quarter of the families having no farm land, and about 20 percent possessing farms over one acre in area, most of the landholdings are below the one acre level. Even when farming and fishing are combined, a practice that is followed by most of the families, the primitive technology and the low level of productivity in both activities assure at best a precarious living. Both farming and fishing are susceptible to the vagaries of nature--the unpredictable late autumn floods and hailstorms occasionally wipe out the one rice crop (boro) primarily grown in the area; irregular floods also affect the fish harvests adversely.

The ecological features of the area are somewhat forbidding as far as economic development is concerned--probably more so than the typical rural area of the rest of the country. However, in terms of the level of poverty, the dependence on primary production activities based on primitive technologies, the high rate of population growth, the low level of education, the inadequacy of government institutions and public services, and the basic cultural patterns and values, the area is not significantly different from other rural areas in the country and is subject to the same challenges, problems, and prospects of development as the rest of Bangladesh.

Major Program Elements

The 200-odd villages of the project area, chosen because of relief needs and geographical contiguity rather than administrative convenience, cover the whole of Sulla thana, three unions of Derai thana, and two unions of Baniachang thana. Spending a little over Tk 4 million (about US\$207,000) in the course of three years to the end of 1975 (excluding the initial relief expenditures), BRAC appears to have served directly at least one-half of the area population with one or more of its program activities. BRAC has faced and attempted to solve with varying effectiveness many problems that other rural programs, large or small, public or private, will have to face and resolve in the future.

- BRAC has apparently identified a cluster of basic needs of the rural people that are amenable to deliberate collective efforts, if they are supported by a sufficient input of technical and financial resources. It has fashioned a program to utilize these resources for a direct assault on the problem of satisfying the basic needs.
- BRAC has recruited for its staff a group of young men and women, most of whom are university graduates. While the knowledge, skills, and educational background of such people can be an asset to a development program, the high educational qualifications can also alienate them from the rural people, and their values and temperament may make them unsuitable for rural work. BRAC has attempted to capitalize on the idealistic impulses of the young, to instill in them the spirit and values of the organization, to give them the necessary understanding of the issues and intricacies of implementing a multipurpose rural development project, and to develop their ability to relate to and communicate with the rural people.
- The field staff of BRAC is complemented by local young men and women from rural families who are recruited, trained, and utilized for various roles in the implementation of the program.
- The program has apparently managed to work with the village power structure; it has gained their tolerant acceptance if not actual support of a program which helps the underprivileged in the village but eventually and potentially threatens to upset the existing power structure.
- The program functions within the context of services and activities of the government departments concerned with rural areas, however inadequate these services may be. One of BRAC's tasks is to work out a compatible relationship between itself and the government agencies and programs at

both the local and national levels and to secure the cooperation of the government agencies whenever necessary and possible.

- In order to increase farm productivity, create new employment, and improve the nutritional balance, the program has introduced some new farm practices, facilitated the supply of essential inputs, and helped in procuring and maintaining farming and irrigation equipment. All of these, though on a limited basis, have apparently been done without using a large complement of specialized agricultural extension staff.
- The program in addition to providing health, family planning, and functional education services to women, has attempted to bring women into the mainstream of economic and development efforts by using local women personnel in some of the program activities, by offering special skill training to women, and by encouraging the formation of women's cooperative economic enterprises.
- One component of the program is the attempt to encourage village youths to undertake collectively community service activities as well as cultural, sports, and recreational activities to enliven the overall community atmosphere. Selected youths are also given training to help in the management of cooperatives.
- The health and family planning component of the program is founded on the concept of a low-cost basic preventive and curative service delivered by community-based auxiliaries and backstopped by paramedics and qualified physicians and clinical services. A health insurance plan is a significant feature of this effort.
- BRAC has invested considerable effort and resources in an experiment to raise the effectiveness and efficiency of its adult education program. BRAC's early efforts were troubled by the typical problems of most well-intentioned traditional literacy programs, such as difficulty in sustaining learner interest and motivation, teaching techniques that smack of infantile pedagogy, inappropriate content materials, and lack of followup materials. With the technical support of World Education, Inc. of U.S.A. and World Literacy of Canada BRAC has developed methods and materials for a functional education program that promises to produce better results and to be more relevant to the total development efforts carried out by BRAC.

- One of BRAC's main objectives is to build local institutions and organizations that will permit the development efforts to be carried out with the active involvement of the rural people and will lead the way to greater self-management of these efforts by the local people. To this end, BRAC has put a heavy emphasis on building community centers and forming cooperative societies of different types.

All of these elements of the BRAC program, as noted earlier, have by no means achieved a high level of effectiveness; the performance varies between communities in the project area. The important point is that all of these elements are seen as the necessary constituents of a program for improving the quality of life of rural families.

Since the initial development phase of Sulla (called Sulla Project, Phase II) came to a conclusion at the end of 1975, BRAC has initiated a third phase of the Sulla Project, extended its development activities in rural locations in other districts, and reoriented and reorganized its program activities in both Sulla and other locations on the basis of the experiences acquired from the early Sulla efforts. The basic program objectives of BRAC, however, have remained unchanged; the redirected program activities are designed to achieve the same basic goals more effectively.

Goals of the Study

The purpose of this case study is to carry out an analysis of various necessary operations and tasks that have been undertaken in designing, managing, and implementing the program. In this process, evaluative judgement including assessment of various components of the program is made to the extent permitted by available information.

Certain operations are common to all programs aiming at the improvement of rural living conditions: diagnosing the local situation with respect to the development needs, potentialities, and obstacles; designing a strategy of actions and building an organizational structure; recruiting, training, and utilizing the staff; selecting learning contents and preparing and supplying learning materials; developing and applying appropriate learning methods; securing the involvement of the clientele and building or strengthening local participatory institutions; establishing working relationships with the government agencies at the different levels and with the local power structures; and mobilizing resources of various types from local and external sources. All these are tasks that have to be tackled at a certain level of effectiveness by all programs of rural development. An analysis of BRAC experience, it is hoped, will shed light on the procedures, methods, techniques, and steps adopted as well as on the obstacles and the favorable circumstances encountered in carrying out the vital tasks of program implementation in one case. The BRAC experience also provides an opportunity for examining not only the practical application and meaning of the concepts of integrated rural development, but also the participation and involvement of the clientele in self-sustaining and self-managed development programs—concepts that are emphasized by BRAC and other programs focusing on the disadvantaged segment of the rural population.

The case study has attempted to match the implementation steps taken with the results achieved, not only in terms of the stated and predetermined goals, but also of the unanticipated byproducts and costs incurred in terms of money as well as human and material resources. The assessment of the results as far as possible is necessary for analyzing and understanding the process of implementation. The negative aspects of the program can be as instructive as the positive achievements as far as the case study is concerned.

A further aim of this case study--in combination with similar other case studies undertaken by ICED--is to make a contribution to building an inductive-empirical base for extracting useful lessons and formulating general principles, operational guidelines, and evaluative criteria for conceptualizing, designing, implementing, managing, and evaluating other programs that will improve the situation of the rural poor.

An Overview of BRAC

By the end of 1976 BRAC grew to be a multifaceted development program of considerable size employing over 180 full-time staff members with an annual operating budget of about Tk 5 million. The BRAC activities, with general guidance and support from the Dacca central office, spread to several rural locations with at least 300,000 potential beneficiaries in three districts. In addition, BRAC contributed to the national rural development effort by publishing a monthly rural newspaper that circulated throughout the country, by establishing a training program that provided training to rural development workers of other organizations in the country, and by developing and producing functional education and health education materials that could be used by other programs. The total program is organized as a number of sub-projects (though usually referred to as "projects" in BRAC parlance), each of which is briefly described below.

The Sulla Project.

Sulla is the oldest and best known of BRAC projects. It is in Sulla that BRAC began its relief activities and then initiated the rural development program that came to be called Sulla Project, Phase II. This phase of the Sulla Project began in November 1972 and lasted until December 1975 when Sulla Phase III was launched.

The activities carried out during Phase II included construction of gonokendro (community center) in the project villages, a functional education program, agricultural development, promotion of cooperative societies, fisheries development, vocational training for women, and a health care and family planning program.

For the implementation of the above activities, a fairly elaborate field organization with full-time staff personnel was built up. The project area was divided into 11 sectors, each with an Area Manager and a field camp where 4 to 5 field-level development workers, known as Field Motivators, resided and functioned under the guidance of the Area Manager. The 11 field camps were supervised by 2 zonal program coordinators. A Field Coordinator had the overall responsibility for directing the project. The health care and family planning program was implemented by 30 paramedics, divided among the field camps and supervised by 4 medical doctors.

Phase III plans (January 1976 to December 1978) still emphasized health care and family planning as a major project component. Functional education was to be reoriented to stress its roles of "consciousness-raising" and helping specific interest groups more directly in being organized for collective self-improvement activities. There was to be, on the whole, an emphasis on helping functional groups of landless laborers, women, young people, and fishermen in improving their situation through collective efforts instead of conducting separate sectoral activities.

During the first year of the third phase, women Field Motivators and paramedics were recruited and trained for the first time, a step that was expected to be the beginning of a new trend. Otherwise the field organization remained essentially the same as during the second phase.

Manikgang Project.

This project located in the Manikganj thana, 40 miles west of Dacca, was initiated in April 1976 after BRAC became familiar with the area and its population by conducting a rural works project in the thana. The Manikganj project embodies the lessons of experience in Sulla and reflects the emerging program approach of BRAC.

The health and family planning component remains a major sectoral activity in this project. All other development activities, however, are not planned to be sectorally separated but rather designed according to the specific preference and capacity of functional interest groups, such as landless laborers, women, youth, rural artisans, and managed mainly through the collective efforts of these groups rather than by BRAC's own personnel. Functional education is to be used as the main vehicle of organizing the functional groups and developing their capacity to engage in self-help activities. Rural youth, especially the educated ones uncertain about their vocation and purpose in life, are regarded as an important resource to be tapped for becoming "agents of change" and local organizers of the collective activities. BRAC plans include provisions for training, technical assistance, and limited financial assistance to the local youth organizations.

Jamalpur Project.

This project in 30 villages near Jamalpur town in Mymensingh district had its origin in an involvement of BRAC in conducting a functional education program for destitute rural women who were participants in a UNICEF-sponsored food-for-work project. At the conclusion of the UNICEF project, the rural women and the local instructors of functional education earlier trained by BRAC were eager to continue the education and development effort, if only they could receive some guidance and assistance. BRAC assisted the group of 15 women instructors/development workers in preparing an operational plan and found for them a source of financial assistance to implement the plan. Launched in early 1976, the plan included the following: functional education centers and groups for women in each of the villages; a family planning program, including child health and maternal care; improvement of preventive health measures and hygiene in the villages; joint savings and cooperative economic projects for women (including horticulture,

poultry raising, and use of fallow land); and formation of women's organizations for self-help efforts. This project for underprivileged rural women is directed and managed entirely by BRAC workers, who are all local women originally recruited as functional education instructors for the UNICEF project.

The Materials Development Unit.

Dissatisfied with conventional adult literacy methods and materials, BRAC found the need for developing a more effective approach to functional education and creating relevant educational materials for this purpose. As a part of this effort to design a new functional education program (for which BRAC received technical assistance from World Education, Inc., a technical assistance agency based in New York), a materials development unit was established at BRAC headquarters in Dacca in 1974. The staff of the unit was intimately involved in developing the new educational methodology, identifying the relevant lesson content, preparing and field-testing the trial materials, and preparing the successive sets of functional education materials. The unit, with a full-time staff of four writers, evaluators, and illustrators, is engaged on a continuous basis in assessing and modifying the old materials and designing, field-testing, and producing new materials.

Training and Resource Centre (TARC).

As BRAC began to build a sizeable field organization with full-time personnel and initiated a functional education program that required special training for instructors and supervisory staff, the need arose for a systematic staff training arrangement. With the assistance of a consultant provided by the Ford Foundation and banking on its own training needs for field personnel, BRAC developed a series of short training courses or "modules" on topics considered important in improving the skills and competence of the staff. These topics include communication, organizational analysis and needs assessment, program planning, group dynamics, leadership, "consciousness-raising," and functional education methodology. The training center--based partially in the Dacca office and partially in Savar, 20 miles northwest of Dacca, where the facilities for the center, including residential accommodation, were under construction--employed six full-time trainers in late 1976. The center, besides meeting BRAC's own needs, also conducted training courses for rural development and functional education workers on commission from other voluntary organizations in Bangladesh.

Gonokendro.

Recognizing the scarcity of relevant reading materials for rural readers, BRAC began to publish in 1973 a monthly tabloid of 8 to 12 printed pages with development-related information, articles, and news items. Although the journal was seen originally as a means of providing reading materials to neoliterates emerging from the functional education courses, it turned into a more general interest rural journal (without the gradation of vocabulary and careful selection of the texts required for neoliterates), especially after UNICEF offered to underwrite the cost of distributing 60,000 copies every month to rural primary school teachers.

The Research and Evaluation Project.

Soon after the beginning of its development phase, BRAC saw a need for a system of orderly collection and analysis of base-line information about the project area and population and of service data. It saw a need for a general assessment of the changes or lack of changes resulting from BRAC activities. Aided by a grant from the Ford Foundation, a small research and evaluation unit was set up which at the end of 1976 had five full-time research assistants and statisticians. The plans for research and evaluation included the following: base-line sample surveys of project areas for selected socioeconomic indicators; assessment of the impact of specific sectoral activities, such as health and family planning; and an in-depth economic-anthropological study of selected villages, in order to evaluate the overall socioeconomic impact of the project activities on the village communities. Assistance of researchers from local research institutions were available for designing and conducting the surveys. The services of an anthropological researcher from the Marga Institute in Sri Lanka was available for designing the village studies and training the research workers for this purpose.

Rural Works Program.

The works program, by means of which rural agricultural laborers are paid wages in cash or in food grains during the "slack" farming season for work in useful community works projects, has become a regular annual BRAC activity. BRAC used the works program to build physical infrastructures to improve the agricultural potential of the Sulla and Manikganj project areas, to provide a means of sustenance to vulnerable groups in the project area at a time of food shortage and unemployment, and to involve local people in planning and implementing development schemes in their own localities. In Manikganj, the works program was the means for BRAC to get acquainted with the area and its population, to establish BRAC's own credibility and reputation among the local people, and to identify promising members of local youth groups and involve them in BRAC development activities.

During the 1975-76 dry season 30 works projects, including embankments, irrigation canals, drainage canals, roads, and fishery and irrigation ponds, were completed in Sulla and Manikganj. The projects provided 87,000 man-days of employment and cost a total of Tk 545,000.

Various facets of these program components and how they relate to each other in shaping the total rural development thrust of BRAC are examined in the following sections of this report.

FUNCTIONAL EDUCATION

A Conventional Beginning

Widespread illiteracy among the rural people was seen by the organizers of BRAC as a major contributing factor to rural underdevelopment and poverty. Spread of literacy was considered necessary for communicating new knowledge and ideas to the people and for creating among them an awareness of their situation and of ways of changing this situation.

A strong literacy drive was therefore launched early in the project as a major element of its rural development strategy. With a goal of eliminating almost 90 percent illiteracy in the Sulla Project area within a period of three years, 255 literacy centers were opened in 220 villages in 1973, and 300 local men and women were trained and employed as teachers.

It was a conventional literacy campaign, concentrating on the skills of reading and writing, with traditional pedagogic techniques in a classroom environment. Some efforts were made to include rural topics in the lessons. There was a great surge of enthusiasm initially and 5,000 villagers enrolled in the courses.

But interest waned quickly and the dropout rate shot up. Some centers closed down because learners did not show up, and others took as long as twelve months to complete the six-month course because of high absenteeism. Only 5 percent of those enrolled completed the course.

A combination of factors contributed to the failure of this educational effort. An unusually high level of flood in 1973 not only damaged many of the centers and made them unusable but also caused extra economic hardship to the people of the area. BRAC launched the campaign on the assumption that there was a high level of demand for literacy and all that was needed was to provide the opportunity to attend literacy classes. Very little attention was given to appropriate teaching techniques for adults, and the lessons were prepared on the basis of preconceived notions of what was good for the learners. The most serious problem was that the learners soon discovered that the acquisition of literacy skills required considerable effort and time; yet these skills and the reading lessons bore little relevance to the immediate and burning problems of their life. Customers for the literacy courses, therefore, declined sharply.

The Functional Approach

Having reached the conclusion that mere teaching of alphabet and arithmetic was not enough to hold the interest of the learners and of no direct benefit to the rural learners, BRAC began searching for a new approach. It was felt that new methodology and materials had to be developed that would be perceived as useful and relevant by the learners in their daily life. In this

task BRAC enlisted the assistance of consultants from World Education, Inc. to develop, test, and implement on a pilot basis an adult functional literacy education program designed (a) to maintain learners' interest and participation in the educational program, (b) to enable learners to read with understanding and write legibly simple texts likely to be of use to them, and (c) to modify learners' attitudes and behavior toward family planning, nutrition, health and agricultural practices.

The main steps followed in implementing the new functional education program were assessment of learners' needs and interests, development of learning materials and methods, training supervisors and instructors, and implementation of a pilot phase in order to test and revise materials and methods.

The assessment of learning needs was based on a canvassing of the villagers' views on their main concerns and problems about which they needed new knowledge and information. This was supplemented by the BRAC field workers' knowledge and understanding of the general rural condition. A survey was carried out in 19 villages in the Sulla Project area to collect general information about village socioeconomic situations and to determine the villagers' perception of their learning needs. Consequently, several major content topics for the functional education program were identified: (a) soil and use of fertilizers, (b) high yielding rice cultivation, (c) animal husbandry and poultry, (d) fisheries and pisciculture, (e) cooperatives, (f) nutrition, (g) hygiene and public health, (h) family planning--male orientation, (i) family planning--female orientation, (j) child care, and (k) cottage industries.

In early 1974, a materials development unit, consisting of an education and training adviser, one illustrator, three writers, and a typist, was set up in BRAC's head office in Dacca. The first round of materials--large charts with drawings, "generative words," and short suggestive sentences--was the product of brainstorming among the materials development unit staff centering on the themes identified as the main concerns of the rural people. A consultant from World Education with experience in materials development for functional adult education programs served as a resource person for the unit.

Methodology and Materials

The preparation of materials was, of course, contingent upon a methodology for the use of the materials. The World Education consultants introduced to the materials development unit and other senior BRAC personnel the functional education methods developed for World Education-assisted programs in Thailand, Turkey, Indonesia, and other countries. The main elements of this methodology were:

- (a) identification of key concepts relating to the learner group's major problems and potential ways of dealing with these problems;
- (b) preparation of lessons (pictures, words, sentences, reading and writing exercises, arithmetic exercises) centered on the selected key concepts;

- (c) group discussion of the key concepts (aided by relevant pictures and drawings), encouragement of active participation by group members, presentation of practical experiences, and comparison of conflicting ideas and alternative action possibilities;
- (d) introduction to relevant words, sentences, and arithmetic exercises following the discussion as a means of recording and expressing ideas, increasing knowledge, and gaining access to useful information; and
- (e) recognition of the instructor, not as a traditional teacher, but as a facilitator of group discussion and group learning.

(Credit for farm production, for instance, may be a theme that would be the basis for an extended discussion of the learners' situation in relation to farm credit and would also supply the key words and sentences for one or more lessons. The identification of the main themes and the generative words derived from the themes is done through the needs assessment exercise mentioned above.)

In conformity with this methodological approach, the BRAC staff developed a basic functional education course for the rural learners of Sulla comprising 80 lessons--56 of which were regarded as core materials for both male and female learners and 24 as variations designed to fulfill the special needs of either the male or the female learners. Sets of posters with the illustrations, words, and sentences for the lessons bound in the form of a flip-chart were prepared for use with each learning group. The same lessons and exercise sheets were printed in handy book-size pages and bound in a looseleaf book for each learner.

The materials were tested with 1,175 learners in 59 learning groups in Sulla when the first cycle of the functional education course was launched in May 1974. On the basis of a review of the first cycle experience, the materials unit decided to reduce the number of lessons in the six-month course (two or three sessions per week) from 80 to 70 and the number of differentiated lessons for men and women was reduced to 14 from the original 24. Many illustrations were revised to improve their capacity to communicate messages and generate group discussion. The written content of some of the lessons was also changed.

The revision and modification of the lessons and adaptation of them to the needs of new learner groups in different geographical areas are a continuous responsibility of the materials unit. Its members spend much of their time in the field observing the actual use of the materials, testing new materials, and gathering ideas for improving the lessons. A current round of revision of the materials (late 1976 and early 1977) is discussed later in this chapter.

Training Instructors and Supervisors

Orientation and training were necessary for both supervisors and instructors in the program in order to familiarize them with appropriate use of the materials and methods and, probably more importantly, to change their conventional perception of the role of the instructor in a learning group. The members of the materials unit and other BRAC personnel designated to become trainers of field personnel, together with the assistance of a World Education consultant, worked out the orientation and training content and method for the supervisors and the instructors.

The Field Motivators, who have overall responsibility for initiating and supervising all village level activities of BRAC, were also to be the supervisors of the functional education activities. The instructors for the learning groups were to be young men and women with some post-primary formal education background, chosen on a part-time basis from the same villages as of the learners.

The first cycle of functional education courses, however, was launched in May 1974 without going through the supervisory training phase. The cycle began directly with the recruitment and training of 61 instructors in the project area. The importance of a thorough understanding of the concept and process of functional education by all supervisory personnel of BRAC and the need for continuous support and guidance to the instructors were soon realized, and training sessions for all BRAC personnel with supervisory responsibilities were arranged before the second cycle of courses.

The World Education consultant who had earlier assisted in designing the functional education program returned in September 1974 and organized a five-day training session in Dacca for 11 area managers, members of the materials development unit, and other core personnel of BRAC who would subsequently have training and other responsibilities in the functional education program. Immediately following this session, a five-day course for the Field Motivators was held at the Sulla Project site at Markuli. The training was conducted by the Area Managers and the World Education consultant attended as a resource person.

In addition to the initial training of instructors, short workshops, follow-up meetings, and refresher courses were organized for the instructors by the Area Managers and Field Motivators, and they, in turn, attended review meetings organized by the training and materials development staff at the head office.

The training sessions, passing through initial trials and errors, have evolved into a common pattern (known as the BRAC Functional Education Training Module), though variations for specific groups are possible and even encouraged. The session normally lasts for five full days. The specific objectives of the training are: (a) to help participants shed their inhibitions in group situations and understand the dynamics of an effective group as well as the worth of individual members in the group, (b) to eliminate the traditional notions of "experts" and "teachers" and to demonstrate that everyone in a group can enrich the group's

learning experience, (c) to familiarize the participants with the materials and methods of the course and their role as facilitators of group interaction, and (d) to let the participants engage in practice and demonstration of the methods to be used later with the learners.

The major activities of the training sessions include the following: identification and discussion of the participants' own expectations about the training session and its outcome; brainstorming about anticipated problems in functional education groups and the participants' own misgivings and doubts about the approach; discussion of the familiar methods of teaching literacy and numeracy; simulation games and role-playing to sharpen understanding of the learners' and instructors' roles as well as the general rural situation; discussion of the specific steps in the functional education lessons; demonstration lessons by the trainer and the participants who volunteer; discussion and demonstration of effective group procedures; and critical analysis of the participants' experience in the training session at various stages along the way and of the entire experience at the end. When feasible some of the demonstration lessons are conducted with actual illiterate learners. An instructor's guide that outlines the objectives and steps for each of the 70 functional education lessons has been prepared in 1974. It serves as a useful training aid as well as a handy reference for instructors in the field.

Reading Materials

With the aim of providing relevant and informative reading materials to rural readers, BRAC began publishing the monthly journal, Gonokendro (The People's Forum) in April 1973. Written and edited by a full-time staff of two, the tabloid-size eight-page paper (later increased to 12 pages) started with an initial print run of 2,000 copies. The circulation shot up to 30,000 copies when UNICEF agreed to buy and distribute copies to 30,000 rural primary school teachers as a supplementary reading material for themselves and their students. UNICEF later decided to distribute 60,000 copies to cover most rural primary schools in the country. Besides the primary school teachers, the general distribution in the rural areas was less than 1,000 copies in mid-1976, even though BRAC tried to promote subscription among the functional education participants.

A content analysis of one volume of Gonokendro (12 issues from April 1975 to March 1976) showed that the materials in the journal were on agriculture (rice, jute, horticulture, wheat, fishery, cattle, and poultry); health and nutrition; family planning; women's socioeconomic situation; cooperatives and the rural economy; primary education; and general information (10 to 20 percent of the space). Each issue also contained some literary and entertainment pieces covering about 10 percent of the columns. The lead articles in the 12 issues were headed as follows: "Deep water rice," "Population Education in Bangladesh," "Main causes of malnutrition," "Cattle Wealth of Bangladesh," "Our fishery resources," "Preparation for winter farming," "Cultivating improved varieties in the Boro season," "Population growth has to stop," "Food for work," "Foreign market for jute has to be protected," "Ups and downs in jute farming."

Although the paper is well-written in an attractive racy language and is well edited and covers topics likely to be of interest and use to rural readers, it requires a level of language proficiency significantly beyond the level of an average neoliterate. It is well suited to primary school teachers and others who have language skills expected at least of primary school completers. This is the group it serves now --not, by any means, an unimportant service. But it does not fill the alarming vacuum that now exists in neoliterate reading materials with systematically chosen texts of graded levels of complexity.

The Results

As noted earlier, with 35 male and 26 female instructors, the first cycle of courses was opened for 734 men and 441 women from over 50 villages in the Sulla Project area. Another 85 villagers joined the learning groups after the formal beginning, making a total enrollment of 1,260. The new participatory learning process and the emphasis on familiar problems of rural life aroused a high level of enthusiasm; regular attendance and retention showed marked improvement in comparison to the earlier literacy efforts. A total of 520 learners (41 percent) completed all 80 lessons, and another substantial number completed more than half of the course. A second cycle of courses was offered in June 1975 in 53 centers with 1,338 learners, of whom 616 or 46 percent, completed the lessons.

What is the significance of these results? For one thing, a much larger number of rural people compared to that of the previous literacy efforts considered it worthwhile to devote the time and energy to completing the lessons. Moreover, the attention and effort given to preparing the materials, developing the methodology, and training the instructors, as well as the participatory learning process employed in the program must have made a qualitative difference in the learning outcome that could not be indicated merely by the completion rate.

The important question, however, is: What is the achievement of the participants in the educational program in terms of (a) literacy and numeracy skills, (b) new knowledge and information useful in improving rural living conditions, (c) critical awareness of the situation in which the participants find themselves, and (d) use of the newly acquired knowledge and awareness to change the situation?

BRAC has not undertaken any systematic evaluation to provide a definitive answer to this question. BRAC workers, however, through their continuous contact with the rural people in the project area, including the participants in the educational program, have formed their own views about the results of the educational efforts and have accordingly influenced the subsequent course of the educational program. ICED investigators, on the basis of extensive discussion with workers in the field and at headquarters and visits with the rural participants of the program, have reached the following conclusions:

1. Most of those who finish the course do not achieve a level of skill sufficient to write an informative letter to a friend or a relative or to read a newspaper column. They also do not achieve a level of self-sufficiency in literacy skills that would permit them to improve their skill level on their own if reading materials for neoliterates were available. A small proportion, no more than a quarter (estimated generously) of those who complete the course, achieves a level sufficient to continue to improve their skills if they have relevant reading materials for neoliterates and the opportunity to use frequently their skills in their daily life. In the absence of both, most of these people are likely to relapse into illiteracy. For a rural resident in a Sulla village, it would take extraordinary individual motivation and determination to continue to make use of his newly acquired literacy skills and to improve them.

2. To the extent that the lessons cover information and knowledge useful to improvement of rural living conditions and an understanding of the dynamics of the rural socioeconomic situation, and to the extent that the skills of the instructors and their supervisors are sufficiently put to use (these skills vary in the groups), there is a greater knowledge and understanding among the participants about various rural problems and their own situation than in a comparable group of nonparticipant rural residents. (To be any more precise about the level of knowledge and understanding of the learners would call for a somewhat elaborate evaluation effort beyond the scope of this study.)

3. There is, however, no clear evidence that the knowledge and awareness gained from the functional education program have been put to effective use. The level of participation in the various BRAC development activities, either as beneficiaries or as contributors of the functional education group members, is not significantly different from that of nonmembers. Nor does the "standard of living" of the group members as a group appear to be different from that of the nonmembers. It is evident that the BRAC program organizers, at least initially, have not viewed the participation in functional education as a precondition or an essential element of participation in other development activities. Nor has the functional education program led to such initiatives and self-help efforts among the participants as to cause them to be marked apart as the focus of special development efforts either by BRAC or other agencies.

Implications of the Early Experience

The functional education experience in Sulla reconfirms what has been found repeatedly in literacy efforts: that in a nonliterate environment and a primitive rural economy with most people engaged in subsistence activities, literacy is not a practical necessity, and it is extremely difficult to maintain motivation and interest in literacy efforts, even when these efforts form a part of a broader functional education program. In fact, in these programs the literacy components tend to dominate the program and distract attention from other important goals of the program, such as that of creating a critical awareness of the learners' situation and the dissemination of useful knowledge.

The rural people are generally interested in literacy, as their initial response to any kind of literacy effort shows, because they see in it a visible and tangible objective to attain skills which the privileged ones possess

and also a promise of change in their own condition. A rude awakening soon follows when mastering the skills proves to be hard work and the promise of change turns out to be elusive. Interest wanes and the drop-out rate mounts. A functional education program deemphasizing literacy and stressing the intangible "conscientization"¹ objective probably would not evoke the same kind of initial enthusiasm among the people; but if the program were well-conceived and well-managed, the interest in it would be likely to increase cumulatively and should be more enduring than in a traditional literacy program.

The Sulla experience also indicates that just initiating a number of development activities, including educational programs, in the same area and under the same organizational auspices will not lead spontaneously to an integrated development effort with the educational programs supporting and reinforcing the total development effort. The educational program has to be directly and deliberately geared to satisfying the needs of knowledge, skills, understanding, and group efforts for various development activities--especially if popular support and initiatives are called for in these development activities. An independent functional education program with a heavy emphasis on the mechanics of literacy does not satisfy these needs effectively.

The implications of the Sulla experience have led the BRAC leadership to two somewhat conflicting responses: (a) a revision of the functional education materials laying a greater stress on the mechanics of literacy and arithmetic, and (b) a greater emphasis on the "conscientization" role not only in the educational effort but in the total development approach of BRAC.

The primary aim of the revision of the materials, undertaken by the Materials Development Unit, seems to be improvement of the achievement level in literacy skills of those who complete the course. The number of lessons is to be raised from 70 to 100, apparently because a larger number of lessons is considered necessary for achieving a functionally useful level of proficiency in reading and writing. Every eleventh lesson in the course is to be a review lesson focusing on the mechanics of literacy and arithmetic such as the vowel signs and the arithmetic functions. The sequence of the lessons is to be based on the level of complexity of the mechanics. Some modification of content in the light of experience and a more logical clustering of lessons by major themes are also to be done in the course of the revision. Changes of the "generative words" and specific content items are also intended to make the materials usable widely in different parts of the country. Expansion of BRAC activities in various locations and the increasing interest by voluntary organizations as well as government agencies in

¹Raising the level of consciousness about one's own condition through a dialogical process--a concept advocated and popularized by the Brazilian educationist Paulo Freire.

in terms of methodology, content, field personnel, and the organization and management of BRAC field activities are yet to be fully worked out, although the general trends and directions are evident from project plans.

Reconciling Literacy and Functionality

On the whole, the BRAC program managers appear to be minimizing and underrating the divergent rationale and philosophies of (a) the approach underlying a functional education course with a predetermined lesson sequence that imposes a literacy bias and criterion of learning achievement on all rural learners and an all-purpose readymade educational package to be used by various organizations in various situations; and (b) a truly functional program that is shaped and controlled by each learning group's priorities and perception of the crucial problems and is characterized by a "conscientization" effort that directly leads to actions for changing the existing situation. The latter approach would call for:

- (a) Instructors or learning group facilitators who are not just tutors of literacy skills but are individuals with a high level of sophistication and a highly developed critical awareness about the dynamics of the rural situation who can help organize not just the educational activity but also the action programs that accompany or follow the educational efforts. The instructor has to become also the field worker for the development activities to be launched collectively by the learning group.
- (b) Generation of learning materials by the learning groups themselves, based on the specific situations they face and the action programs they choose to undertake. A central materials development unit can prepare resource materials and prototypes to be drawn upon by the groups and can provide guidance and techniques to the groups and the instructors for creating at least a significant proportion of their own learning materials. The instructor/field worker has to have training in improvising relevant learning materials and in assisting the learning groups to create their own learning tools and content--another task for the materials development unit.
- (c) Planning, implementing, and managing the BRAC activities at all levels, particularly at the field level, in a way that recognizes the central importance of "conscientization" of the participants and shuns the temptation to impose solutions or manipulate compliance of participants in the name of efficiency or any other pretext.
- (d) Adequate provisions for acquiring functionally useful levels of literacy skills and supplying relevant reading materials for those who are interested. While literacy should not dominate the functional education program and should not be a major criterion for judging the performance of the program or of the learners, literacy need not be relegated into an inconsequential position in the program. Just as the literate "do-gooders" should not impose literacy on others at the slightest pretext, neither should they withhold it arbitrarily. Literacy will probably maintain its attraction for

the rural people, and only by allowing everyone a crack at it (or more than one crack) is it possible to know who has the motivation and the determination. As the momentum of development quickens, the customers for literacy will grow too. It is, however, evident that those who survive a basic cycle need further assistance in bringing their skills up to functionally usable levels. They also need relevant reading materials and help in availing themselves of opportunities to use their new skills. Improving the general learning environment and expanding the scope of literacy use can be an element in the various development activities undertaken in the village.

- (e) Pragmatic strategies and tactics to overcome the inevitable obstacles put up by the local power structure that has a vested interest in maintaining the status quo or seizing control of the development activities. While resistance may arise to an educational program seen as a pure literacy effort, an authentic "conscientization" effort is bound to face much more vehement and sinister opposition. In each situation the BRAC workers and the local participants have to make a realistic assessment of the several obstacles, issues, and activities that give rise to possible confrontation. They must be ready to take advantage of all progressive elements and forces in the locality as well as in the national political scene. BRAC is obliged to weigh carefully against potential outcome of its effort the possible dangers of exposing the deprived rural residents to even greater deprivation and even oppression by initiating an educational effort. Its assessment should be shared fully with the participant groups.

The degree of effectiveness BRAC will achieve in its functional education efforts will depend on how successfully BRAC tackles these questions. Insofar as functional education is intimately linked with the whole development approach of BRAC, the realization of the overall development objectives of BRAC also will depend heavily on how well these issues are handled.

HEALTH AND
FAMILY PLANNING

The Health Situation

The health problems in the Sulla Project area are similar to those found throughout rural Bangladesh. Caused by the absence of basic hygiene and sanitation provisions and frequently complicated by malnutrition, preventable and communicable diseases abound. Adequate information about the prevalence and incidence of diseases in the area is not available. The service statistics of BRAC and the observations of its health workers indicate that diarrhea and gastro-intestinal diseases, internal parasites, and respiratory infections account for about 60 percent of the total morbidity in the area. Infection of the skin and of ears, eyes, and throat amounts to another 15 percent of the diseases. If common cold and general bodily aches and pains, described as rheumatism, are added to the above list, it would cover over 80 percent of the diseases for which the people of Sulla sought treatment from BRAC paramedics (see Table 3.1).

Undernutrition and malnutrition are particularly noticeable prior to the harvesting of the boro, the only rice crop in much of the area. Specific nutritional deficiencies in the form of night blindness and stomatitis are frequent. Tuberculosis is prevalent, although its intensity is not known. Incidence of malaria has gone down recently and smallpox, a scourge in the past, seems to have been eliminated as a result of an internationally assisted government eradication campaign against malaria and smallpox.

Mortality rate for the area, on the basis of a 1975 sample survey, is estimated to be around 15 per 1,000 population with a heavy concentration among infants, children under five, and pregnant mothers. The survey has shown that two-thirds of all deaths in the project area occurred among children up to the age of 4 years. The rate was 186 per 1,000 for infants (from birth to age 1). It fell sharply to 23 per 1,000 for children (1-4 years). From age-groups 15-19 to 45-49 the death rate was more or less constant around 1 per 1,000, and it rose gradually for older people over 50.¹ The population growth rate for the area is estimated by BRAC at 2.5 percent. Both the crude birth rate and the crude death rate in the project area, according to the sample survey, is slightly lower than the national rate (40 and 15 respectively compared to 47 and 17).²

¹BRAC, Base-line Survey of Sulla (October-November 1975), Dacca, 1976.

²However, the infant mortality rate was found to be higher than in another thana with good demographic records. Matlab Demographic studies (May 1967-April 1968) indicated an infant mortality rate of 125 compared to 186 in Sulla in 1975. (BRAC, Base-line Survey of Sulla (October-November 1975), Dacca, 1976, pp. 4-5.)

Table 3.1

Incidence of Diseases Treated by Paramedics in Sulla
July-September 1976

<u>Disease Symptoms</u>	<u>Number of Cases</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Diarrhea	982	10.4
Dysentery (chronic and acute)	1 727	18.2
Worms	1 043	11.0
Hyperacidity	285	3.0
Common cold	992	10.5
Acute bronchitis	423	4.4
Pneumonia	263	2.8
Ear, eye, throat condition	630	6.6
Skin infection	763	8.0
Rheumatism	787	8.3
Others	<u>1 590</u>	<u>16.8</u>
TOTAL	9 485	100.0

Source: BRAC Service Records.

Services Other Than BRAC

The stipulated pattern for government personnel for health care in a thana is one health administrator (physician), a medical officer and other staff for a 25-bed hospital, two or three health inspectors, and a family welfare worker for vaccination and preventive care per 5,000 people. The family planning staff is supposed to include a thana Family Planning Officer, a number of Lady Family Planning Visitors for maternal and child health care as well as some clinical services such as IUD insertion, and three family planning workers per union (one male and two female). In 1976, the government personnel and facilities in the area did not conform to this standard. In the project area, encompassing one thana and parts of two other thanas, there were two physicians serving as Thana Health Administrators and 15 other health workers for two thanas. The family planning personnel included, besides the two thana officers, 14 field workers. The thana health center existed only in one thana, DeraI. It had offices for the health officials, a dispensary and outdoor clinic (open about two hours a day, six days a week), a 25-bed indoor treatment facility, and a seldom used operation theatre.

The government health personnel are known to remain confined to the thana center waiting for the people to come to them and providing such curative services as inadequate and irregular supplies of medicine permit. Frequent complaints about the absence of the doctor, the nonavailability of medicine, and the considerable distance that most of the thana residents have to cover to come to the center discourage effective use of the center. Visits to villages by the health workers are made mainly for vaccination drives against smallpox and cholera. The family planning program, which has recently undergone a major reorganization at the national level and the impact of which is still to be felt in all the rural areas, has remained ineffective in both motivational work and in recruiting acceptors.

The private practitioners of western medicine in the area include 11 doctors (2 regular medical graduates, 3 LMFs, and 6 national doctors).¹ All of these doctors are located in four bazars (trading centers) in the area. A number of "village doctors" (compounders or pharmacist's assistants, and practitioners of indigenous medicine) are also mostly located in the bazars. All health workers, government and private, are men.

BRAC Health Care and Family Planning Approach

True to its character as a relief program in its initial phase, the early BRAC activities in the health area consisted of fielding four medical teams in 1972 to provide daily outpatient services in four camps. When

¹LMF (Licentiate of the Medical Faculty) doctors, licensed by the State to practise medicine, have four years' training after 10 years of general schooling, compared to five years' training after 12 years of schooling for MBBS. The LMF program was discontinued under pressure from the medical establishment to "raise the standards of the medical profession."

National doctors are trained in a private medical school, not recognized by the government as equivalent to the state medical colleges.

a cholera epidemic became a real threat and beyond the capabilities of the small medical teams to handle, the doctors also trained a group of villagers in the techniques of taking care of cholera and severe diarrhea cases. In addition a child feeding program was undertaken with UNICEF assistance. Up to 15,000 children of poor families in the area were given a ration of corn-soya milk as a supplement to their diet to avert the dangers of serious malnutrition.

As the BRAC activities began to evolve into a development program from a relief operation, the need arose for converting the ad hoc medical relief effort into a program of medical care, public health, and family planning that would become an integral part of the total rural development effort of BRAC.

The disease pattern in the villages, encompassing a preponderance of communicable and preventable diseases, and the health manpower situation in the rural areas dictated a solution that had been found effective in a number of other developing countries. It was to raise a cadre of paraprofessional health workers from the rural residents themselves (paramedics) to treat the common diseases and conduct preventive and health education activities. It was decided that the common clinical facilities and technical medical personnel would provide backup support to both the health care services and the family planning services. The main objectives of the health care and family planning program, as these were seen at the time of initiating this program in mid-1973, were:

- a. to train a cadre of paramedics to treat 18-20 common illnesses,
- b. to make available inoculation and vaccination against the common preventable diseases,
- c. to motivate and educate villagers to take preventive sanitation and public health measures, and
- d. to form a cadre of female family planning workers to serve as distributors of contraceptives and recruiters of acceptors with the paramedics' guidance and supervision.

Organization of the Services

The paramedic is in a central position in the delivery of health care in BRAC. Each paramedic, responsible for 4,000 to 5,000 people in five to eight villages, visits the villages once a week or as nearly so as possible, treats the specified common health problems, discusses and provides advice on sanitation and hygiene measures, and looks after the health problems of mothers and children brought to his attention by the family planning organizer in the village.

The health and family planning activities are organizationally linked with other BRAC activities through the camp, the base unit for all activities in a cluster of villages. The paramedics are also based

in the camps (one or two for each camp), where they conduct a daily clinic for an hour in addition to the village rounds and maintain liaison with other BRAC personnel and activities. The Area Manager, head of the camp, and the Field Motivators, who initiate and guide the village activities, also have general supervisory responsibilities for the health and family planning activities in the villages. Existing groups for functional education, cooperatives, and women's activities are used in most motivational and educational work relating to preventive health measures, sanitation, nutrition, and family planning. In this effort, the Area Managers and the Field Motivators work as a team with the paramedics. Educating the public about the health insurance scheme (see below) and mobilizing support in its favor again require a team effort by all BRAC field personnel.

Technical supervision of the paramedics is the responsibility of the three physicians based in three health centers in the project area (a ratio of one physician to 40,000 people--the present overall ratio in rural Bangladesh). The physicians provide initial and refresher training to the paramedics, look after the patients referred to them by paramedics and the family planning organizers, and supervise the paramedics' work by frequent field visits. The main task of the physicians is to provide technical support and supervision to the paramedics and to take care of the referral cases. They do not deal with patients directly except in exceptional emergencies. The centers where the doctors are based are modest facilities where simple surgical procedures, common pathological tests, and such family planning services as IUD insertion, tubal ligation, and vasectomy can be performed.

The village level family planning functions (i.e., making direct contacts with child-bearing age women, informing them of the contraceptive alternatives, distributing supplies, maintaining records of acceptors, advising about side effects, recruiting candidates for terminal methods, and so forth) are the responsibility of the Lady Family Planning Organizer (LFPO). She serves a village (about 100 families) and is a native of the village. She makes referrals to paramedics and the physicians as necessary. She looks, however, to the Field Motivators and the Area Manager for guidance and active help in educational and motivational work, specially in dealing with existing community groups or when special community assemblies are arranged for this purpose.

The health care and family planning components of the second phase of the Sulla Project (1973-76) have functioned on the basis of the organizational structure described above. This structure aims at bringing the basic health care and family planning services to the people's doorstep, meeting the most urgent need, hitherto unmet, of simple domiciliary care, utilizing the available health manpower efficiently, emphasizing preventive measures and basic health care in place of expensive hospitals and sophisticated curative services, and integrating health care and family planning with other aspects of rural development.

Experience in the Sulla area with this organizational approach, however, has pointed out some practical problems and has led BRAC to explore

certain modifications of this approach in the third phase of the Sulla and in new projects in other locations.¹

First, it was found that there was a preponderance of adult males being treated by the paramedics, even though disease pattern and specific mortality rates indicated that child-bearing women and children under five were most in need of medical services. For example, the age and sex distribution of patients treated by paramedics in the Markuli area during a one-month period (from August 10 to September 10, 1974) was as follows:

Age in Years	No. of Male Patients	Percentage of Male Patients	No. of Female Patients	Percentage of Female Patients
0-5	111	13.5	96	11.6
6-15	109	13.3	50	6.1
Over 15	319	38.8	139	16.9
TOTAL	539	65.6	285	34.6

Women were apparently reluctant to come themselves or bring their children to paramedics, who were young men and mostly unmarried. The treatment of pediatric and obstetric-gynecological problems requires a personal rapport with the mother that is not easy for young men to establish in a Bengali village.

Second, despite the weekly village visit of the paramedics, the degree of contact between the paramedics and the villagers and the accessibility to medical service were found to be insufficient. A villager often had to wait up to a period of one week or travel some distance to one of the camp clinics before he could get help on any urgent medical problem.

Finally, the paramedics were found to be spending most of their time in the village providing curative services and very little time teaching preventive care and health education. Moreover, the once-a-week visit to the village for a few hours did not create a rapport and mutual trust between the paramedics and the villagers that is essential for the acceptance of new ideas and information.

The changes initiated in organization and staffing to overcome the problems encountered in Sulla were three-fold: (a) formation of a cadre of auxiliary women health workers who under the supervision of paramedics would establish a continuous presence of the health program in each village--each being based in her own village and each serving no more than 100 families on a narrower and more specific range of health problems than those treated by paramedics (see below the discussion about personnel); (b) employment of women paramedics and a significant increase in their numbers (see the chapter on women's programs); and (c) emphasis on

¹BRAC, The BRAC Health Care, Preventive Medicine and Family Planning Program, Dacca, n.d.

public health education, preventive measures, and nutrition education through a systematic community-centered effort, particularly through women's groups such as mothers' clubs (see the chapter on women's programs).

In addition, it was seen as an important objective to develop the organizational structure and the service delivery system in a manner that would make the health program increasingly self-sufficient in financial and management terms. The health insurance scheme designed to achieve this goal is discussed below in the section on financing.

Health Personnel

Categories and Functions

Three categories of personnel form the health and family planning staff of BRAC. They are (a) the newly introduced (in 1976) village-based women auxiliaries, known variously as the Peoples' Healer (Shasthya shevika) or locally as the Daktarnee (the lady doctor) and the older category of Lady Family Planning Organizers (LFPO), (b) the paramedics, and (c) the qualified physicians. Women auxiliaries are seen by BRAC as the most effective means of reaching rural families; consequently, BRAC has no current plan to use men as village health auxiliaries.

As noted above, the village-based auxiliary or the peoples' healer is the response to the need for maintaining a continuous contact of the health program with each village and for ensuring greater accessibility of the services to the village people. Her tasks, therefore, are three-fold: (a) providing specific treatments for selected common and uncomplicated disease symptoms such as diarrhea, dysentery, scabies, headache and fever, and intestinal worms (the list may vary somewhat depending on the village needs); (b) providing specific advice and information to mothers about nutrition, child care, vaccination, and family planning; and (c) distributing oral contraceptives. This list is not intended to be rigid or restrictive. The healer may be given more limited responsibilities (for example, when an LFPO is functioning in the same village) or additional tasks depending on the ability to learn and performance of the healer and the need of the village. The additional tasks that the healer may take over are vaccination and inoculation and midwifery.

The functions of the LFPO have been mentioned already. With the healers placed in each village, the role of the LFPO needs reassessment. The logical solution would appear to be to combine the LFPO and healer functions and to retrain the interested and competent LFPOs for the healer's job. BRAC, however, is not certain about the proper course to follow. Apparently, women of relatively high level of education and social status are interested in becoming healers, whereas the LFPO's position is seen somehow related to the tasks of traditional birth attendants or dais, ranked relatively low in the social status hierarchy. Having two separate groups of village level workers for the health and family planning services offers the advantage of aligning the support of some influential village women for the health activities, but it has the disadvantage of affecting adversely the social esteem and credibility of the LFPO and of separating the interrelated health and family planning activities. The solution ultimately accepted will depend on trials, underway

currently (1976) in selected villages, with different patterns: newly recruited healers performing both health care and family planning tasks, LFPOs converted into healers carrying out their old and new functions, and division of duties between LFPOs and healers in the same villages.

The responsibilities of paramedics have been discussed in the previous section. With the posting of healers in each village, the paramedic continues with his usual weekly village visit, but now visits homes identified by the healer as having health problems and follows up previously treated cases. He devotes more time to health education and preventive care by attending meetings of village groups, such as mothers' clubs, functional educational groups, and primary schools. With a potential decrease in the paramedic's work load, and in view of the seriousness of another problem in the villages, the idea of training paramedics for treating and preventing common diseases of cattle and fowl is being examined in BRAC. It is not known whether the treatment of cattle and people by the same person will be found acceptable by the people. Presumably, the cattle will have no objection to this arrangement!

The functions of the physicians--anyone with MBBS, LMF, and National Certificate, and all three types are represented in BRAC staff--have been described above. As a BRAC document states,

The classic role of the physician as that of a healer is being redefined in BRAC. We view him first and foremost as a teacher, then a planner and lastly one directly involved in curing.¹

With an increasingly important role of the village-based healer as the front line worker of the health and family planning program, her training and ultimate technical backstopping and supervision of her performance are the responsibility of the physician posted in the health center serving a particular area.

Recruitment and Training

The criteria for recruitment as a people's healer are that (a) she is a female member of the community, preferably over twenty years of age, (b) she is acceptable to the community, and (c) she is enthusiastic about her new responsibilities and willing to move freely about the village. She may be illiterate if she meets the other criteria.

The training of the healer is carried out in one of the villages and conducted by physicians or paramedics supervised by physicians. The main methodology is demonstration and practice of the tasks--identifying the disease symptoms, mixing and applying medicine, communicating with clients, handling money, and so forth--repeating these as many times as necessary to ensure mastery of the tasks. For the benefit of illiterate healers, the drugs are premixed with individual dosages separated or marked and each drug color-coded for easy identification. The initial training of healers lasts up to four weeks in two to three hours of daily sessions. Refresher sessions are held as needed.

¹BRAC, The BRAC Health Care... Ibid., p. 12.

Since LFPOs do not handle medicine, a less rigorous training method has been followed in their case. The one week training for them includes discussion and demonstration about the need for family planning, the relationship of family planning to nutrition and child care, means of contacting child-bearing couples, and the recording of data. The training is conducted by the paramedics and the Field Motivators.

To qualify as a paramedic in the BRAC health program, the candidate must (1) have at least matriculation certificate (10 years of formal education), but relaxable in the case of female candidates; (2) be well motivated and willing to travel from village to village; and (3) be acceptable to the village communities to be served by him. Until mid-1976 all paramedics in BRAC were men; since then a group of 15 women have been placed in training to become paramedics.

The training of paramedics is conducted by the BRAC physicians and is held in the project area, except for one week's special training at the Cholera Research Laboratory in Dacca on diarrheal treatment methods developed at the laboratory. It is a fairly rigid well-structured training course that lasts for six months and includes two months of classroom sessions on theoretical aspects and four months of supervised practice.

A training manual for the paramedics has been prepared that lists the distinguishing symptoms, danger signs to be watched, and specific treatments for the following common diseases:

1. Diarrhea
2. Dysentery (acute, bacillary)
3. Dysentery (chronic, amoebic)
4. Enteric fever (typhoid)
5. Common cold and influenza
6. Pneumonia
7. Sore throat
8. Bronchitis
9. Scabies
10. Boils
11. Burns
12. Ringworm
13. Roundworms and threadworms
14. Anaemia
15. Fever
16. Headache
17. Rheumatism
18. Stomach ulcer
19. Malnutrition and vitamin deficiencies
(including night blindness and stomatitis)
20. Women's conditions (including pregnancy
and post delivery problems)

In addition, the procedure and dosages for immunizations (DPT, tetanus toxoid, smallpox, BCG and TABC) are described in the manual.

The training also emphasizes the basic philosophy and mottoes of the program, the supervisory and management responsibilities of paramedics, communication with village people, and the importance of prevention.

The quality that is given the highest importance in the recruitment of a physician is his enthusiasm for the BRAC program and its objectives and his willingness to learn from his own experience. There is no formal training program in BRAC for a physician. His professional training does not prepare him for the role he is expected to play as a teacher, planner, and provider of technical backstopping in a comprehensive rural health care system. However, for the professional and intellectual rejuvenation of the physician and as a kind of special incentive, there is provision for short study tours in other developing countries to observe the rural health problems or innovative projects and for attending short advanced public health education and management courses.

Services Provided

In the Sulla Project area in 1975 curative and preventive services were provided by 31 paramedics. As noted earlier, they provided treatment for the common ailments and referred complicated cases (about 5 percent of the patients) to the physicians.

The number of cases treated by the paramedics and physicians in 1975 was about 50,000, mostly among the members of the insurance scheme (see below). With 13,500 members in the insurance scheme in 1975, and each member requiring treatment on an average of three times a year, the number of noninsured patients was very small.

Although anyone in the project area could take advantage of the curative service by paying the cost of medicine (an average of 2.50 taka) and a modest service fee of Tk 0.50 per consultation, even these charges were apparently high for many families. The insurance scheme was intended to overcome this problem by distributing the cost burden evenly in the population. However, as mentioned earlier, the reluctance of women to be treated by male paramedics and the inadequate provision of service in the absence of a village-based health worker prevented the spread of the insurance scheme. Therefore, on a regular basis, the benefits of the curative services were enjoyed mostly by a small proportion (about 12 percent) of the area population. As a part of the plan to expand the benefits, the village-based people's healer scheme was initiated in 1976, and training of female paramedics was begun. At the end of the year, 30 people's healers (Shasthya shevika) were working in 30 villages, mostly with insured groups, and 15 female paramedics were in training.

One specific preventive measure widely available was primary smallpox vaccination for all children. DPT and BCG injections for children as well as tetanus toxoid for pregnant mothers were to be made selectively available in 1976 and were planned to be made generally available subsequently.

Besides general advice by paramedics on prevention and hygiene during contacts with the villagers, group efforts on health education were carried out through mothers' clubs as well as functional education groups, primary schools, and cooperative society meetings. The most systematic of these efforts were the mothers' clubs, 73 of which were started under BRAC auspices and were functioning in the project area in 1976. The mothers' clubs activities are described in the chapter on women's programs.

Family planning services were offered through 87 Lady Family Planning Organizers in the project area in 1976. The services included contact with eligible couples and explanation of the methods, means, and importance of family planning; distribution of oral pills, condoms, and EMKO foam; followup of side effects; and referral to clinics for insertion of IUD or terminal methods.

The family planning program started in January 1974 and reached a peak of 2,105 acceptors in May 1975. Since then, the number of acceptors seems to have reached a plateau and has remained around 2,000 in 1976. In December 1975, 1,892 women were on pills, 38 had IUDs inserted, and 40 men had undergone vasectomy.¹ Tubectomy was not made available until 1976 because, as the BRAC leadership put it, the husbands in male-dominated societies avoided the much simpler procedure of vasectomy and prevailed upon their wives to undergo tubal ligation. The plan was to have a sufficient number of vasectomy clients first and then to offer both vasectomy and tubal ligation. As it turned out, the campaign for vasectomy did not have a great success, and the denial of tubal ligation probably imposed more hardship on women willing to take a terminal measure than the pain they were spared. Tubectomy, therefore, began to be available in 1976.

The services of LFPOs were available in 1976 to 87 villages, or less than half of the 200 villages in the project area. The current acceptance ratio, if computed on the basis of the total eligible couples in villages actually served (estimated to be about 10,000) rather than of the eligible couples in the whole project area (about 20,000) is approximately 20 percent--compared to a national estimate of about 5 percent.²

While 20 percent acceptance rate is relatively high, what precisely this means in terms of impact on population growth rate was not clear. Some benchmark data for 1975 were collected by BRAC, but no comparative demographic data for a later check were available. In any event, the program was not extensive enough or had not been in existence long enough to provide any definitive conclusion regarding its impact. The rate of continuation among contraceptive acceptors after 12 monthly cycles of pill distribution was reported to be 62.6 percent after 12 monthly cycles and 54.9 percent after 18 cycles of distribution.³ Physical side effects of pills were reported to

¹BRAC, Sulla Project Report on Phase II, pp. 24-25. Service statistics for December 1976 showed 2,082 continuing pill acceptors, and a total of 74 IUD acceptors and 59 vasectomies in Sulla by December 31, 1976.

²According to the BRAC oral pill follow-up survey of February-March, 1976, the estimate of acceptance rate is 21.1 percent of the eligible married women in the villages covered by family planning services.

³BRAC, Oral Pill Follow-up Survey: Family Planning in the Context of Integrated Rural Development, Dacca, March 1977, Table 13.

be the single most important reason for discontinuation. (See Tables 3.2 and 3.3.)

Financing the Health Program

A primary health care service designed to meet the basic health care needs of the people on a permanent basis cannot remain dependent forever on philanthropic support of voluntary organizations. It is BRAC's belief that its low-cost health delivery approach will make it possible to have a self-sufficient community health service financed by the community's own resources with some supplementation from the national government or other outside sources.

The group health insurance scheme is designed to mobilize community resources for the health program and to keep the cost burden for the rural families at an acceptable level. The main features of the scheme, as it operated in Sulla till 1976, are as follows:

- a. A group consisting of at least 75 percent of the population of a village with a minimum of 175 people can enter the scheme.
- b. The annual premium of 4 kilograms of paddy (unhusked rice) per person is payable in advance (collected after the main harvest).
- c. The insured families must accept and cooperate in BRAC's preventive health program (particularly, inoculation and vaccination).
- d. BRAC provides weekly paramedical curative health service to the group, including referrals to doctors when necessary, without further cost.

(With the introduction of shasthya shevikas, curative care is available on a continuous basis in each village. The preventive measures such as vaccination and mother and child care through the mothers' clubs are, in principle, available to all project area people, irrespective of participation in the insurance scheme.)

The insurance scheme was launched in May 1975 and a drive was organized by the paramedics and the Field Motivators to enroll members and form village committees for the collection of the annual in-kind premium. BRAC estimates are that throughout the project 40 to 50 percent of the families were prepared to join the scheme, but only 10 percent of the villages could muster 75 percent coverage to qualify for group insurance. By early 1976, only 37 groups covering 13,500 people had joined the scheme.¹

¹BRAC, Sulla Project Report on Phase II, p. 22.

Table 3.2
Stated Primary Reasons for Discontinuation
 of Contraceptive Use

Reasons	Number	Percentage
Physical side-effects	247	30.8
Desire for another child	156	19.4
Accidental pregnancy	130	16.2
Not needed for unspecified reasons	91	11.4
Other reasons	36	10.7
Husband's objection	37	4.6
Fear of method	28	3.5
Forgetfulness	27	3.4
	N = 802	100.0

Source: BRAC, Oral Pill Follow-up Survey: Family Planning in the Context of Integrated Rural Development, Table 15.

Table 3.3
Physical Symptoms Mentioned Most Frequently for
Discontinuing Contraceptives

Symptoms	Most Important Reason (Percentage)	Second Most Important Reason (Percentage)
Dizziness	27.2	24.9
Excessive Bleeding	21.8	5.8
Headaches	13.0	15.9
Irregular Bleeding	7.9	4.8
Vomiting	7.5	11.6
Colic	3.8	3.7
Disability, neurosis	3.4	13.2
Lack of appetite, dyspepsia	1.7	3.2
Fatigue	1.7	5.3
Difficulty in breast feeding	1.2	2.1
Bleeding between periods	0.8	2.6
Weight gain or loss	0.8	0.5
Other breast problems	0.4	0.0
Skin diseases	0.4	0.0
Others	<u>8.4</u> 100.0	<u>6.4</u> 100.0

Source: BRAC, Oral Pill Follow-up Survey: Family Planning in the Context of Integrated Rural Development, Table 16.

At a time of relatively low paddy rice (late 1976) the annual per person premium of 4 kilograms of paddy valued at Tk 6.00 covered roughly 50 percent of the drug costs on the basis of 3.3 consultations per person per year at an average drug cost of Tk 3.50 per consultation. The trends in cost of production and the international prices suggest that rice prices will stabilize at a higher level of around Tk 100.00 per maund (40 kgs.). The current premium rate of 4 kgs. would therefore cover about 80 percent of the drug costs--if the drug costs also remain stable.

Recurring costs other than for medicine are estimated to be no more than two-thirds of the drug costs on the basis of the cost structure proposed by BRAC for the third phase of the Sulla Project. Following broadly the BRAC cost projections for the Sulla Project, the following per capita annual recurring costs are derived:

	<u>Taka</u>
Medicine	12.00
Other supplies (contraceptives, clinical supplies, vaccinations, etc.)	2.00
Personnel	
Doctor (Tk 1500 per month/30,000 people)	0.60
Paramedics (Tk 750 per month/4,000 people)	2.50
Shasthya Shevika/LFPO (Tk 150 p.m./1,000 people)	<u>1.80</u>
	4.90
Travel (20% of doctor & paramedic salaries)	0.62
Training (10% of all salaries)	<u>0.49</u>
TOTAL.....	20.01

BRAC leaders believe that it would be feasible gradually and sufficiently to increase the insurance premium during Phase III (1976-78) to cover all of the medicine and supply costs. The personnel costs have to be met from other sources. BRAC's proposal for Phase III states that the salaries of paramedics and the shasthya shevikas will be "required to be borne by the Village Development Committee who will receive grants from the Cooperative Society. The cost of administration and doctors' salaries will require funding from outside sources."¹ Whether the Village Development Committee can pay the salaries of the health worker will, of course, depend on how successful, economically and otherwise, the cooperative societies are.

Recordkeeping and Evaluation

A reluctance to devote any substantial effort to maintaining more than the most rudimentary service data and other project statistics is clearly detectable in BRAC. As stated in a project document, "Paper is

¹Ibid., p. 10.

not only expensive, it creates an army of clerks when we want an army of health workers."

The paramedic maintains a notebook in which he enters the date and the village visited every working day and records the patient's name, age, sex, symptoms, diagnosis, treatment, and money collected for medicine. These records are reviewed monthly by the physician.

The LFPO used to maintain two notebooks, one for listing the target couples and the other for acceptor information. These have been replaced by a card to be maintained by the LFPO for each married woman between 15 and 45. The cards are used to record name and age of husband and wife, number and ages of children, type of contraception accepted, period when used, and reason (if any) for discontinuation. The cards are used for referral service in the clinic.

The shevika is required only to record the number of patients seen and whether they are adults or children.

If the data recorded by the paramedics and LFPOs were consolidated and analyzed, they would provide the basic quantitative indication of curative medical services provided and the acceptance and retention rates for family planning. These, however, would not provide any accurate indication of the impact of the health efforts in terms of morbidity, mortality, and overall health situation of the population; nor would there be an indication of the effects on birth rate and population growth rate or of the differential characteristics of acceptors, dropouts, and non-acceptors in the family planning program.

Recording of births, deaths, morbidity, nutrition status, and socioeconomic characteristics of patients and family planning patients on a continuing basis is regarded by BRAC as "a very expensive and time consuming process"¹ and not an appropriate task for the health workers. The necessary evaluative data about the health and family planning activities as well as other aspects of the BRAC project are planned to be collected by a sample survey of the population every three to four years. Such a sample survey of 1600 households was conducted for the first time in Sulla in late 1975. A follow-up survey of oral pill acceptors was undertaken in February-March 1976. Both of these, being the first surveys, provided useful benchmark data (but no comparative data for assessing the impact of the program).

Outlook for the Future

Whether the BRAC health and family planning program will survive and grow as a viable approach to meeting the health and family planning needs of the rural people in Bangladesh and whether it will influence significantly the national programs will depend, first, on the results of the efforts under way to extend the accessibility and

¹The BRAC Health Care.... op. cit., p. 15

coverage of the services to the total project area population and, second, on how successfully a management structure evolves that is compatible with local management of the program (without the guiding hand of BRAC) and with the overall organization and management of development and local government in the area.

Greater Access.

As noted already, access to and coverage of the services are affected by cultural factors (the women's reluctance to face men paramedics), physical factors (once-a-week presence of the paramedic for a few hours), and the nature of the service (dominance of an "outpatient" type curative service and the lack of dialogue, social interaction, and a seeking of advice and reassurance that is possible only with the presence of a health worker in a village). Attempts to remove these barriers to quantitative and qualitative improvement of the program are being made by the introduction of the village-based auxiliaries (healers) and the recruitment of new female paramedics. The outcome of these recent moves in both quantitative and qualitative terms are yet to be seen.

Visible Impact.

The extension and intensification of service coverage should begin to be reflected in the health and demographic status of the area population in the near future. BRAC apparently has not paid sufficient attention to assessing the impact of its services on such indicators as the rates of morbidity, mortality, and births. It appears to be particularly modest about its effect on the high mortality rate. One of its reports states: "A fall in death rate may be noted but is not anticipated. Food production, flooding, and social stability will probably have greater effects on mortality rates than the health care or preventive medicine program."¹

Obviously, a high mortality rate is not the main problem; it is but an indicator of the health status of the population. An improvement in the general health status should reduce mortality rate, especially when certain segments of the population are found to be particularly vulnerable and are contributing disproportionately to the total mortality rate. A concentrated attack on the health hazards of infants, children under five, and mothers who fall victims to communicable diseases and preventable but fatal infections such as tetanus is quite feasible and compatible with BRAC's health care approach and is likely to curtail both the specific and overall rate of mortality significantly.

Improving Records.

BRAC's reluctance to have the health workers spend much time on collecting and recording statistics is understandable. On the other hand, the fairly intensive coverage of rural families envisaged by its service delivery approach (having a ratio of no more than 150 families to one village-based auxiliary) should permit the maintenance of a set of selected data about the health situation in the area without imposing too

¹The BRAC Health Care..., p. 16.

heavy a tax on the worker's time. The information recorded may include births, deaths, incidence of selected disease symptoms, children's nutritional status (using a simple QUAC stick or other appropriate measurement), contraceptive acceptance, and continuation of contraceptive use. The periodic sampling of the population still would be useful for assessment of the impact of overall BRAC efforts and may be supplementary to the regular recording of information. The advantages of consolidation of the selected data--say, on a monthly basis for each paramedic's area and on a quarterly basis for the project area--are many: (a) it would provide a ready check on the health situation of the area; (b) it would help determine appropriate emphasis on specific therapies, preventive measures, and educational actions for each locality at a particular time; (c) it would encourage the workers to maintain systematic contact with their clients and remain fully informed about the health situation in the area; and (d) it could be a tool for creating an awareness in the communities about their health and population situation and about the results or lack of results of their collective efforts.

Coopting Indigenous Medicine.

BRAC has taken an initiative to coopt the practitioners of the various forms of nonallopathic medicine (ayurvedic, unani, and homeopathic) into the comprehensive health care system for a rural area. The advantages of this move are seen to be three-fold:

First, the potential power of these practitioners of medicine to resist the spread of the BRAC approach and to create misgivings about it among the rural population will be neutralized. Second, to the extent the therapies and health measures of the indigenous and non-allopathic medicinal practices are relatively effective, cheap, and compatible with popular beliefs, these practices may be included with beneficial results in the repertoire of treatments of the paramedics and the shasthya shevikas. Finally, these practitioners of medicine--being a group of people living in the rural areas and catering in their own way to the health needs of the rural population could be put to good use as paramedics within the primary health care system and could be prevented from being the purveyors of poor medical service at a high cost to the patients.

The success of this move will depend on whether a commonly agreed list of therapies and health measures can be prepared, whether the local "doctors" can be brought into a specially designed paramedic training program, and whether these "doctors" perceive the move to be in their long-range interest. Identifying elements of nonallopathic medicine that can be incorporated into the curative and preventive practices of the basic health care system of the country calls for a substantial research and investigation effort. The prospect of government assistance and collaboration of other agencies in the country concerned about rural health could be explored by BRAC.

Improving Family Planning.

As for family planning, the tasks before BRAC are to extend the coverage of the services to all the project area villages (instead of

less than half the villages as in 1976) and to push the curve of the acceptor rate upward beyond the plateau that the curve seems to have reached. An optimal acceptor rate among the couples of childbearing age at the present stage is about one-third of the total (leaving out those who are already pregnant and those in a state of post partum amenorrhea).¹ However, identifying and reaching the appropriate clients in this group and maintaining their acceptor status would require a more precise and differentiated approach than a general "shot-gun" approach to the provision of family planning service, which actually may do more harm than good by interfering with the natural fertility reducing effects of the biological factors.

The potential of traditional and nonwestern methods of restricting births appears to have been ignored in BRAC family planning efforts. There has been almost an exclusive reliance on just one birth control technology--the pill (other than the terminal measures of vasectomy or tubectomy). While this dependence on one method may have been justified and may have to continue--given the fact that this is culturally an alien technology and produces, at least for some, adverse physiological side effects--the other indigenous and "non-technological" methods such as rhythm, abstinence, late marriage, breast-feeding (in order to extend lactational amenorrhea), azl (coitus interruptus) warrant a fair trial. The offering of wise and appropriate counsel to potential candidates about methods other than the standard prescription of pills would require a personal, well-motivated, non-stereotyped approach.

Another issue that has to be resolved is the overlap between the functions of the Lady Family Planning Organizer and the shasthya shevika. The logic and rationale behind the integrated health care approach of BRAC calls for a merger of these two positions in the village. If indeed there is a social stigma attached to those in family planning services, there is all the more reason to combine the positions of the LFPO and the shevika in order to assure a greater social acceptance for those in family planning services. Such a move, of course, should be accompanied by an educational effort to remove the roots of the prejudice. The trial under way with different combinations of roles and functions of the village-based worker will probably suggest the best course of action in this respect.

Organizational Issues.

A number of organizational and management issues has to be tackled during the third phase of the Sulla Project (and in the course of initiating BRAC-sponsored health programs in other locations). How can the health care system continue to function when the BRAC umbrella and resources are removed? What kind of organizational structure will ensure that the needs of the people will be

¹The period of temporary sterility after a live birth. This period is estimated to be 17 months in Bangladesh for a woman who breastfeeds her child. Use of contraceptive pills ends the state of amenorrhea and increases the probability of conception if the woman is negligent about taking the pills regularly or if she drops out. See Lincoln C. Chen, et al, Recent Fertility Trends in Bangladesh: Speculation on the Role of Biological Factors and Socio-economic Change, Dacca, The Ford Foundation, December 1976.

adequately served, that the necessary resources will be available, that the workers will be paid, and that they will perform their duties? How can the group insurance scheme be kept alive and prevent the paramedics and the shevikas from being individual private entrepreneurs? How can the beneficiary population participate in the management of the program and keep it compatible with their overall development needs and priorities?

The approach that is favored by BRAC and expected to be worked out in detail and gradually implemented over the next two or three years is the transfer of the management responsibilities to a representative body at the thana level with subsidiary bodies at the union (a unit of 10-20 villages) level. The committees at the thana and the union levels, formed with a representation of the different categories of workers in the program and the beneficiary population (and with the representation of BRAC management at the initial stage), will be made responsible for making appropriate arrangements and taking the necessary steps for:

- collecting the group insurance premium
- seeking and receiving supplementary resources needed for operating the program
- organizing training and supervision of the workers and maintaining the standard of their performance
- paying the workers
- procuring, storing, and distributing the supplies
- maintaining appropriate liaison with other development activities and agencies within the area and outside

Supplementation of the locally generated resources of the program may come from the Thana Development Committee or a central federation of the village cooperative societies that is expected to emerge from the BRAC development efforts in the area. Another possible source is a government subvention to the program for performing functions of the national health and family planning services. The extent of supplementation available from the Thana Development Committee, or, for that matter, the mobilization of local resources possible through a general acceptance of the health program and widespread enrollment in the group insurance scheme, will depend on the overall development achievement of the total range of BRAC project activities in the area and the climate of hope and confidence created by these activities.

It is BRAC's expectation that the thana and union committees for health will be affiliated or partially overlap with representative bodies (e.g., the Thana Development Committee) which will emerge in order to oversee, manage, and keep alive the overall development program for the area initiated by BRAC.

It is evident that if the BRAC health and family planning program develops along the line envisaged and becomes capable of offering comprehensive health care service to the area population, an accommodation has

to be reached with the government health and family planning activities in the area. There are three possible alternatives. The government could provide financial assistance to the program, ensure that the entire area population is served, and see that specific government health and family planning objectives are fulfilled. In this case, the government personnel and facilities from the area could either be withdrawn or turned over to the management of the local program. This alternative should not be seen as the abdication of government responsibility for health care and the transfer of government functions to a private organization. If the BRAC goals are fulfilled and local representative organizations emerge to take over the management of health and other development services, the health care program would become the program of the local communities (rather than of BRAC). The government public health service would provide technical and financial support to locally managed programs instead of running the local program itself. Ideally, this is the direction in which all government development agencies should move if fostering self-reliant communities and mobilizing local resources are considered important goals. A second possibility is the continuation of the status quo whereby both the government health service and the BRAC project would attempt to serve inadequately the health needs of the local population without consolidating their efforts and resources and without the emergence of local organizations assuming greater management responsibilities for the local program. Under this alternative, BRAC would play a useful role in filling at least a part of the gap in local health care as long as the government service remains weak and out-of-reach of most of the rural people. Obviously, the full potential of a community-based primary health care system with appropriate backstopping from the national government and support from other extra-community sources will not be realized under this option. The least desirable alternative is that two rival structures of facilities, personnel, and services would attempt to expand themselves without any effort to cooperate and complement each other wasting national resources, creating confusion and distrust among the people, and leaving the basic health needs of the people badly served.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

In the Sulla Project area, almost all of the cultivable land (60,000 acres out of a total of 64,000 acres) is one crop rice land suitable for boro rice farmed during the dry season (November-April) after the flood water recedes. The farm land remains inundated the rest of the year.

An ICED sample survey revealed the predominance of agriculture in the economic life of the area. Over 53 percent of the households relied for their livelihood exclusively on farming their own land; about 20 percent of the landless families depended on farm labor as the main source of income. For over 10 percent of the households fishing was the primary source of family earnings. The same survey also showed that the pressure on the limited farm land was high: 54 percent of the families had farms less than one acre in size; 17 percent had farms of between 1 and 3 acres; and only 3 percent of the families had over 3 acres of farm land. Twenty-six percent of the families owned no farm land. According to BRAC's independent estimates, landless and near landless families would constitute at least one-third of the households in the project area.

The agricultural needs of the area, defined by the ecological limitations, are as follows: (a) to make the best use of the limited cultivable land during the short farming season by increasing the productivity of rice on land with sufficient moisture and producing on the rest of the land other crops requiring less moisture in order to increase total agricultural income and to improve the nutritional balance, (b) to make a special effort to help farmers with small landholdings use high yielding seeds and fertilizers, and (c) to help the landless and the near landless make intensive use of plots attached to the homestead to meet at least partially their basic food and nutrition needs and also to help them make collective use of communal or state land whenever available.

The government assistance for agricultural development, in principle, consists of agricultural extension service, provisions for agricultural inputs, and support of farmers' cooperatives. The extension field staff in the thana is headed by the Thana Agricultural Officer, TAO (usually with a university degree in agriculture). The TAO supervises the Union Agricultural Assistants, each of whom is responsible for rendering technical advice to farmers in about 20 villages with up to 10 thousand farmers. The inputs supplied by the government at subsidized price include low-lift pumps, fertilizer, pesticides, and seeds. It is the government policy under its Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) to encourage the formation of primary cooperative societies of farmers at the village level and a central federation of cooperatives at the thana level which then can be the main channel for providing credit, inputs, and extension advice as well as the means for attaining economies of scale in various farming activities.

In practice, the government infrastructure for agricultural development has not functioned at any reasonable degree of effectiveness for various reasons. The principal reasons include: inadequate training, supervision, technical backstopping, and incentives for the extension staff; limited supply of inputs and credit insufficient to meet the total needs; village social structure and land tenure that allows the benefit of cooperatives and government inputs to be enjoyed by relatively larger landowners; and inefficiency of the overall administrative structure that causes frequent breakdown in the logistics of supply, supervision, and maintenance of services. The net result is that the government agricultural services reach too few with too little too ineffectively. The IRDP with its goal of creating village level cooperatives with broad-based membership appears to offer some prospect for invigorating the agricultural services and increasing the efficiency of the scarce inputs. Other national level efforts are underway to improve the extension service and the supply of inputs, but the results of these efforts are yet to be felt in the project area. BRAC in its third phase program in Sulla is attempting to supplement and support the IRDP efforts in the project area to expand the structure of cooperatives and increase its effectiveness. (see discussion in ch. 7.)

The main features of BRAC agricultural activities in Sulla during the second phase were agricultural support blocks, camp demonstration plots, introduction of new vegetable crops, support to landless groups, and assistance in flood protection and irrigation.

Components of the Agricultural Program

Agricultural Support Blocks

The agricultural support blocks were intended to enable BRAC to concentrate its limited resources and personnel on a limited area of land and a small number of farmers to produce a demonstration effect in respect of improved practices in rice cultivation. During each planting season 20-30 agricultural support blocks, each with an average of 50 acres of land, were organized by BRAC workers in the eleven camp areas for cultivation of high yielding varieties of boro rice with equipment and inputs within the means of local farmers. Five to six hundred farmers in the support blocks received the following types of support:

- Block farmers were brought together into regular meetings early before the onset of the agricultural season and during the season in order to plan and implement the agricultural plan for each block.
- Farmers were assisted in planning the input needs, arranging finances, and procurement. Most farmers were able to arrange the supplies with their own resources.
- Farmers were advised about preparing compost pits and the use of organic fertilizer.
- Some of the farmers received credit from BRAC for fertilizer and seeds.

- High yielding rice seeds were supplied by BRAC at cost. New short-duration high yielding varieties were introduced by BRAC, particularly for land vulnerable to early flooding.

The responsibility for the extension work with the support block farmers lay primarily with the Field Motivators who were supervised by the Area Manager for each camp. Information about the increase in yield resulting from the block support activities was not collected by BRAC. BRAC, however, claimed that "support block farmers in most cases were able to show substantial improvement in yield."¹ The farmers themselves perceived the activities to be sufficiently beneficial to continue their participation in the blocks during successive years.

Camp Demonstration Plots

Each of the eleven BRAC camps in the Sulla Project area set up its own demonstration plots, and the BRAC personnel residing in the camps contributed the labor to grow various crops in these plots. An average of two acres was leased from local farmers for rice or wheat demonstration, and an additional half acre was used for different varieties of vegetables and legumes. The plots were the means for practical farming experience for the BRAC workers, demonstration of methods and results, and a way of establishing credibility for BRAC extension service. As reported in a BRAC report:

...[At first] the sight of university graduates ploughing and transplanting brought laughter and sarcasm from villagers. The seriousness and persistence of BRAC workers soon changed their attitude to one of respect. When the plants stood out as some of the best that they had seen grown in the area, the cultivators started asking for advice and requesting BRAC workers to visit their fields.²

New Vegetables

Prior to BRAC activities in the project area, vegetable growing was almost unknown in the area, and vegetables were regarded as an inferior type of food. BRAC launched a vegetable growing campaign in order to make better use of land unsuitable for rice and to supply the nutritional needs of the population. In cooperation with the Mennonite Central Committee (an American voluntary organization active in improving the productivity of small farmers in Bangladesh), vegetable seeds were imported and distributed each year to 10,000 families and primary and secondary schools in the project area. Vegetables new in the area such as carrots, broccoli, and Chinese cabbage were grown successfully alongside those already grown in the area such as tomatoes, cauliflower, and

¹BRAC, Sulla Project Report on Phase II, pp. 12.

²BRAC, Sulla Project Report on Phase II, pp. 12-13.

radishes. Up to 800 acres of land were put under vegetable cultivation in the area per year.

Seeds were given free the first year, but in subsequent years they were sold. Instructions on seedbed preparation, transplantation, and care of plants were provided by BRAC field motivators, and growers' plots were repeatedly visited by them at the initial stage. Horticulture exhibitions were organized in each camp, and prizes were given to the best growers. Although seeds were not distributed free after the first year, no problem was encountered in selling the seeds.

BRAC also encouraged the growing of fruit trees in the area. After the unusually high floods of 1974 when all the papaya trees in the area were destroyed, BRAC transported thousands of papaya saplings, as well as seedlings and saplings of coconut, banana, mango, and guava, and distributed them at cost to villagers.

Support to Groups of Landless

BRAC organized groups of landless laborers for cultivation of fallow land leased from local landlords or of state-owned land. Only about 600 acres of such land was available for lease, and all together 300 landless farm laborers in groups of 25 on an average benefited from this effort. The land available for this purpose was not readily cultivable; it required leveling and clearing, and the supply of water had to be arranged and water channels laid out. BRAC workers advised the groups on preparing the land and making a farm plan for optimal use of the land, supplied credit for purchasing the necessary inputs, and provided the services of low-lift irrigation pumps and power tillers, the cost of which was recovered after the harvest. The program increased the income of the beneficiary families substantially, but the size of the program was limited by the high pressure on cultivable land in the area.

Assistance for Irrigation and Flood Protection

Agriculture in the project area suffers from too much water during most of the year and too little of it in relatively higher land during the dry season. BRAC procured 19 low-lift diesel pumps of 2-cusec capacity to irrigate boro land without sufficient residual flood water. The pumps were leased to groups of farmers in the support blocks and among the landless groups.

BRAC charged a rental of Tk 225 per acre for the pumps and took care of the fuel, maintenance, and operation of the pumps. The average area irrigated by each pump was 52 acres. This compares favorably with the average of about 20 acres in the government (Agricultural Development Corporation) program for extensive use of low-lift pumps to increase cropping intensity. The government in its program subsidized the cost of pump use, charging about Tk 1,000 as rent for each pump for a season (irrespective of acreage covered) with fuel and operation costs paid by the farmers. BRAC, on the other hand, realizing over Tk 10,000 for each pump per season, more than covered the capital and operating costs of the pumps. This was possible because BRAC saw to it that a sufficient amount of land was included in the irrigation plan of the group renting the pump and that a breakdown would not occur ruining the crop

and the farmers' investment in time and money. Besides ensuring the supply of fuel, spare parts, and proper operation of the pumps through its own well-trained operators, BRAC also had a small maintenance shop for the overhaul and repair of the pumps and other equipment such as 10 power tillers and two outboard motors for the small boats used by the staff during the floods. (The power tillers were rented to farmers without draught animals and the groups of landless farmers.)

Building flood protection embankments, as well as drainage and irrigation channels, were undertaken during the dry season of 1974-75 and 1975-76 as a "food-for-work" program under which workers received their wages in wheat supplied for this purpose by Oxfam of Canada and U.K. Additional protection embankments and water channels were also excavated during the same years by voluntary efforts of the local people organized by BRAC workers. It is reported by BRAC that:

During the early floods of April 1974, when the neighbouring areas suffered total destruction of their crop, the BRAC area only suffered a 40 percent crop loss due to the successful effort of the BRAC workers in mobilizing and activating entire villages for building dams and embankments day and night to fight the rising water.¹

The Third Phase Plans

The third phase plans for Sulla (implementation of which began in 1976) call for continuation of the agricultural work begun earlier and propose some new elements: a rice seed multiplication project, new initiatives in animal husbandry, and increased emphasis on supporting agricultural opportunities for groups of landless and women from poor families.

With the spread of high yielding rice varieties, the supply of good quality seeds becomes a critical bottleneck. Government seed farms currently meet only a fraction of the total demand of the country, and it is difficult for farmers to arrange procurement from the limited government supply without direct BRAC intervention. The small farmers themselves find it difficult to put aside seed grains and to control the quality of seed production without some assistance. The BRAC project is intended to train and support some model farmers to undertake seed multiplication on a commercial basis. Best quality first generation seeds are to be procured by BRAC and supplied to the farmers who will be provided a price guarantee and whose fields will be supervised by a qualified agronomist to ensure quality control. BRAC will arrange proper storage of the seeds in specially constructed ferro-concrete bins in the humid climatic condition of the area. It is expected that the production, storage, and sale of high quality rice seeds will eventually be taken over by the central body of the local cooperatives or the Thana Development Committee and will become a source of income for the central body.

Preparation of land in the Sulla area, as in the rest of the country, is almost entirely dependent on cattle draught power. Feeding the cattle is a serious problem during the six months of flooding when the cattle remain confined to the pens. During the dry winter months the situation improves, but as more fallow land comes under cultivation the

¹BRAC, Sulla Project Report on Phase II, p. 14.

the competition between grazing and farming land becomes more intense. The paucity of veterinary care is another problem that means wastage from ill health and premature death of cattle. BRAC plans to introduce high yielding fodder crops such as Guinea grass and alfalfa, begin extension work on locally suitable silage methods, and start a basic veterinary service by training the paramedic in the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of the common cattle diseases (as well as the diseases of poultry and ducks).

A special effort is to be made during the third phase to form cooperative groups of landless farm laborers and destitute women and to make use of all available land on lease either from the state or from local landowners. BRAC will support these groups initially until the first harvest, while the land is levelled, irrigation facilities built and the first crop planted. It will also make credits available on the basis of production plans of the groups by arrangement with a commercial bank. In addition, BRAC workers will provide continuous extension support to these groups.

Fishery Development

BRAC estimates that 20 percent of the households in the Sulla Project area depends on fishery as a major source of income.

The natural water bodies of the area are owned mostly by the state, and the fishing rights in these waters for a specified period are leased to cooperatives of local fishermen. Since collective fishing requires high capital inputs in nets, boats, and royalty payments to the government as well as in storing, transporting, and marketing the highly perishable commodity, the cooperatives are financed and controlled largely by nonfishermen moneylenders who provide credits at usurious rates and serve as middlemen for marketing. As a result fishermen as a class are one of the most exploited and poorest groups in the area.

BRAC supported a number of fishermen's cooperative societies by providing them boats and nylon twines for fishing nets. Altogether 15 medium-sized fishing boats and 10,000 pounds of twine were distributed. But, by BRAC's own admission, this had only "peripheral impact." It is estimated that an average cooperative society of 150 members requires a working capital of Tk 100,000 to 120,000 to fish in a water area leased for two years. The fishermen can reap the full benefit of their labor and extricate themselves from the vicious cycle of exploitation, if they can procure this capital on reasonable terms and arrange for marketing their catch without depending on the moneylenders and the middlemen employed by the moneylenders.

In the third phase of Sulla, BRAC proposes to meet the full credit requirements of a number of societies under financial arrangements with commercial banks similar to those planned for landless groups. BRAC also plans to assist in organizing a fishermen's cooperative marketing society and training a number of fishermen for marketing activities.

In order to help youth and women's groups in the fishermen's communities, BRAC also organized, during the second phase, the digging of six large ponds under the "food-for-work" program which were used for pond-fishery. The ponds were stocked with quick-growing *Nilotica* fingerlings imported by UNICEF from Thailand. A number of the youth group members were sent to Jamalpur for training in *Nilotica* culture.

Concluding Points

While the impact of the fishery program during the second phase of the Sulla Project was, by BRAC's own account, marginal in improving the well-being of the fishermen, the achievements of the agricultural program were also not very clear. Once again the reason for the lack of a clear picture of the results is BRAC's reluctance or inability to devote the necessary effort (and workers' time) to a collection of elementary benchmark data and a collection and recording of information about the services provided and the results achieved. Basic information about the initial condition of the farmers in the support blocks and the changes in their condition brought about by BRAC services could have been collected without substantial expense of time and money, and it would have identified and made clear the benefits derived from the effort.

What is now known is that the total beneficiaries of the two main and intensive efforts--the support blocks and group farming by landless laborers--were relatively small in number. In any one season a maximum of 600 farmers and 300 landless laborers were involved in the two activities out of a total of over 15,000 heads of farmers' and landless laborers' families in the area. About 40 Field Motivators spent most of their time during the farming season with the farmers' and laborers' groups (a ratio of one motivator to 25 farmers). This is a relatively high extension worker-to-farmer ratio by any standard with its consequent cost implications.

To the extent that credit, supply of inputs, and logistics (and not just the knowledge gap) were the impediments to increased agricultural productivity in the area, the support blocks and the camp demonstration plots were unlikely to have much spillover effect on other farmers in the area. Obviously, the scarcity of rentable land, subsistence support when the land is prepared and planted, and credit for inputs were the main obstacles for the landless laborers' groups. Supply and logistics apparently were also major problems for the support block farmers as is clearly indicated by the BRAC emphasis on procurement of seeds and fertilizers and the operation and maintenance of power pumps and tillers.

Under these circumstances, the approach to serving the total farming population and to improving the overall agricultural situation would be to establish and strengthen the institutions that serve the supply and logistical needs, such as the cooperatives, the government distribution mechanism of seeds and fertilizers, and the supply and maintenance of the irrigation pumps and tillers (again the responsibility of the government Agricultural Development Corporation). BRAC put great stress on the formation of cooperatives--this being the central institutional strategy of the BRAC development approach (see the chapter on institutional structures). However, the support block operation does not appear to have been linked directly with the formation and strengthening of the cooperatives or, for that matter, with other BRAC components, such as functional education and the health program. All of these run parallel to each other with only incidental overlap of clienteles rather than in a strategic concentration of multifaceted program efforts on the same communities. Nor were there attempts to work with the Agricultural Development Corporation for better utilization of irrigation pumps and tillers in the area or for improved distribution of seeds and fertilizers. Of course, in this case the willingness to cooperate and work together must be mutual, and the government agencies often are not overly eager to admit that they

need the help of a private organization. On the problem of seeds, BRAC has its own project for the third phase.

The agricultural extension work of BRAC carried out by the Field Motivators appears to be based on standard technical prescriptions and generally accepted notions about the improvement of rice and vegetable cultivation rather than on specific technical analysis and recommendations derivative of such analysis. The Field Motivators had neither special training in agriculture, nor the technical advice and services of an agronomist or a soil tester. On the other hand, if the obstacles to agricultural improvement were more institutional than technological, specialized technical knowledge of the field workers and the backstopping of an agronomist would be less important. The problem would be to use effectively already known and applicable techniques. However, the services of an agronomist would be required in the third phase for the seed multiplication project. It should be possible to utilize him in a broader role of providing technical support to the extension team.

In view of the high pressure on land and the large number of very small landholders depending on farming for their livelihood, it would be very important to explore the question of optimal economic use of the small farms and the limits and possibilities of changes in cropping pattern and cropping intensity. This is also an important question for the landless groups who manage to lease some land.

BRAC made a special effort to improve the lot of the landless laborers by organizing group farming projects, and it plans to continue this effort during the third phase with both the landless laborers and destitute women. As noted already, these efforts are handicapped by the limitation of land available for renting out and by the financial and technical support needed to put the groups to work on land which is often of marginal quality. Despite all the efforts, the return realized by each individual member of the group may be too small to make an appreciable difference in his standard of living--partly because of BRAC's understandable desire of not leaving out any of the landless families in a village project. It therefore becomes important to look for a broader range of income earning opportunities for the landless families, such as a combination of rural public works, nonfarm activities, farm laborers' work, horticultural and animal husbandry activities around the home, group farming projects, and group economic projects in agricultural processing. Ideally, the planning, managing, and participation in the group farming projects should be organized within the framework of a broader approach to improving the earning and employment opportunities of the poorest rural families. The institutional vehicles of functional education groups, cooperatives, and membership in health insurance schemes can be used then to reinforce the economic improvement efforts, to give a sense of cohesion and purpose to the participants, and to facilitate a larger role of the participants in the management of these efforts.

There are indications that BRAC is attempting to apply the lessons of the experiences in Sulla in its new projects, particularly in Manikganj. The Manikganj Project put a heavy emphasis on the institutional structure in the villages--organizing youth's and women's organizations and cooperative societies, and planning and implementing various development activities, including agricultural activities, through the groups in an integrated manner. We return to this question in the chapter on institutional structures.

The third phase efforts in fishery development--to the extent that capital funds are available and participation is made broad-based--should have a greater impact on the condition of the fishermen than the second phase activities.

No attention has been paid so far to the long range fishery prospects, nor to the possibilities of technological improvements in raising both yield and employment in fishery activities in the area. This would probably require a regional approach extending beyond the project area, also resources and expertise difficult to muster without government support. In any case government support would be needed for any long-range fishery development in the area, because the government is the owner of the fishing grounds and the ultimate authority for imposing and enforcing regulations in such matters as fishing seasons, selective catching, terms of fishing rights. These questions deserve attention as they affect the welfare of a sizeable proportion of the population in the project area.

CHAPTER 5

PROGRAMS FOR WOMEN

Activities that have been designed by BRAC to contribute to the improvement of social and economic status of women fall into two categories:

- (a) integrating women into the general development activities of the project, and
- (b) special activities in response to special needs of women.

The general program activities which serve women clientele or have substantial involvement of women in one form or another are functional education, agricultural and horticultural extension, family planning, and health care. Activities which respond to special women's needs include mother and child-care clubs, skill training for women, women's cooperatives, women staff development, and the women's project in Jamalpur.

Serving Women Through General Programs

Functional Education

Women have participated in a major way in the functional education program. In the Sulla Project, of over 1,100 completers in the first two cycles of courses in 1975 and 1976, about 400 were women. One-half of the centers were for women and the number of women instructors was of the same proportion.

The project in Jamalpur with functional education as the key element serves exclusively the low-income rural women in a cluster of 29 villages. This project, as noted earlier, originated from a project to help destitute women in the same area.

The content of the functional education lessons also attempts to reflect women's needs and interests. While 70 percent of the content are of general interest, 30 percent are differentiated for men and women. The special lessons for women cover such topics as women's contribution to agricultural production; food processing and preservation; nutritious cooking; savings habits; survey of the community birth, pregnancy, and family planning status; family planning methods; cooperation among women; nutrition surveys; breast feeding; and fire hazards in the kitchen. Some of the general lessons which are designed for both men and women also include topics of special significance in improving the condition of women; for example, equal rights for men and women, cooperatives for women, nutrition topics, family planning methods, survey of family planning and nutrition status in the community, pregnant mothers' health, plight of widows, evils of early marriage, and child care.

Agricultural and Horticultural Extension

Women have a traditional role in Bangladesh in the horticultural activities around the home. BRAC extension service in horticulture, therefore, serves both men and women. As noted in chapter 4, about 10,000 families in the Sulla Project area benefited each year by the distribution of vegetable seeds and by technical advice, and up to 800 acres of land were put under vegetable cultivation, including such newly introduced items as carrots, broccoli, Chinese cabbage, as well as the more traditional vegetables. BRAC also provided seedlings of fruit plants such as coconuts, bananas, mangoes, guavas, and papayas, which were planted and reared to a large extent by the women.

In the Jamalpur Project one of the major activities is to encourage and assist women in undertaking vegetable, fruit, and other crop cultivation collectively as well as individually. This young project, only in its first year of operation in 1976, has yet to yield substantial results in the horticultural area. Future plans for Jamalpur as well as other areas include efforts to design extension services for economically viable collective or individual projects on grain processing, poultry and duck raising, and animal husbandry. Another area to be examined is those technologies that will reduce the drudgery and increase the productivity of routine chores around the home: grain processing and storage, food preparation, water collection, household cleaning and sanitation, and so forth.

Health Care and Family Planning

Women constitute a specially vulnerable group in regard to health. The BRAC health care program, important for the whole population, meets a special need for women. Bringing health care directly to the rural homes through the paramedics also facilitates women's participation in the program. Special measures to improve the health care provisions for women through staff development and village women's assemblies are mentioned below.

The family planning program in BRAC, following nearly universal practice, uses a female-oriented approach: persuasion of women to take contraceptive measures. BRAC also encourages male vasectomy because of the simplicity of the procedure and the relatively smaller medical risks involved. Furthermore, it shows that the responsibility for family planning lies in a direct personal sense as much with the male as with the female population. The BRAC clinics in the Sulla Project also perform tubal ligation operations. However, these terminal measures are resorted to by only a small number even when family planning practices are widespread. Without underestimating the importance of educating men about family planning, it can be said that the success of the family planning program of BRAC depends very much on how effectively the female population is reached with the message and the services of family planning.

The use of female workers in the family planning program and the related program of mother and child care education are discussed below.

Mother and Child Care Clubs

Widespread health and nutrition problems of pregnant and lactating mothers and children observed in the Sulla Project area led to a special effort to reach this group. The paramedics in their respective villages organized "mothers' clubs" or a monthly discussion group of the pregnant and lactating mothers in the village. This group meets in the village gonokendra or a suitable home, where health problems and preventive and curative measures for mothers and children are discussed under the paramedic's guidance and certain services are provided. The services include blood pressure check, iron and vitamin supplement for pregnant mothers, weighing the children and recording their weight on "Road to Health" cards.

In the Sulla Project area 73 mothers' clubs were functioning in mid-1976, with attendance in each ranging from 10 to 20 mothers plus their children. About 15 other clubs have been organized in the Jamalpur Project area.

A series of posters and a discussion guide keyed to the posters have been produced by the BRAC materials development unit in order to provide some structure and guidelines for the mothers' club meetings. Another purpose of the materials and the discussion guide is to enable field workers, such as functional education instructors without paramedic training, to conduct mothers' club discussion groups.

The multicolor wall poster set prepared for the mothers' clubs contains 15 posters on nutrition, care for pregnant and lactating mothers, child care, family planning, common diseases, and vaccination and inoculation. Each of the wall posters is used as the main visual aid for conducting one discussion session. The discussion guide, compiled in the form of a mimeograph booklet, explains the basic principles to be observed in effective group discussion, the objectives of each session, the main message or information to be conveyed to the group, the leading questions arising from the wall poster designed for the particular session, and other questions to maintain the momentum of the discussion, with possible follow-up actions to be engaged in by the group and the discussion leader.

The mothers' club as a device for organizing mother and child health care is a recent BRAC activity that began in the Sulla Project area only in the latter part of 1975 and even more recently in the Jamalpur area, where the discussion groups are led by the women field workers (experienced functional education instructors who are serving as multipurpose motivators/organizers and supervisors of functional education).

It is too early to assess the effectiveness of the clubs. Discussion with the field workers in Jamalpur revealed a number of problems. Although a sizeable group gathers on the appointed day, there is often a lack of continuity because the same person does not come on a regular basis. There appears to exist a superstitious belief that weighing a child attracts the evil eye and causes harm to the child's health. Some of the field workers decided to counteract this belief by taking their own little children to the village discussion meetings and weighing them in front of the village mothers. It is also often found that some members of the group want to discuss problems and topics other than mother and child care. The meetings

are also frequently attended by a few women who are not pregnant or lactating mothers. They come sometimes as chaperons of the young mothers (especially if a male paramedic is the discussion leader) or just as curiosity seekers.

In the light of the experience with the mothers' clubs the BRAC discussion leaders have accumulated some ideas for the future development of this activity including the following:

- (1) converting the mothers' club into a more general forum for village women concerned with health and nutrition and re-naming it the women's assembly (Mohila Shobha)
- (2) broadening both its membership and scope and using it as the vehicle for discussion, education and planning for general development activities that are of interest to the group or emerge out of the functional education program.

It is interesting that both of these possibilities involve broadening the role and function of the women's forum and a departure from a rigidly structured and imposed discussion session. The participants, it appears, are interested in setting their own agenda, pace, and ground rules. It is also noteworthy that BRAC field workers on their own have detected and recognized these tendencies. However, how these needs would be handled and what steps would be taken to prepare the discussion leaders to meet this demand, to provide the learning materials, and to link up the assemblies with other economic and educational activities were still to be worked out.

Vocational Training and Cooperatives

In its effort to help destitute women (without a male breadwinner in the family) earn a living and enable other women to supplement the family income, BRAC began a vocational training program in Sulla. The original ambitious plan envisaged four vocational training centers for women in the project area teaching many types of productive skills. However it was possible to open only one sewing center in Deraï, and the plan for a weaving center had to be abandoned because of problems faced in procuring cotton yarn that had even made many professional weavers unemployed.

In the sewing center 89 women in three batches received training for three months in tailoring. UNICEF donated sewing machines and cloth which were used to train the women in making children's clothing. The training, however, did not lead to the establishment of economic enterprises that provided employment and income to the trainees. Apparently, the local demand for commercial tailoring was being met by the existing tailors in the bazars, and none of the trainees could afford to invest in a sewing machine for meeting only the family clothing needs.

BRAC learned from the experience that the problem of unemployment and absence of earning opportunities in a poor rural area could not be solved by a skill training effort alone. It decided that "the training of women in skills which require assistance of male members in such matters as the procurement of raw materials, marketing of finished goods,

etc., would not be the right approach for ensuring their economic independence."¹ BRAC's emphasis, therefore, shifted from skill training to promotion of collective economic projects by women compatible with the local market demands. The women were brought together through functional education groups and the formation of women's cooperatives.

In the Sulla area, some 30 women's cooperatives had made an embryonic beginning by mid-1976 and were engaged in collective projects in agriculture (growing of rice, potatoes, legumes, and vegetables), making fishing nets, and pond fishery. BRAC Field Motivators helped in the initial formation of the groups, advised the groups about the principles and practices of cooperatives, encouraged them to accumulate capital by regular (though small) saving, and provided them with small credits with which to launch their projects.

In the newly initiated Jamalpur Project, by October 1976, there were 29 women's cooperative societies with a total membership of 353, mostly destitute women or members of the poorest families. Their savings in less than six months had approached Tk 1,000. With the assistance of the women field workers of BRAC and the promise of small loans from BRAC, the group had already launched or were planning projects in block-printing of cloth, weaving, silkworm raising, oil pressing, running grocery shops, bamboo crafts, poultry, pond fishery, and farming.

A comparable approach is proposed in the plans for the Manikganj Project:

BRAC's functional education classes will be the initial media to bring women together. These classes will stimulate women to think creatively about their environment and to develop their decision-making powers. The learners from these functional education classes will become the potential core membership of women's societies.... Those members interested in savings and loans will set rice saving targets, and with the amount saved credit unions or rice banks will be established. Loans will then be given to finance small-scale, village-based economic activities.... The choice of activities by the women will depend in part on local availability of raw materials and marketing facilities. Certain activities will generate cash incomes for the women; others will add to the nutritive value of their families' diets.²

Women Staff Development

Very often in rural development programs, even when special needs and problems of women are addressed, the responsibility for carrying out the development activities is in the hands of men, and the women become passive beneficiaries of the project activities and services.

In BRAC, women workers had been employed as functional education instructors and Lady Family Planning Organizers. However, the Field Motivators

¹BRAC, Sulla Project Report on Phase II, p. 19.

²BRAC, Manikganj Project, p. 15.

and the paramedics--the personnel responsible for organizing and initiating the functional education and family planning activities in the villages, supervising and guiding the instructors and the LFPOs, and providing backstopping to these frontline workers often by direct contact with the rural residents--were all male. As noted elsewhere, the effectiveness and expansion of the health program suffered because all the paramedics were men with whom the village women hesitated to communicate freely.

In 1976, BRAC initiated a number of steps to remedy this situation and to establish a parity of esteem and responsibilities between men and women among the BRAC personnel.

As noted in the chapter on health and family planning, all or nearly all frontline health and family planning workers--the village-based auxiliaries or the shasthya shevikas (with or without the duties of the family planning organizer)--would be women from the respective villages. This was more than adding another tier of workers in the hierarchy; it signified a change of approach in the delivery of health service that made the village-based shevika the key link in the chain that connected the health program and the rural people.

The third phase of the Sulla Project (beginning in 1976) included the provision for training and recruiting 15 female paramedics. The training of these paramedics, besides the subjects contained in the regular paramedic syllabus, would include midwifery, mother and child care, and certain women's diseases. The female paramedics were also to be trained in IUD insertion and tubal ligation in order to reduce further the dependence on qualified doctors.

With the goals of training women program personnel, transferring to women the direction of women-related activities, and exploring new program ideas for improving the social status and economic condition of rural women, BRAC decided to open one camp in the Sulla Project area to be directed and staffed entirely by women. It was felt that in an all-female environment some of the housing problems and social obstacles in recruiting female full-time staff might be overcome. The women's camp in Anandapur, with a direct responsibility for programs in a cluster of 10 villages and indirect responsibility for support of BRAC activities affecting women in the whole project area, opened in March 1976 with a female Area Manager and three Field Motivators (two local and one outsider). Nine other women joined the camp as trainees who would serve as BRAC personnel in Sulla or in other locations. The women in BRAC who conceived the idea of the camp (and one of whom serves as the Area Manager) describe the role of the camp as follows:

These staff [in the camp] carry out the female segment of BRAC's ongoing activities: functional education, public health, family planning, cooperatives. They will also experiment with and demonstrate potential economic activities for women: poultry and duck farming, food processing, intensified horticulture, manufacturing of utility items, etc. Eventually it is hoped they might design extension services and appropriate technologies to improve women's grain processing, fuel processing, water collection, etc.

Anandapur Camp will serve also as a training centre for prospective female leadership from other areas. Each camp's staff

members [there are eleven other all-male camps in the Sulla Project area] are being encouraged to locate a core of motivated and interested women from their camp areas to facilitate some of the development activities now being facilitated by male staff. Anandapur camp will serve both as an experimental laboratory (in which various ideas for women's development activities can be tested and evaluated) and as a training centre (for local female leadership).¹

The Jamalpur Project

In the Jamalpur Project of BRAC, which evolved from an ad hoc functional education component in a UNICEF-sponsored "food-for-work" scheme for destitute women into a special women's project of BRAC, the women functional education teachers took the initiative and assumed responsibility for planning, managing, and implementing the whole project. When the UNICEF-assisted project came to an end in November 1975, the 15 women instructors decided to continue the functional education courses and to expand the scope of their activities to village-based women's development work in the villages of the functional education participants. The women teachers, with the assistance of BRAC headquarters staff, prepared the project plans for poor rural women in 28 villages of the Jamalpur subdivision. The objectives of the project, as formulated by the women after investigating the needs and priorities of the potential participants in the villages, were as follows:

1. to make village women conscious of the root causes of their problems and to help them seek solutions;
2. to control population growth through family planning movitaion and delivery of services;
3. to encourage joint savings and cooperative economic activities by village women;
4. to educate village women in hygiene and nutrition;
5. to encourage horticulture and poultry raising by women;
6. to encourage village women to utilize fallow land surrounding their respective villages;
7. to intitiate women's organizations in the villages; and
8. to educate village women.

The 15 women set up their headquarters and a dormitory facility (for those not resident of the town) in a rented house in Jamalpur town and launched the

¹Khushi Kabir, et al., Rural Women in Bangladesh: Exploding Some Myths, Dacca, The Ford Foundation, May 1976, Appendix A, p. 5.

project in January 1976. Most of them came from the general area. Ten of them were married and were in the age-range of 19 to 25 years (except one who was 45). Their formal educational achievement varied from eighth grade to twelfth grade. They came to BRAC as candidates for the instructor's position in UNICEF-assisted functional education without any previous development work background and were chosen from a total pool of 60 applicants on the basis of an interview by the BRAC functional education coordinator. After their selection, the women went through a five-day training course for functional education instructors. This training, the experience of conducting the functional education courses with the destitute women, and two short evaluation and planning workshops (organized for them by BRAC to help evaluate the results of their work with the destitute women and to consider the issues in planning the future Jamalpur Project) were the women's main training and professional development exposure before they embarked on the new project.

By November 1976 the 14 women and one team leader were working in pairs five days a week in the 28 villages (with a population of 36,000 and 6,400 families). In 15 functional education centers, close to 200 women attended courses three days a week. As mentioned earlier, 29 women's savings groups were engaged in or planning group economic projects.

In 32 mothers' clubs, women discussed once a week (average attendance of 10-15) health, nutrition, hygiene, sanitation, and child care problems and actions. Over 550 acceptors of family planning measures were recruited (including 170 tubal ligation and 29 vasectomy cases). Each Saturday the women instructors/field workers met to report and discuss the previous week's activities and to plan for and discuss the next week's activities. The teachers formed their own savings society and opened a joint bank account. The teachers together with selected village women received training with BRAC headquarters assistance in public health and nutrition, duck and poultry raising, composting, and horticulture. (For instance, two rural women from Jamalpur were sent to Sylhet, 200 miles away, for a six-week training course in duck farming conducted by a church organization. On their return, these women started demonstration duck farms and were ready to advise others interested in raising ducks.) In the course of a few months the team of functional education teachers were maturing into a team of development workers.

Concluding Points

The relatively new and exploratory activities related to the improvement of economic condition and social status of women and making women partners in the overall rural development efforts already succeeded in indicating the potentialities of these activities and in demonstrating the promise of specific program approaches.¹

It is evident, in the first place, that rural women, even those without formal education and experience in roles outside the family environment, can serve effectively as frontline workers in such roles as those of Shasthya shevikas, Family Planning Organizers, and functional education

¹See Khushi Kabir, et al., Rural Women in Bangladesh...., op. cit.

instructors (who, of course, must have some formal education).

Second, women with some educational achievement and an interest in assuming a role outside home--irrespective of whether they are from a rural or a semiurban background--may be motivated and trained to take up supervisory, leadership, and field operation responsibilities involving extensive travel, public contact, and personal initiatives (as in the position of paramedics and the Field Motivator).

Third, relatively inexperienced women with appropriate motivation, interest, and training, are able to plan, design, manage, and implement a development program designed to benefit rural women.

Finally, social constraints and inhibitions can be overcome if female workers live and work in teams. Village women also respond to female field workers and are willing to travel from their homes to attend meetings, form cooperatives, and participate in collective activities.

Despite the promising leads given by the BRAC efforts, many of the most apparent economic and social problems of the women participants in the various projects are by no means about to be solved.

The capacity to save money among the members of the cooperative groups is very small, and it cannot begin to provide the necessary capital even for modest economic ventures. For the limited number of groups with economic propositions in Sulla and Jamalpur, BRAC has given the seed money. But with a larger number of groups in the two areas and particularly if the approach is expected to expand to other areas, the demand for capital funds and the problem of managing and monitoring the use of these funds will be beyond the capacity of BRAC as well as that of other agencies, including the government.

Identifying and designing viable economic projects ensuring a reasonable return to each member of a group have been found to be extremely difficult. The experience to date in BRAC suggests that for maintenance of motivation and effort, it is crucial that an individual's return is sufficient to make at least a small impact on his economic position. It is not enough for a group project's total return to be relatively large, if the total when divided among members becomes insignificant.

Even if projects are theoretically sound, they need management and supervision that is not always within the competence of BRAC field workers. Anything beyond extremely simple and primitive production or processing activities often requires complementary inputs and support beyond the means of the project. These are difficult to organize.

Besides these obvious difficulties, the fundamental problem lies in the subsistence character of the rural economy with its extremely limited effective demand for commercial products and services. This situation severely limits the opportunities for families without access to agricultural land. A general improvement in the economic situation, spurred by higher agricultural production and better distribution of income, will generate the demands for nonsubsistence goods and services and create a more conducive environment for the poor women's economic ventures. Improvement of the women's situation beyond a certain point and beyond small numbers included in special "hot-house" projects is inextricably connected with overall rural development with equitable distribution.

It bears reemphasizing, however, that a lot more can be done to involve women prominently in health, family planning, education, and other social development efforts for rural families. This involvement will not only enhance the social status and self-esteem of women, but also help make the development activities more effective.

RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING OF STAFF

A difficult problem in all rural development programs is the recruitment of field workers and supervisory people who not only are well-motivated, dedicated, and willing to give up the attractions of the city, but are also perceptive about rural problems, sensitive about pride and values of the rural people, and above all, willing to learn from their experience. A difference is usually noted in spirit and motivation between the personnel in the government agencies and those in nongovernment voluntary agencies--often because of the close-knit interpersonal relationships in a small organization, the influence of ideologically motivated leadership in voluntary programs, and the fact that voluntary organizations tend to attract idealists. However, voluntary organizations have their own share of personnel problems in finding the right people for the right tasks, helping the workers develop the necessary skills and competence, and maintaining their motivation and confidence in the face of frustration and failures. Any program past the stage of a small shoe-string operation and employing paid workers needs to be concerned about the questions of recruitment, staff development, and efficiency of performance. Another issue is to what extent and in what way government field agents can sustain the kind of motivation and enthusiasm that many workers in voluntary programs apparently have.

BRAC Personnel

In July 1976, BRAC's personnel roll included 157 full-time members, excluding part-time workers in the villages such as the Lady Family Planning Organizers, and voluntary workers such as the functional education instructors, and youth program leaders. By the end of the year, the total number of full-time personnel rose to about 200 with the addition of 30 newly recruited shasthya shevikas and 14 trainee female paramedics.

Of the regular personnel, about 10 may be regarded as constituting the directing staff of BRAC, including the Executive Director, the coordinators of different administrative functions, the Program Administrators for Sulla and Manikganj, and the Medical Officers. The support staff including the training and materials personnel, staff writers, clerical workers, drivers and mechanics, custodial staff, and office helpers numbered about 50. The number of paramedics including the trainee women recruits was 45. The main workhorse for BRAC's field activities with direct and multiple responsibilities for identifying and assessing opportunities and needs for field activities and initiating, guiding, and supporting them, is the Field Motivator, 49 of whom were in employment in mid-1976. Directly above the Field Motivators, with immediate responsibility for guiding and assisting the Field Motivators, were 19 Program Supervisors (also known as Area Managers).

The Field Motivator is the basic rank to which new multipurpose field workers are recruited, and at this level the BRAC personnel receive their

orientation and experience in the rural development approach of BRAC. Although lateral entry at the higher management levels has been necessary initially and still continues to some degree in the headquarters, a career ladder appears to be emerging as more workers are promoted to higher levels in the hierarchy from the rank of the Field Motivators. Recruitment and training of specialized BRAC workers in health and education has been discussed in other chapters. This chapter will deal mainly with the Field Motivators--the backbone of the BRAC personnel structure.

Recruitment Criteria and Procedure

There was initially a heavy emphasis on high formal education qualification in the recruitment of BRAC personnel; this emphasis still persists although its application appears to be somewhat less rigid now. At the beginning of the Sulla Project, when BRAC had to recruit both the field level workers and the supervisory personnel (at that time there had been no opportunity to appoint supervisors by promotion), the basic requirements for Field Motivators were college graduation (two to three years of college education after the higher secondary stage), and the candidates for supervisory positions such as Area Managers (also called Program Supervisors) were required to have a master's degree. The emphasis was on the level of college qualifications rather than on a specific disciplinary background because a master's or bachelor's degree in any subject was acceptable as the requisite qualification.

The argument for the high value attached to formal education degrees (irrespective of the subject of study) as put forth by BRAC was that a high level of formal education was likely to be associated with an adequate level of intellectual competence, leadership qualities, and an ability to analyze and learn from new experiences. The possible alienation of the educated youth from the rural environment and the difficulties in establishing a bond of empathy and rapport between the rural people and the urban-educated youth were apparently not a great concern to BRAC. The feeling was that with its very low level of urbanization, Bangladesh was essentially a "rural" country and even the university-educated young people were not completely severed from their rural roots. The most important reason for insisting on high educational credentials probably was that with the prevailing high level of unemployment among the college educated there was an ample supply of these candidates for BRAC jobs.

As it turned out, the university degree was not actually the determining factor in recruitment. In selecting the personnel from the large pool of available candidates, all with university degrees, BRAC management used other criteria. Assessment of the candidate's suitability for the Field Motivator's job, determined through personal interview and personal recommendations about an individual's qualities and aptitudes, was really the decisive factor. It was all quite subjective--contingent largely on the notion of the qualities and competence considered necessary for the field worker's job by the person conducting the interview or making the recommendation.

It is difficult to make a judgment on the formal qualifications and the selection procedure followed, because there is really no benchmark for comparison. The Executive Director of BRAC considered the process as "hit or miss" and found the attrition rate among workers as relatively

high. He pointed out that, out of hundreds of job applicants who submit their applications whenever new recruitment is announced, ten might be selected. Out of the ten, two would not turn up, two would leave during the first two months, two would be asked to resign as incompetent within the first few months, two would continue as "plodders" in their level of performance and motivation, and two would turn out to be effective, well-motivated, and enthusiastic. Most of the workers would stay on if they survived the first six months.

In order to improve on the "hit or miss" results described above, a new selection procedure was introduced in 1976. This procedure consists essentially of a two-day group interaction session of the applicants retained on a "short list" after preliminary screening of the written applications. The group session, called the "selection course" requires the applicants to engage in a series of exercises selected from BRAC training modules (see below) involving communication, planning, and analytical skills. The exercises offer the opportunity to BRAC management to observe and assess the applicant's personality, perception of rural development problems, leadership qualities, analytical ability, and planning capability. The applicant also has the opportunity to get a taste of what might be required of him as a BRAC worker and whether the job suits his own expectations and temperament. The procedure is applied in selecting new male and female Field Motivators. This procedure makes the selection process more systematic and permits at least an attempt to relate a potential recruit's competence, aptitude, and personality traits to the tasks required to be performed by the Field Motivator. The process, however, is yet to undergo sufficient trial to warrant any definitive judgment.

Staff Training

The training and orientation of the Field Motivators and other non-specialized BRAC personnel have been dependent on a combination of brief orientation sessions and the initiation of the workers into the methods and approaches of BRAC through practical experience.

The new recruits go through an initial orientation course for about a week in which the new personnel become familiar with the BRAC development approach, an overview of the program activities, specific responsibilities and assignments of field workers, and the work procedures and the administrative routines. After they are dispatched to the field, the apprenticeship continues at least for a three-month period when the new recruits are accompanied and guided by their senior colleagues. After this apprenticeship period, the new Field Motivators are given independent assignments and increasingly greater responsibilities. The Program Supervisors (previously known as Area Managers), each one of whom supervises no more than four or five Field Motivators, are always at hand to assist and advise the latter. Moreover, the full-time field workers of BRAC (Program Supervisor, Field Motivators, and paramedics) usually reside in a communal style in camps. This leads to a close association with almost daily comparison of notes and ideas, both formally at the Program Supervisor's initiative as well as informally.

STAFF

Problems and progress in field activities and plans for the subsequent months are taken up at monthly meetings at the project level (e.g., in Sulla, Manikganj, and Jamalpur), attended by all Program Supervisors and selected Field Motivators in turn. These meetings serve as a learning experience for the Motivators and they provide training and supervisory guidelines for the Supervisors.

In addition, special training opportunities are organized on specific topics. For instance, before the introduction of the second cycle of the functional education course and after the revision of the course content and methodology at the end of the first cycle, all field staff in the Sulla Project went through a five-day training session on the implementation of the functional education program. The Sulla Project staff attended special training sessions on cooperative principles and practices organized in Comilla in cooperation with the Cooperative College and the Academy for Rural Development. A month-long staff development workshop was conducted in the Sulla Project in July-August 1976, in which BRAC headquarters personnel, training staff, and field staff deliberated on seven selected topics--reorientation of functional education instructors, functional education methodology, BRAC approach to development, "consciousness raising" among the rural people, human relations, leadership and communication, and the third phase strategy for the Sulla Project. Similarly, a week-long evaluation and planning workshop was organized for the functional education teachers in the Jamalpur Project before they launched the special women's project there.

A small training team under a Chief Trainer was put together in BRAC headquarters early in 1974 and given the responsibility for arranging the special training and orientation sessions for the BRAC field personnel and for developing a portfolio of training materials and methods on specific topics called training modules. BRAC received assistance from a training expert provided by the Ford Foundation in the preparation of the training modules. The modules are resource materials on a specific subject that can be drawn upon in organizing a training session on the subject. These can be modified, adapted, and combined for specific groups, depending on their needs and the available training time. In fact, for each group of trainees, a special training program that may vary from a day to a month is worked out by adapting and combining the modules.

The training modules developed so far are the following:

1. Communications. There are three modules in the communications area--(a) teaching of methods for dissemination of ideas in a way that creates a sense of participation from all parties concerned; (b) organizational analysis and needs assessment to understand exactly what the organization desires from its workers, what the workers expect of the organization, and what they together expect their accomplishments to be; and (c) program planning where all members are involved in the process of establishing the goals and objectives of the program leading to plans and objectives to which all parties are committed.
2. Group dynamics. Establishing a sense of team effort through genuine interaction, teaching how to work together for common goals, and reaching consensus.

3. Leadership. Helping trainees to be self-confident and identifying and helping develop qualities and skills needed to achieve leadership status that is freely accepted by the people concerned.
4. Consciousness raising. Helping trainees develop analytical skills to understand why certain conditions and situations exist in the rural areas and to formulate and assess alternative approaches to solving specific rural problems.
5. Functional education. Training instructors in methodologies developed specifically for use with BRAC functional education material.¹

Training and Resource Center (TARC)

With the establishment in mid-1976 of a Training and Resource Center consisting of six full-time staff members, the staff training program has become a systematic and regular activity and has developed into a service that is available to other organizations and groups interested in rural development and the BRAC program approach. The establishment of TARC does not mark any basic change in training content and methodology, but it permits orderly planning and management of the training activities and provides some assurance that the necessary staff and resources are devoted to training. An important motivation for setting up the center was also the growing demand by many voluntary organizations in the country for training assistance from BRAC for their own workers. Another reason was a new emphasis in BRAC's own program strategy on rural youth "self-starter" groups and youth leaders who might be trained and supported to initiate rural self-help projects without building a heavy staff and organization structure maintained by BRAC (see the chapter on institutional structures).

In 1976, about one-half of TARC staff time and training activities was spent in providing services to other voluntary organizations. They were charged fees roughly on the basis of actual costs for the services provided. The rest of TARC activities were devoted to training BRAC's own staff and rural youths identified as potential leaders of "self-starter" groups. A program timetable of TARC for one month (December 1976) indicates the typical scope and nature of TARC activities (see Table 6.1).

The Training and Resource Center was located in Dacca in 1976 in a rented building adjacent to the BRAC headquarters. It is planned, however, that the center will be set up in a rural location with residential accommodation and run like an ashram where trainees and trainers together form a community, meeting their basic needs through necessary manual labor and creating an environment for a total living-learning experience.² It is also planned that the training staff will alternate between training work at the center and regular field assignments in BRAC projects.

Six acres of land have been purchased at a cost of Tk 400,000 in Savar, 20 miles west of Dacca, for the site of the training center. The dormitory, staff

¹BRAC, Training and Support Programme for Rural Development, n.d., pp. 2-3.

²BRAC, Training and Support Programme..... p. 5.

Table 6.1

TARC Program for the Month of December, 1976

Trainer	Date/ Period	Assignment	Organization Providing Trainees	Venue
Mijanur Rahman	13th-17th	Youth leaders' training	BRAC/Manikganj	Manikganj
Selim Ahmed Shahid Talukder	8th	Project planning workshop	Community Development Foundation	CDF-Dacca
Selim Ahmed	9th-17th	Management of works program	BRAC	Dacca & Savar
Rafiqul Islam	9th-20th	Works program	BRAC	Savar
Mijanur Rahman Selim Ahmed	19th-24th	Motivation and communication training	Swallows of Sweden	Dacca & Shaturia
Mahbuba Karim	7th-9th	Follow-up of previous trainees and consultancy	UNICEF	Gaibandha
Mijanur Rahman Selim Ahmed Rafiqul Islam	27th-31st	Youth leaders' training	BRAC Manikganj	Manikganj
Shamsul Huda	8th-16th	Poultry extension	BRAC/Jamalpur	Jamalpur
Shamsul Huda	20th-31st	Poultry complex construction	BRAC/TARC	Savar
Gishpoti Roy	6th-12th	Pond fisheries	BRAC/Sulla	Sulla
Gishpoti Roy	18th-31st	Duck hatchery construction	BRAC/TARC	Savar

Source: Training and Resource Centre, Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, Dacca.

residences, meeting rooms and other facilities are expected to cost a similar amount. The annual recurring expenses for running the center is estimated to be about Tk 350,000--a part of which will be recovered from fees for services provided to other organizations.

Maintaining Motivation and Morale

Persistence in rural development work and efforts to improve the condition of the poorest in a political climate and socioeconomic environment not particularly conducive to rapid social change takes a high level of stoic fortitude and a certain philosophical disposition. Successes when achieved are small and slow to come, and frustrations and failures are frequent. A consistently high level of enthusiasm among rural development workers is unrealistic to expect. A high degree of "achievement motivation" gratified by quick and visible accomplishments is probably not as helpful to a rural development worker as it might be in McClelland's entrepreneurial world.¹ Morale and enthusiasm among the BRAC workers, therefore, have their natural "ups and downs," as the Executive Director put it. It is also likely that a number of the BRAC workers would prefer to have remained in the city with a desk-bound job in a government or commercial office and have come to BRAC only as a second choice.

On the whole, however, the level of enthusiasm and dedication among the workers is regarded as high by the BRAC leadership--an assessment confirmed by ICED researchers' impressions from visits to project sites and discussions at field camps. This is attributed to a number of factors by the Executive Director of BRAC:

1. Friendly interpersonal relationship among the workers is emphasized and the leadership pays attention to and helps resolve any interpersonal problems among workers.
2. There is a high level of flexibility in administration and management of program activities. Workers have a great deal of freedom about taking initiatives and making decisions and usually would receive backing from the leadership in their decisions and judgment.
3. There is an informality in relationship between the workers and the program management. The Executive Director and other program leaders are freely accessible to all workers.
4. The communal environment of camp living generates an organizational spirit and helps to protect the workers from the sense of isolation and frustration a conscientious rural development worker may feel.

Concluding Comments

It is not clear what the dividends have been in terms of performance and motivation because of the emphasis on formal education credentials in the recruitment of Field Motivators and higher level personnel. A variation seems to persist among personnel in performance and commitment to program goals as indicated by the "hit or miss" character of the results obtained from the re-

¹ David W. McClelland and David G. Winter, Motivating Economic Achievement: Accelerating Economic Development through Psychological Training (New York: The Free Press, 1971).

cruitment process. The new recruitment approach through group interaction exercises is an interesting innovation and represents an attempt to make the selection of personnel more rational and less intuitive. However, if this approach proves to be more satisfactory, it would only indicate the importance of assessing personal traits and qualities of individuals rather than placing a premium on university degrees.

Apparently little weight is given to the local background of the workers--the project staff being drawn from all over the country. The educational requirements, in a sense, restrict the possibility of local youths being employed as Field Motivators, because very few university-educated young men can be found living in their own villages. There are both advantages and risks in giving a preference to the local candidates in recruitment. The local youths are likely to be acquainted with and sensitive to local social and cultural characteristics and capable of identifying with the aspirations and values of the people in the area. On the other hand, in a social structure marked by inequity, the most likely candidates for a development worker are apt to be members of the local "gentry," or similar privileged groups, and they may not be effective in serving and safeguarding the interests of the local poor. A Field Motivator from another district, even if he comes from a class background similar to that of the local workers, will probably not be inclined as much to identify himself with or to be sympathetic to the local power structure. Generalizations, of course, are inappropriate because the determining factor is each individual's own attitudes and level of awareness of the rural socioeconomic condition.

In the light of recent shifts of emphasis in BRAC program strategy towards stronger local organizations and less reliance on a large BRAC staff for local project management, the pros and cons of recruiting local field workers need to be reexamined. There may be significant advantages and far-reaching consequences of recruiting and training local Field Motivators who may, after a stint with BRAC, pursue a career in politics and local government and carry over the BRAC experience and outlook to their new vocations. Such workers would not become professional BRAC field workers, and their life's ambition and the rewards and incentives would not be tied to the career ladder held out by BRAC. Obviously, it is not necessary or appropriate to apply the principle of local recruitment rigidly, even if it is found to be generally desirable.

The establishment of a training center and setting up courses ready to be offered on request may have led to a process of growing formalization of training and an abstraction of training from the essence of program activities. Formal training sessions on specific topics and skills as well as for general orientation can be extremely valuable. However, the practical insight into the intricacies of rural life, the perception of the problems of the rural poor, the approaches to dealing with them, and the skills and understanding necessary for effective human relations are developed through practical experience and are very much affected by the program objectives and rationale. The training modules will never replace the learning experiences of the field worker during his initial apprenticeship and as he begins to take on independent assignments and

responsibilities; but the training sessions and the refresher workshops can be invaluable as complements and stimulants to further learning. This complementary and catalytic role of a training center needs to be recognized as TARC continues to provide its services to BRAC and other organizations.

If indeed it is desirable in voluntary organizations to have field workers whose life's ambition does not lie in climbing the career ladder in a rural development program and if the skills as a rural development worker cannot be abstracted from the substance of the program to be put into the content of a training course, then approaches followed for staff development and utilization in large public programs and small voluntary agencies must be somewhat divergent. Centralized planning and decisionmaking, larger bureaucracies, standardized personnel management and administrative procedures, while understandable in large public programs, do not readily lend themselves to the improvisation, individualization, and destandardization possible in recruitment, training, interpersonal relationship, and administrative procedures in small voluntary programs. The public programs also would have these advantages to the extent that the nature of the public programs change in the direction of greater decentralization, local integration of development efforts, and local flexibility.

CHAPTER 7

DEVELOPMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES

Creation of appropriate institutional infrastructures is both a pre-condition for effective rural development programs and an objective of such programs. The organizational and staff structure of a program and the concomitant mobilization of the beneficiary population into participatory institutions make it possible to carry out the program activities. This process of participation at the same time can help the beneficiary populations develop their own capabilities to control and manage the development activities in a locality--growing increasingly less dependent either on outside voluntary organizations or a centralized government bureaucracy.

BRAC's approach to rural development attaches a high value to the growth of local participatory institutions and self-sustaining and self-managed rural development. However, in the short span of time since the inception of the BRAC development program, there has been an evolution of concepts and strategies about creating and strengthening institutional structures for rural development. Definitive solutions to the problems of institutional structures have not been found by BRAC and probably should not be expected; nevertheless, the BRAC experience with these problems and its continuing efforts to deal with them are instructive.

BRAC Organization and Staff Structure

In 1976, the BRAC organization was physically spread out in Dacca, where the central offices were located, and in three project locations--Sulla, Manikganj, and Jamalpur.

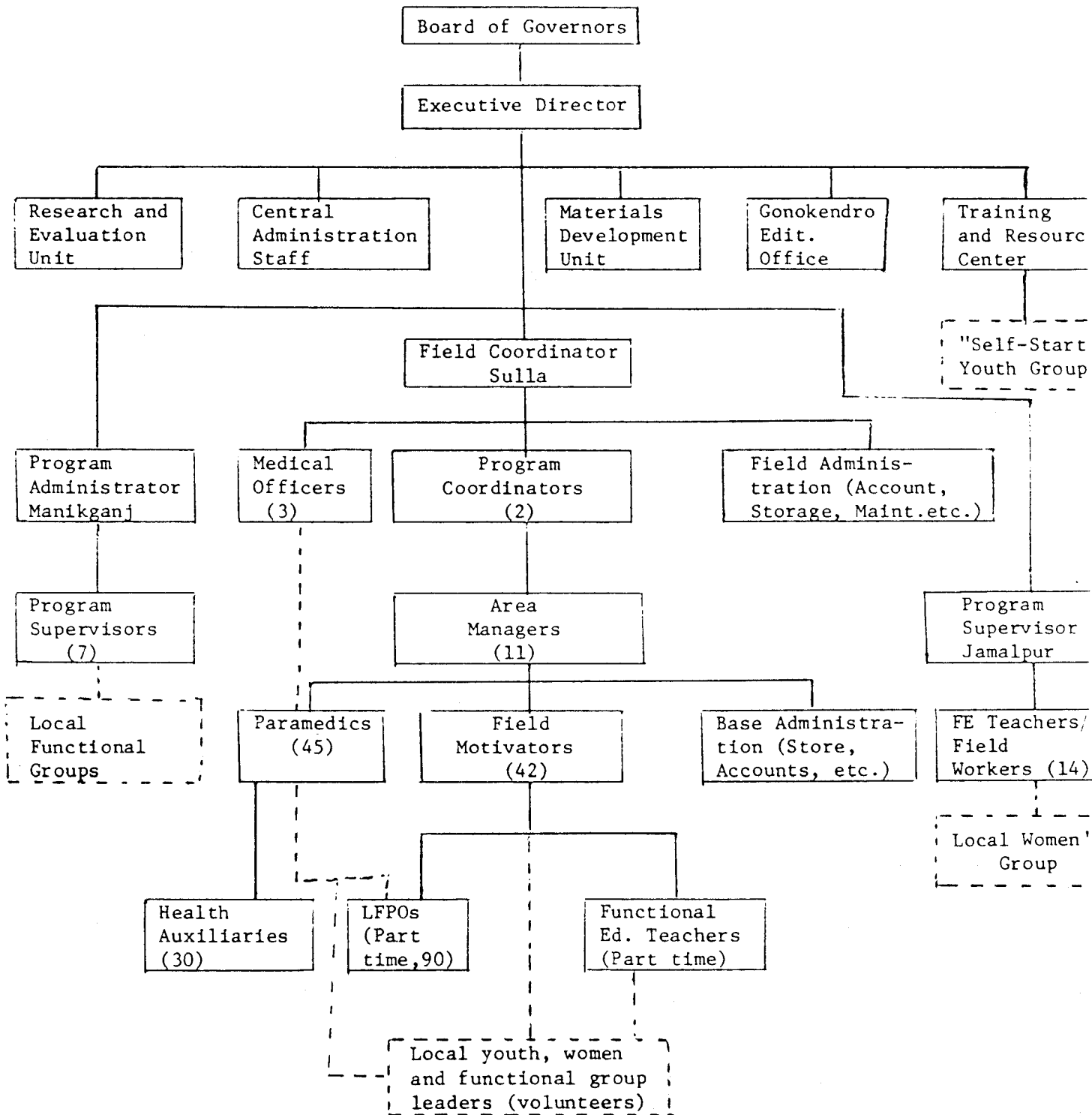
The central offices consisted of the Executive Director's office, the administration and accounts departments, the materials development unit, the Gonokendro editorial office, the research and evaluation unit, and the Training and Resource Center (until the Savar site for the center is fully developed).

The field organization was most elaborate in Sulla where BRAC was born and where the project had been in operation the longest. The Sulla Project area was divided into 11 sectors under 2 zones. Each sector was headed by an Area Manager (also known as a Program Supervisor) who had an average of 4 Field Motivators and 3 paramedics working under him. The Area Managers reported to the two Program Coordinators in charge of the two zones, and they in turn were supervised by the Field Coordinator for the Sulla Project. There were also three Medical Officers in the project area in charge of three clinics and responsible for providing technical support to the health workers in the area. In mid-1976 there were 42 Field Motivators and 31 paramedics in the Sulla Project area (in addition 14 women paramedics were under training). There were also 30 newly appointed shasthya shevikas functioning as full-time village health

Figure 1.

Simplified Organization Chart of BRAC

January 1977



_____ Line of administrative control

- - - - - Line of technical support

auxiliaries in 30 villages; shevikas were to be ultimately appointed in each village in order to intensify the coverage of and improve the access to the health services in the area. There were also about 90 part-time Lady Family Planning Organizers and an unspecified number of volunteer and unpaid functional educational instructors and youth workers in the project area.

In the Manikganj Project in late 1976, there were 7 Program Supervisors under the direction of the Program Administrator. Ultimately, in each of the 8 unions (with a total population of about 100,000) to be covered by the BRAC project, a team of 2 Program Supervisors was planned to be posted. No Field Motivators were proposed to be appointed in Manikganj. The health care activities were not yet operational in Manikganj. The plan, however, was to post a single paramedic in each union and 3 to 4 village-based auxiliaries in each village—a smaller ratio of paramedics to population than in Sulla and a greater reliance on the shevikas for basic health and family planning services. (Meanwhile, BRAC supported financially a local voluntary family planning organization based in Manikganj that provided clinical services and performed tubectomies and vasectomies.)

In Jamalpur's special women's project covering 28 villages and a total population of 36,000, there were 14 women functional education instructors/field workers under the supervision of a Program Supervisor. Functional education groups, mothers' clubs, women's cooperatives, and group economic activities were to be organized, and nonclinical family planning services were to be provided by these women with the assistance of local volunteers. Basic health care was not included in the initial phase of the Jamalpur Project.

The field organizations in Manikganj and Jamalpur, both of which were initiated in 1976, show a distinct shift from the pattern in Sulla. The significance of this shift is discussed later in this chapter.

The organizational structure described above was not meant to carry out the rural development program of BRAC by itself. The effectiveness of this structure depended on how well it could help create and support various organizations and institutions of the local people as the instruments for implementing the multifaceted development program of BRAC. We turn now to these organizations.

Cooperatives and Other Local Organizations

Cooperative societies of rural groups with homogeneous economic and development interests are seen by BRAC as essential for collective self-help efforts as well as efficient provisions for support services and inputs. A major task of all BRAC field workers is the promotion of cooperatives—educating rural residents about the importance and ways of cooperation, encouraging them to save and to undertake cooperative projects, and assisting them to form and manage cooperative societies.

BRAC was interested in forming new societies as well as rejuvenating existing farmers' and fishermen's cooperatives in the Sulla Project area. Many of the old societies had become ineffective, having fallen into the hands of powerful groups in the village such as the larger landowners and moneylenders. Input allocations, credit facilities, and other benefits of cooperative societies available from the government were monopolized by members of the managing group to the detriment of general members' interest. Furthermore, corruption and mis-

management at the top were a common feature of the cooperatives.

One of the first tasks before BRAC was to rid the cooperatives of their unsavory image. It was necessary to restore the confidence of the general members in cooperative societies and eliminate the prevalent corruption and bad management. BRAC emphasized the importance of cooperative spirits, savings habits, collective responsibility, and cooperative projects, rather than achievement of legal status as a registered society under government regulation, although this was not discouraged. All Field Motivators were trained in cooperative accounting practices, and books of accounts of the societies were updated and regularly maintained. BRAC arranged with government cooperative inspectors for audit and regular inspection of the societies' state of affairs. The societies were encouraged to hold regular weekly meetings, and the members were encouraged to attend these meetings. BRAC field workers attended many of these meetings. New management committees were elected for many societies in a democratic manner. A training session was arranged for 154 chairmen and secretaries of the cooperatives by the joint efforts of the BRAC staff and the extension officers of the cooperative department.

About 120 primary cooperative societies were active in the Sulla Project area in 1976. About 80 of these were farmers' cooperatives, approximately 30 were fishermen's cooperatives, and the rest were societies formed by women's groups and landless laborers. The combined savings of these societies had exceeded Tk 200,000 by early 1976. Following the national pattern under the Integrated Rural Development Program (IRDP) of the government, the Sulla Thana Central Cooperative Association (STCCA) was formed in early 1974. The role of the central association is to serve as a channel for credit funds and inputs available from the government for the primary society's members, to provide common services to the small primary societies they are unable to arrange by themselves, and to maintain liaison with government departments on matters of common interest to the rural cooperative members.

Interference by a prominent member of the ruling political party, who was interested in controlling the government patronage offered through the central association and was opposed to the prominent role of BRAC in the local cooperative movement, gave the STCCA an inauspicious start. The situation improved, however, after the change of government in August 1975. The government appointed a Project Officer under the IRDP whose job was to provide technical assistance and management advice to STCCA. The STCCA and through it the primary societies received the exclusive fertilizer dealership for the thana, and a credit fund of Tk 500,000 for lending to members of the primary societies was made available by the government. A central association was also formed in 1976 in DeraI thana, part of which is included in the BRAC project area.

Deviating somewhat from the IRDP national pattern, the Sulla central association decided to decentralize its activities by forming another tier of association in each of the four unions in Sulla thana with all the primary societies in the union as its members. There was an enthusiastic response to this idea from primary societies, and land and money were donated by the local people for erecting the STCCA office.

In the Jamalpur Project some 29 women's groups were engaged in collective economic projects. (See discussion in the chapter on women's programs.) In Manikganj, during the first year of its operation in 1976, 27 groups of women and landless laborers with a total membership of over 400 were being assisted by BRAC field workers in group economic activities, including hand-husking and marketing of rice, farming, weaving, and pottery. These groups in Jamalpur and Manikganj were at a pre-cooperative stage in the legal sense and were entirely dependent for credits and inputs on BRAC, not being eligible for support from the government sources. In addition to the above, in November 1976, there were 19 other groups in Manikganj with 339 members which had made more progress towards becoming full-fledged cooperative societies with elected managing committees, regular membership meetings, and weekly thrift savings. Among these groups were 10 women's cooperatives with 158 members, 6 landless farmers' groups with 138 members, 2 weavers' societies with 24 members, and 1 potters' society with 19 members.

As the description of the Jamalpur and Manikganj efforts in the development of cooperatives (and collective economic enterprises) indicates, there is a deliberate emphasis in these projects to concentrate on helping the underprivileged groups organize collective self-help efforts through cooperatives--in contrast to the general cooperative development effort in the country by such agencies as the IRDP and the cooperative department, both of which have concentrated on cooperatives of landowning farmers.

The cooperatives and pre-cooperative groups were seen as the institutional means for economic improvement. For the purpose of mobilizing people's initiative and motivation, creating a conducive environment for self-help efforts, and raising the level of awareness about the roots of rural problems and ways of dealing with them, BRAC introduced two kinds of institutions--the Gonokendro (people's center) and the functional education groups.

The Gonokendro, a modest building established in each village as a center of village community life and a physical base for various development efforts, was given a high priority in the second phase of the Sulla Project. Construction of 175 Gonokendro buildings were planned through joint contributions of BRAC and the individual village communities. BRAC was to supply the building materials and the villagers were to provide the land, labor, and the furniture. Actually 129 buildings were constructed by the end of 1974--mostly modest bamboo and timber structures.

While the accomplishments in physical construction of the buildings were relatively good, the experience of Gonokendro was an eye-opener for BRAC. In many instances, it was found difficult to overcome the rivalry of opposing factions, patronized and supported by influential families in the village. Many of the village committees formed for directing the Gonokendro did not have the support and confidence of the whole village. In at least one-third of the villages, it was not even possible to agree on a site for the center.

Apparently, the Gonokendro as a focal point for village organization and activities was BRAC's own concept of how the villagers could be organized and mobilized for development efforts. This concept ignored the reality of

conflicts of interests among the village residents and the fact that the village community was not really one entity. The Gonokendro, an attractive idea on the face of it, did not live up to BRAC's expectations. BRAC concluded: "Despite the fact that this programme accounted for a substantial part of BRAC effort the achievement of the programme was not commensurate with the effort."¹ While building a community center in the village was not ruled out if the village desired it and was willing to contribute to its building and upkeep, it was not included as a project item in the third phase of Sulla or in other BRAC projects.

The role of the functional education groups in helping self-help efforts and in supporting the total rural development efforts has been discussed elsewhere in this report.

The group health insurance scheme and the mothers' clubs also have been described in other chapters of the report. The insurance scheme is intended to mobilize local financial support for the health care and family planning services, distribute the cost burden of health care evenly among the population and keep it within acceptable limits, and eventually be a mechanism for substantial participation of the local people in the management of the health program. The mothers' clubs are designed to facilitate health and nutrition education and to serve as a forum for collective and individual actions for the improvement of mothers' and children's health.

Important questions about the institutional and organizational arrangements of a rural development program are to what extent these arrangements facilitate community participation in its various dimensions and promote better integration of the program activities among themselves and with other rural development efforts.

Community Participation

Two main aspects of community participation are the distribution of the benefits of the development program among the various segments of the community population and the degree of active involvement of the beneficiary population in managing and carrying out the development activities.

Since BRAC has been in operation for some length of time only in the Sulla Project area, ICED attempted to determine to what extent the benefits of BRAC activities reached the poorer and the more underprivileged groups. A random sample of 240 households from 11 villages where BRAC had been active were asked about the number of instances they had benefited from various BRAC activities since the inception of these activities in the respective villages. The responses were classified according to the level of education and landholdings of the heads of the household. (See Tables 7.1, 7.2, and 7.3.) It was found, somewhat unexpectedly, that the overall

¹BRAC, Sulla Project Report on Phase II, p. 7.

Table 7.1

Distribution of Benefits Related to the Level of
Education of the Head of the Household

Level of Education	Total Respondents Heads of Households		Frequency of Mention of Benefits									
			Health		Agric. Coop.		Family Planning		Other*		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Illiterate	105	44	56	34	28	29	26	38	210	37	320	36
Less than Complete Primary Ed.	66	28	46	28	32	33	18	25	172	30	268	30
Primary Ed. and above	56	23	50	31	30	31	20	29	149	26	249	28
Complete Secondary School and above	13	5	10	6	7	7	7	9	36	6	60	7
TOTAL	240	100	162	100	97	100	71	100	567	100	897	100

*See first footnote of Table 7.2.

SOURCE: ICED Field Data

Table 7.2

Distribution of Benefits Related to Land Ownership

Size of Landholdings	Total Respondents Heads of Households		Frequency of Mention of Benefits									
			Health		Agric. Coop.		Family Planning		Other*		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
No land	62	26	33	20	8	8	21	30	111	20	173	19
Less than 1 Acre	130	54	10	6	6	6	10	14	44	8	70	8
1 to 3 Acres	40	17	52	32	40	41	7	10	164	29	263	29
3+ Acres and above	8**	3	67	41	43	44	33	46	248	43	391	43
TOTAL	240	100	163	100	97	100	71	100	567	100	897	100

*Other activities include fisheries cooperatives, youth groups, women's groups, functional education, providing power tiller and water pump, supply of seeds, and useful literature and advice.

**Many of the larger land-owners' families are joint families with several nuclear units within the joint family structure, which partially explains high frequency of mention of benefits from the various BRAC activities.

Source: ICED Field Data.

Table 7.3

Contribution to BRAC Project Activities by Level of Education
and Land Ownership of Head of Household

Level of Education	Frequency of Mention of Contribution			
	Participation in Planning and Management	Voluntary Service	Paid Services	Donation: Cash or in Kind
Illiterate	4	16	2	1
Less than Complete Primary Education	4	15	1	-
Primary Education but less than Complete Secondary Education	7	17	1	3
Secondary Education and above	6	3	1	1
<u>Land Ownership</u>				
No land	1	13	1	-
Less than 1 Acre	-	2	1	-
1+ Acre to 3 Acres	5	15	2	-
3+ Acres and above	16	21	-	3

N=240.

Source: ICED Field Data.

benefits as well as the specific benefits from the health activities, co-operatives, and the family planning efforts (as the respondents perceived the benefits) were distributed more or less evenly among the groups with different educational levels. Groups with higher levels of education were not enjoying a disproportionate share of the benefits.

The findings were quite different when the benefits were related to the landholding pattern. Households with no land or less than an acre of land revealed themselves to be recipients of benefits much less frequently than their share in the sample population and those with three acres or more land mentioned instances of benefits totally out of line with their proportion in the sample. The totally landless households fared somewhat better than those with less than an acre of land, apparently because of some special efforts to help landless laborers and destitute women, though even in this case the frequency of mention of benefits was less than proportionate to their number. The most "discriminated" group was also the largest group of households--those with less than one acre of land. The pattern of benefits according to landholdings for specific sectors was not the same for all sectors. (Table 7.2) The distribution of health care benefits was similar to the skewed pattern of overall benefits. In agricultural cooperatives it was more skewed in favor of the larger landowners than the overall pattern. The distribution of benefits was somewhat more favorable for the two poorer groups in regard to family planning.

The specific quantitative dimensions as shown in the table may not reflect a high level of precision, because the investigators in the sample survey relied on the verbal responses to their questions and were not able to apply any independent verification to the responses.¹ The investigators believe, however, that the main findings of the survey regarding the direction of bias in the distribution of benefits are valid.

The absence of a relationship between educational distribution and the distribution of BRAC benefits and the positive relationship between landholding and benefits apparently mean that ownership of land is a more important determinant of economic status and social influence than educational achievements and that distribution of education does not have a high correlation with the distribution of land ownership. These cross-relationships, however, need further investigation, especially for the purpose of assessing the role of education in rural development and determining educational policies.

The heads of the same sample of households were asked about their contribution to BRAC activities by means of participating in program planning and management, providing voluntary services, providing services for

¹The landholding pattern, for example, indicated by the survey is somewhat at variance with the findings of a BRAC survey in 1975 of 2300 households, which shows that 34 percent of the households are totally landless, 18 percent have one acre or less land, and 25 percent possess between 1 and 5 acres. The discrepancy, however, does not alter the basic characteristics of the ownership pattern.

payment, and offering cash or in-kind donation. The responses were predominantly negative for all educational groups and land ownership groups. (See Table 7.3) This apparently was not because they were unwilling to contribute. In response to queries, 90 percent of the sample household heads expressed the willingness to commit labor and time to support BRAC activities and 8 percent said they would contribute cash and materials to help BRAC. The lack of contribution, at least in part, was due to the organizational structure of the BRAC program that did not create conditions for mobilizing local contribution.

The overall picture that emerges regarding community participation is that the benefits of BRAC activities in Sulla were enjoyed disproportionately by the relatively better-off families with larger landholdings and that the institutional structure of BRAC did not exploit to the full extent the latent potentials of engaging the beneficiary population in planning and managing the program activities and of mobilizing the community resources.

On the question of the integrated approach, the Sulla experience points to a number of problems that defy easy solutions. Having decided to address various urgent rural problems in the areas of health, family planning, farming, fisheries, the landless, women's situation, and education, and lacking the human and material resources to provide a reasonably comprehensive coverage of the entire project area population, BRAC scattered its sectoral activities among certain villages and certain population groups, making none the true beneficiary of an integrated approach. As we have seen in the discussion of the major sectoral activities, any overlap of participation among different activities was coincidental rather than central to the program approach followed in Sulla. There was no central organizational mechanism that mobilized groups of population to assess their own development needs and priorities and to launch a multifaceted self-help program. The functional education groups might have been the institutional means for homogeneous interest groups to be organized for improving their own condition. But functional education in Sulla, as we have noted earlier, was not linked directly to development action, and the instructors and the BRAC field workers did not view functional education as the prelude to collective and organized action. The sectoral activities together constituted an integrated approach in an abstract sense from the point of view of BRAC as an organization, since these appeared to complement each other, but they remained somewhat compartmentalized for the beneficiary population.

The links of BRAC activities with nonBRAC development efforts--mostly of the government agencies--were tenuous. As noted in the chapters on the major sectoral activities, the differences in program approach and objectives, the inadequacies of resources and personnel in national programs, and sometimes the inclination to compete rather than to cooperate on both sides stood in the way. The lack of resources for comprehensive service coverage either by BRAC or by the government agencies left room for a tacit territorial and jurisdictional division of labor.

Cooperation between BRAC and other agencies had been most pronounced in respect of the agricultural cooperatives and the formation of the thana central associations. After initial political problems the central associations, formed with BRAC encouragement and support, received the standard financial and technical support and the government allocation of agricultural inputs

available to all IRDP sponsored central associations. There was apparently a sufficient commonality of objectives and approach between IRDP and BRAC in this respect.

The problems of the institutional structure and organization in the Sulla Project were apparently recognized by the BRAC leadership. In attempts to deal with these problems, new program strategies and institutional approaches emerged, as the plans for the third phase of Sulla and the new Manikganj project were prepared.

New Organizational Approach in Sulla

The main organizational goal for the third phase (1976-1978) of the Sulla Project as stated in the project proposal is as follows:

to organise and develop appropriate village and local level institutions, in order to effectively involve the masses of rural population in mobilising the communities' resources for their own development and to provide services to those whose needs are presently being ignored.¹

The major features of the third phase plans, from an organization and institutional point of view, are the following:

1. The third phase puts special emphasis on organizing disadvantaged rural groups with homogeneous development interests, such as landless laborers, small farmers, destitute women, fishermen, artisans, and the youth. The functional education courses are to be organized for such homogeneous groups and are to be used for planning and implementing group projects rather than only for literacy teaching and "consciousness raising" in an abstract sense.

Another device to be used for spurring group action is the village workshop. These workshops, conducted by BRAC staff and local youth group members, are to be a series of "conscientization" sessions with all the members in a village community. In these sessions, a critical analysis of the village socioeconomic structures and problems is to be made and action plans formulated for social and economic change.

As a result of the village workshops and the functional education program, village organizations such as youth groups, women's associations, and cooperative societies of different types are expected to emerge, and a village development committee with the representation of these organizations is likely to be formed. The village development committee is to plan and guide the broader community-wide development services in such areas as those of health, sanitation, family planning, and education. BRAC staff and the youth groups are to monitor the progress of the action programs of the village organizations and the village development committee and provide critical support.

2. The BRAC field staff that was operational during the second phase is to be maintained during the following three years or even slightly increased with the addition of women Field Motivators. However, the main energy and time of the field workers are to be devoted to "institution-building"--formation of homogeneous action groups of women, youths, landless laborers, fishermen, and so on, and supporting the plans and activities of these groups rather

¹BRAC, Sulla Project Report on Phase II, p. 1.

than just organizing and carrying out sectoral activities initiated by BRAC itself.

3. The sectoral activities are to be used not only to provide needed services but also to enhance the formation of organizations and institutions that can help make the sectoral activities more self-sustaining and self-managed. This is to be achieved by drawing up sectoral plans and objectives with the involvement of the homogeneous interest groups and channeling the services through the groups.

4. The central association of cooperatives at the thana level is planned to be more broad-based to include all cooperative groups rather than only agricultural cooperatives. The capacity of the central association is to be developed to service and support the various primary groups and to coordinate and guide development efforts that affect the different village level societies.

5. The BRAC organizational structure is expected to withdraw gradually at the end of the third phase leaving probably only a skeleton staff for technical support to the central association. The roles and functions that BRAC is performing are to be taken over by the central association or a similar central body and the village development committees.

At the time of collecting materials for this report in late 1976, some progress had been made in moving towards this new institutional approach. The formats and procedures of conducting the village workshops had been prepared, BRAC field staff had been briefed about the workshops, and a small number of the first round workshops had been conducted. The reorientation of the functional education courses was under way, but the full implications and the operational consequences of the new role of functional education were yet to be fully worked out. It was apparent that no systematic planning and thinking had yet gone into broadening the central association and building its strengths for ultimately taking over many of the BRAC organizational roles.

Local Self-Sustaining Institutions in Manikganj

The new BRAC project in Manikganj initiated in mid-1976 may be regarded as a testing ground for the lessons learned from the Sulla Project. From the very beginning, the emphasis in Manikganj was on keeping BRAC's own staff at a minimum level, forming local organizations of homogeneous groups for collective development action, and using youth groups as a catalyzing force for local activities.

The initial preparation for the Manikganj Project was done through a food-for-work program (FFWP) designed to attack three physical constraints to agricultural development in the area--early monsoon flooding, drainage, and irrigation in the dry season. Members of the local youth organizations participated in the FFWP by working with BRAC personnel to establish contact with the people, select FFWP sites, motivate the people living adjacent to the sites to give additional voluntary labor to the scheme, supervise the work, organize the transportation of wheat to the sites, and make payment to the laborers. The food-for-work program carried out between November 1975 and April 1976 not only improved the physical infrastructure for agriculture and provided food and cash to the vulnerable groups at a time of food scarcity, but also helped identify promising youths and youth groups for future BRAC work, involved local people in planning and implementation of development schemes, helped BRAC

to be acquainted with the local development problems and prospects, and enhanced BRAC's credibility with the local people.

BRAC is of the view that throughout rural Bangladesh there are hundreds of rural youth groups, educated but unemployed, who can act as catalytic agents for various development oriented organizations and programs.¹

From the youth group identified in each village in Manikganj, two to three are to be selected to undergo functional education instructor training, and then the group is to open a functional education center in its own community. As mentioned in the chapter on functional education, the functional education program is to be used as the main initial thrust for organizing groups for planning and carrying out self-help activities in Manikganj. As the groups begin to express the need for other programs, other youths are to be trained as paramedics, family planning workers, and motivators to assist in cooperative formation and other developmental activities.²

The strategy of supporting local youth groups is also being tried in Shaturia, the thana adjacent to Manikganj. A dozen members of local youth groups spent several months in Sulla acquiring practical experience of the BRAC development approach. On their return to Shaturia the youth trainees formed an alliance of 13 local youth groups and planned development activities in the areas of public health, family planning, functional education, fisheries, agriculture, and formation of cooperative groups. They were assisted by a BRAC staff member and received a limited financial support from BRAC. The Shaturia experience prompted BRAC to explore the prospects of a special program of training youth leaders of "self-starter" development programs and supporting such programs with small financial grants and technical advice.

The sectoral activities in health, family planning, and extension services for agriculture and fisheries in Manikganj are to be channeled and carried out through the local groups emerging from the efforts of the youth workers and the functional education program. As in the third phase of Sulla, ultimately the responsibilities for coordinating and supporting the development services are to be taken over by a thana level association of the primary groups.

Concluding Comments

In BRAC's efforts to create a viable institutional structure for its rural development program, a change of approach is readily discernible. Originally the pattern was characterized by a large paid field staff, BRAC-initiated and managed sectoral activities not fully integrated with each

¹BRAC, Manikganj Project, p. 9-10.

²Ibid., p. 10.

other, a low level of community participation in planning and managing activities, and insufficient positive discrimination in the program in favor of the poorest people. This had changed to a pattern marked by a small number of full-time and paid field staff, reliance on members of local youth groups for field work, emphasis on building organizations of disadvantaged groups with homogeneous development interests, and a more prominent role given to functional education and village workshops in forming primary action groups and in planning and carrying out the combination of sectoral activities through the local organizations.

The new approach began to be reflected in BRAC activities and project proposals in 1976 and is still in the process of being shaped and elaborated. It is certainly compatible with BRAC's basic goals of promoting self-sustaining rural development, creating and strengthening local institutions, and helping improve the living condition of the most deprived and the poorest. It is too early to tell how this approach will fare in reality and how effectively BRAC will be able to put it into practice.

Two critical questions in relation to the growth of the local institutions are how the local power structure will be dealt with and how the local institutional structure can be made strong enough to permit the "withdrawal" of BRAC.

What will be the response to BRAC's organizational efforts of the incestuous alliance of the larger landowners, moneylenders, and influential families whose power, influence, and privileges are certain to be threatened? During the second phase of the Sulla Project BRAC had infringed on the vested interests of the local power structure only marginally; there was no concerted and broad-range effort to organize the various deprived groups and to utilize the idealism and the receptivity to change of the youth in this effort. In many instances the benefits of BRAC activities were enjoyed as much or more by the better-off families as the poorer families.

It might be noted here that a somewhat dramatic brush with the local power structure came early in BRAC's life in a project in Rowmari in the northern district of Rangpur. This ended in a BRAC retreat and eventual abandonment of the project.

In the wake of the 1974 floods and famine, a famine relief project was launched in Rowmari with Oxfam-UK aid. BRAC also decided to initiate a multi-purpose rural development program in the area, capitalizing on its association with the local people and on its familiarity with the local situation. However, soon after the relief operation began, BRAC faced a boycott and ostracism from the carpenters who refused to build the BRAC office building, the local bank manager who refused to release funds from the BRAC account, the bullock cart drivers who refused to transport BRAC supplies, and the firewood merchants who refused to sell their firewood to BRAC. A BRAC worker was assaulted in the night and was accused by village leaders of rape, even though he was not in the locality at the time of the alleged "incident." It turned out that all this activity was orchestrated by an influential local man who was chairman of the board of the IRDP-sponsored Thana Central Cooperative Association, a wealthy landowner, a jute exporter, and a former member of the parliament from the locality. He and his allies were apparently afraid of losing control of the

local TCCA and other local institutions and also the system of patronage, influence-peddling, and corruption that went with this control.

With the intervention of government officials from the district, the relief operation was salvaged and BRAC brought it to a successful conclusion. It had fed 8,000 to 13,000 children for up to four months, averting malnutrition and many probable deaths. BRAC and its financial sponsor Oxfam-UK decided, however, to pull out from the development program in Rowmari when it became obvious that BRAC and the local TCCA were unable to work together.¹

In order to have a better insight into the mechanism of social change in the village in the face of numerous obstacles, BRAC is supporting with a grant from the Ford Foundation an anthropological study of two villages in the two project areas of Sulla and Manikganj. Two research assistants have been hired to apply the "participant observation" techniques in the two selected villages. An anthropologist from the Marga Institute in Sri Lanka has been appointed as a consultant for preparing the research design, training the researchers in methodology, and supervising the study. The study is expected to provide useful policy guidance from a disciplined observation of the interplay of the "system" of values, resources, and social and economic relationships in a village. Preliminary results of the study are expected in late 1977.²

The reaction of the local power structure is only one element in the process of nurturing and strengthening local organizations of deprived groups and building an institutional structure for self-sustaining development. Another important element is the intention and attitudes of the national government in regard to the local government structure and the degree of decentralization and sharing of authority considered necessary or desirable. The BRAC efforts might be seen by the government as a useful trial with important lessons for the national rural development program. In this case a favorable climate of support and cooperation from the government agencies, particularly the local and district officials, can reinforce and accelerate the process initiated by BRAC. Alternately, the BRAC activities may be viewed as well-intentioned efforts of a voluntary organization that the government would tolerate as long as no laws are violated. In such an atmosphere, BRAC and the local organizations would be up against the added obstacle of noncooperation and foot-dragging of government agencies and their local agents. BRAC's experience and lessons would also have that much less impact on the government rural programs and the national rural development policies and strategies.

In fact, while at the field level the interaction between the BRAC activities and the government rural services have not generally been close if only because the thin spread of the government activities leave plenty of room for voluntary agencies to function, at the national level there appears to be a

¹See BRAC, Report on Rowmari Thana Childfeeding and Nutrition Programme, Dacca, n.d.

Also Cole Patrick Dodge and Paul D. Wiebe, "Famine Relief and Development in Rural Bangladesh," Economic and Political Weekly, Bombay, May 29, 1976, pp. 809-817.

²BRAC, Newsletter, vol. 1, No. 3, May-June 1976, pp. 6-7.

general awareness and appreciation of BRAC's useful work and bona fides among government leaders and officials involved in rural development. A member of the BRAC governing body is a member of the Council of Advisers to the President (i.e., a member of the President's Cabinet equivalent to a Minister) and there are other well-wishers of BRAC in influential official positions. There is increasing interest from relevant government agencies in BRAC's functional education and health care efforts. For instance, the Integrated Rural Development Program in launching a project for women's cooperatives has called upon BRAC's assistance for developing the educational components and training the field workers. The Division of Population Control and Family Planning has often cited the Sulla Project of BRAC as an example where a family planning effort integrated with a broader rural development program has demonstrated encouraging results. However, a sense of goodwill towards BRAC and appreciation of its efforts among individual government leaders do not necessarily translate into the adoption of appropriate lessons from the BRAC experience in government programs, which would often call for basic reorientation of objectives and policies in government programs rather than the transplantation of certain methods and techniques.

COSTS AND FINANCES

The Pattern of Costs

Available information about the budgets of the various components of BRAC indicate the magnitude of the different project activities, the breakdown of the total costs into major cost categories, and the relative proportions of the cost categories compared to the total or to each other. The cost data are based on the proposed budgets for each of the major projects for the planned duration of the project, which varied from one year to three years. Actual expenditure data were not available as these projects were yet to come to a conclusion at the time of collecting the cost data (excepting the Functional Education Development project for which the data in Table 8.1 represents actual costs). However, major deviations from the budget in the total expenditures or in the relative proportions among cost categories were not expected. (Unfortunately, the breakdown of budget according to the categories in Table 8.1 for Sulla Phase II--the one major project that came to a conclusion at the end of 1975--was not available. This would have permitted a comparison of the pattern of expenditure between the early Sulla phase and the later projects.) All of the projects included in Table 8.1, except Functional Education Development, had their beginning in 1976 and they presumably reflect the changes in program approach following the early Sulla experience.

Among the six projects included in Table 8.1, the first three (Sulla Phase III, Jamalpur and Manikganj) are more representative of the normal and major activities of BRAC. Among the last three, the Training and Resource Centre is unusual because it has a large capital component (training facilities, dormitories, etc.) because of the nature of the project. The last two projects--Research and Evaluation and Functional Education Development--include provisions for foreign consultancy that consume a very large chunk of the total budget in each case and distorts the relative shares of the different cost categories.

Table 8.1 shows that in all of the projects the staff cost is a major item if not the largest item in the total budget. The field staff and head office overhead (which is essentially the head office staff salaries and the staff support and logistics costs) together accounted for 49 to 72 percent of total recurring costs in the different projects. The capital costs (land, building, transportation, equipment, and furniture) are relatively low or even nil in all the projects except the Training Centre project. In the two major projects--Sulla Phase III and Manikganj, they are 5 percent and 15 percent respectively. The lower figure in Sulla is explained by the fact that it inherited capital assets from the previous phase of the project.

Table 8.1

Categories of Budgeted Expenditures for Major BRAC Project Activities

Items	(Taka)					
	Sulla Phase III (3 Yrs.) ¹	Jamalpur (12 Mos.)	Manikganj (3 Yrs.)	Training & Resource Centre (3 Yrs.)	Research & Eval. Proj. (2 Yrs.)	Functional Ed. Dev. (19 Mos.)
<u>Capital Expenses</u>	310 000	--	605 000	723 000	--	--
<u>Recurring Expenses</u>	5 260 000	150 000	2 383 000	1 222 000	204 000	357 000
Field Staff	2 727 000	78 000	1 224 000	380 000	114 000	122 000
Head Office Overhead	521 000	24 000	491 000	216 000	--	54 000
Materials & Supplies	1 164 000 ²	18 000	314 000 ²	50 000	--	120 000
Other Costs: (Travel, logistics, training, data processing, reports, etc.)	848 000	30 000	354 000	576 000	90 000	61 000
<u>Special Costs</u>	361 000	--	965 000	--	255 000	208 000
Loan Fund	111 000 ³	--	500 000	--	--	--
Grants to Local Organizations	250 000	--	465 000	--	--	--
Foreign Consultancy	--	--	--	--	255 000	208 000
<u>Total</u>	5 931 000	150 000	3 953 000	1 945 000	459 000	565 000
Capital Cost as % of total	5.2	0.0	15.3	37.2	0.0	0.0
Staff + Overhead as % of total	54.8	68.0	43.4	30.6	24.8	31.2
Staff + Overhead as % of total recurring	61.7	68.0	72.0	48.8	55.9	49.3

¹Indicates duration for which the budget allocation has been made.

²Excluding part of the medicine costs to be recovered from patients.

³Only loan guarantee expenses assuming availability of loan funds from commercial sources.

Source: BRAC Project Documents.

The large difference in materials and supplies costs between Majikganj and Sulla Phase III is largely because of the plan to provide an intensive health and family planning coverage in Sulla and to build a base stock of supplies prior to BRAC withdrawal from the area at the end of Phase III. In both cases, the costs under this category would have been higher without the provision for recovery of drug costs from the patients. (Total drug costs are to be recovered in Sulla and 50 percent in Manikganj through insurance charges and service fees.) Without these provisions the costs would have gone up to Tk 1.6 million and Tk 250,000 respectively in Sulla and Manikganj.

The category "other costs" includes two major items--staff travel and staff training. Staff travel is generally calculated to be about 20 percent of salaries for all personnel with supervisory roles. Training and retraining constitute a substantial expenditure item for all field level personnel. In the case of Sulla Phase III this category includes the costs for functional education and village workshops, whereas functional education costs at least partially fall under "grants to local organizations" that are expected to carry out this activity in Manikganj. The large expenditure under this category for Training Centre obtains because the maintenance of trainees while resident in the Centre is a substantial cost item.

The loan fund for cooperatives and other group economic enterprises is smaller for Sulla than for Manikganj because it is expected that commercial banks will be found interested in extending credit to groups in Sulla under BRAC guarantee. The amount provided in the budget represents the write-off cost for bad debts (up to 20 percent of the total loans). In Manikganj, the loans are to be provided from BRAC's own funds.

Grants to local organizations of youth, women, and landless represent a new program approach that emphasizes the important role of local organizations and local self-management of group activities. The grants are to be provided as seed money for projects to be planned and implemented by the local organization. This approach, according to the budget figures, seems to be more vigorously pursued in Manikganj.

Major Program Items

Table 8.2 shows the major program items in the budgets for the three main sub-projects of BRAC--Sulla Phase II (concluded in 1975), Sulla Phase III and Manikganj (both begun in 1976). Health care and family planning clearly constitutes the most important component in all three sub-projects judged by budget expenditures. The budget for this component has gone up from under 21 percent of the total in Sulla Phase II to about 36 percent in Sulla Phase III. It is comparably high in Manikganj with 29 percent of the total allocation.

A comparison of the budgets of Sulla Phase II and the two other sub-project budgets indicates a trend toward a diffusion of the demarcations of sectoral activities and more emphasis on organizations and groups of the beneficiary populations rather than separate sectoral activities. This trend is more marked in Manikganj than in Sulla Phase III, probably because it was more difficult for Sulla Phase III to depart radically from Phase II patterns than for Manikganj, a new sub-project.

Table 8.2

Major Items of Expenditure for
Three BRAC Sub-Projects

<u>Sulla Phase II (Actual Nov. '72-Dec. '75)</u>		
<u>Items</u>	<u>Taka</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Construction of Community Centers	304 308	7.9
Functional Literacy	428 825	11.1
Cooperative Development	400 831	10.4
Agriculture	683 466	17.6
Fisheries	132 460	3.4
Health Care	438 254	11.3
Family Planning	367 371	9.5
Field Organization (Salaries and Staff Support)	445 301	11.5
Head Office (Staff and Logistics)	545 063	14.1
General Capital Expenses	125 779	3.2
Totals	3 871 658	100.0
 <u>Sulla Phase III</u> (Budget for Jan. '76-Dec. '78)		
Institutional Development (Functional Education, Village Workshops and Staff Support)	930 240	15.4
Health and Family Planning	2 160 140	35.9
Disadvantaged Groups Programs (Landless, Women, Fishermen, Loan Guarantee Schemes, Grants, Staff Support)	931 240	15.5
Agricultural Development (Seed Multiplication, Veterinary Service, Staff Support)	636 080	10.6
Field Organization (General Staff Salaries and General Costs)	794 880	13.2
Head Office (Staff and Logistics)	520 992	8.6
General Capital Expenses	50 000	0.8
Totals	6 023 572	100.0
 <u>Manikganj</u> (Budget for Jan. '76-Dec. '78)		
Health and Family Planning	1 136 400	28.7
Grants to Local Organizations (Youth, Landless, Women)	465 000	11.8
Cooperative Loan Fund	500 000	12.6
Field Organization (Salaries, except Health and FP Staff, Staff Support and other General Field Costs)	880 920	22.3
Head Office (Staff and Logistics)	491 000	12.4
Capital Costs (other than Health)	480 000	12.2
Totals	3 953 320	100.0

Source: BRAC Project Documents.

Functional education and other training and educational activities (including village workshops in Sulla) remain a central element in the two recent sub-projects. It is not a separate line item in Manikganj budget because much of the educational activities, as noted above, are to be carried out by local organizations with BRAC staff support; hence the costs are included under organizational grants and general field organization costs.

The field organization costs in Manikganj are relatively larger than the others because all staff costs in Manikganj (except health workers) are included under this item, whereas some of the staff costs in Sulla Phase III are shown under separate program costs. Manikganj actually has, on the whole, a smaller paid staff relative to the size of the sub-project.

Overall Size of Operation

Overall size of the BRAC operation is indicated by the total annual non-capital expenditure during the financial year 1975-76. The total came to approximately 4.9 million Taka with the following breakdown:

Sulla Project	Tk 1 600	Thousand
Manikganj Project	1 000	"
Works Program	545	"
Jamalpur Project	130	"
Shaturia Youth Project	175	"
Gonokendro (monthly publication)	430	"
Materials Development Unit	400	"
Research and Evaluation	200	"
Mothers' Club Development	120	"
Training Program	300	"
Total	4 900	"

The capital assets of BRAC in early 1976 were valued at approximately 1.8 million Taka, divided equally between fixed assets in the form of land (on the project sites and land purchased for the training center, the future BRAC head office and the BRAC printing plant) and movable assets. The capital assets in 1976 included the following:

Land	Tk 922 000
River Crafts and other Vehicles	87 000
Camp Houses	388 000
Furniture	109 000
Office Equipment	148 000
Other Equipment and Machinery	232 000
Total	1 836 000

The above figures do not include approximately 400,000 taka spent toward site preparation and construction of the training center and the printing press building in 1976. BRAC also received shipment of the printing plant equipment worth US\$117,000 in 1976 which was still to be installed.

Dependence on External Sources

BRAC--of which the staff, management and leadership are wholly indigenous--is totally dependent on external support for both the operational expenses of all of the project activities and for building up the capital assets. The organization, as we have noted, originated as an instrument for distributing relief supplies provided by private relief organizations from abroad; but as its role changed into that of a rural development agency--with sympathetic backing and encouragement of the donors who originally supplied the relief materials--BRAC remained dependent on the outside donors for carrying out the new development-oriented activities.

BRAC has succeeded in attracting the support and assistance of a large number of external assistance agencies of different types which include secular philanthropy, religious charity, foundations, international agencies, and government aid agencies. The most consistent and the largest donors have been the different branches of Oxfam in U.K., USA, and Canada. The religious charities include Novib of Holland and Bread for the World of Germany. Inter Pares of Canada, a secular philanthropy, has also provided funds. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has given support towards establishing the printing press. United Nations Children's Fund has financed the publication of the monthly Gonokendro. The Ford Foundation has given a grant for carrying out a research and evaluation project.

Overall Cost Feasibility

The cost of the second phase of Sulla, as we have noted, was about Tk 4 million over three years; or about Tk 11 per capita per year for the 120,000 people in the project area. The budgets of Sulla Phase III and the Manikganj project are of the same order of magnitude (Tk 6 million and Tk 4 million respectively over three years with 100,000 people in the BRAC project area of Manikganj thana).

The absolute per capita amount of money spent in the projects, given their scope and objectives, is obviously small. It may be argued that the project activities do not directly benefit the total population of the respective areas and, therefore, the denominator in the calculation of per capita cost should not be the total population of the area. On the other hand, the same argument is applicable to most rural development programs including the government ones. By way of comparison, it may be noted that per capita government expenditure for the whole country in 1975-76 for health and family planning was Tk 10.¹ Since then, the government budget, particularly for family planning, has been boosted substantially by external assistance. The proposed population control and family planning budget of the government for a two-year plan covering 1978-79 and 1979-80 announced in September 1977

¹However, most of this amount was spent for curative services and medical facilities in the urban areas. See Oscar Gish, "The Development of Health Services in Bangladesh," Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, February 1976.

is Tk 3,040 million or about Tk 20 per capita per year. BRAC activities cannot be seen as supplanting government agencies and services, but BRAC has attempted to fill critical gaps in rural services and institutional development at costs that appear to compare favorably with the costs of government programs.

It has been noted in chapter 7 that the organizational approach envisaged for primary health care including family planning, if implemented successfully, will permit the health care program to be self-financed to the extent of two-thirds of the cost at the community level. The remaining one-third (about Tk 6) needed from extra-community sources is well within the range of the growing per capita health and family planning expenditure of the government, if the government funds are redirected towards the provision of primary health care in the rural areas.

Mobilization of financial, material, and human resources from the communities for community programs is a principle to which BRAC has been attaching increasing importance and which it has been attempting to apply with vigor in the newer projects as the discussion of the institutional structures in chapter 7 shows. It is, however, not BRAC's premise that rural people living in absolute poverty can lift themselves up from their condition by their own bootstraps without substantial assistance from outside the rural community.

Future Outlook

What is the future resource outlook for BRAC? Is BRAC to be permanently dependent on external sources of support for carrying out its development activities?

It has been noted that in the Sulla II health care program BRAC has recovered about half of the cost of drugs--the major cost component of health care--through the insurance scheme. The goal for the third phase of Sulla is to recover the total drug cost by improving the coverage and operation of the insurance scheme. The Manikganj project has a similar eventual objective.

As the third phase plans of the Sulla Project indicate, it is BRAC's expectation in each project area to develop the local institutional structures to a level that will enable BRAC to withdraw its own personnel from the project, letting the local institutions manage the development and service activities with their own resources and such government and outside subsidies as they can attract on their own. The problems and prospects of realizing this outcome are discussed in other parts of this paper.

Another important step taken by BRAC is to build an accumulation of capital assets that will provide a core of permanent financial support. To this end a relatively large printing press is being set up at a total cost of approximately US\$170,000 (site, plant and machinery), which will serve BRAC's own printing and publishing needs and is expected to generate an annual net earning of Tk 1 million for BRAC. This site will also house BRAC's head offices, effecting substantial savings in costly rentals.

With the establishment of the new Training and Resource Centre facilities outside Dacca, including residential accommodation for trainees, the center is expected to devote at least one-half of the training activities to serving other organizations in Bangladesh and to exact appropriate fees for these services.

If these expectations are fulfilled, it will mean that BRAC will be able to maintain from its own resources its organizational existence, support a core of permanent professional staff, and carry on essential follow-up of its earlier projects. This will be no small achievement. However, it also means that for undertaking new development projects or extending the scope of present activities geographically, BRAC will have to depend on external sources of support.

This situation does not necessarily portend a bleak future for BRAC. If philanthropic assistance from the industrial countries to the poor nations continues at least at the present level and if BRAC continues to prove itself to be a relatively effective voluntary agency capable of making good use of resources entrusted to it, it should not have any great difficulty in attracting sufficient financial support.

CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS

The purpose of our review and analysis of the BRAC rural development activities is to draw appropriate conclusions and lessons about the important questions that inevitably arise in the course of designing and implementing programs to serve the rural poor. As a rural development program focusing on the disadvantaged groups in the rural population, BRAC's own efforts to tackle the problems of planning and managing a multifaceted program are expected both to clarify the nature of the issues relating to these programs and to indicate the approaches to resolving the issues.

The questions that prompted this case study and others in the ICED series, we might recall, are the following:

- How can the individual and fragmented activities be integrated into a concerted development process aimed at improving the life of rural families?
- How can the usual "top-down" approach of rural programs be reversed and how can the rural people and communities effectively participate in the programs?
- How can the educational processes be effectively used to improve the performance of the development programs and to enhance integration and community participation?
- How can the development programs extend their reach and benefits to the poor and the underprivileged segments of rural communities?
- How can voluntary organizations best utilize their unique advantages and become the precursors and demonstrators of new approaches for larger public programs?

In attempting to arrive at answers to these questions, one cannot help asking what difference the BRAC efforts have made to the life of the people in the project area. As the preceding sections of this report must have indicated, this straightforward question does not have a simple answer because the BRAC undertaking is complex, its goals are diverse in scope and quality, it has been in existence for a relatively short time, and the one-to-three-year time-scale of the financial donors supporting specific project activities does not provide an adequate basis for judging the impact of the program. One

may, however, appropriately point to the factual evidences relating to BRAC performance in the Sulla Project area where BRAC has functioned the longest and where, at the time of this writing, one development phase has been concluded and another phase is well underway. The important indicators of BRAC performance during the three years of the second phase in Sulla are noted below.

At the cost of a major share of the total financial resources and over one-half of the manpower in the project area, the health and family planning program achieved the participation of approximately 15,000 residents (out of a total of over 120,000) in the health insurance scheme and reached a level of about 2,000 (out of an estimated potential number of 20,000) married women of child-bearing age as acceptors of a family planning method. The tangible impact of this service coverage after three years of operation in terms of health and family planning status of the population appears to be marginal. Although pre-project benchmark data were not available for comparison, statistical evidences of mortality and morbidity for mid-1975 and demographic information for early 1976 do not suggest a significant improvement when these indicators are compared with national statistics. Obviously, the health care program has not had the opportunity by 1976 to provide a sufficiently widespread, sustained, and intensive service to make a dent on the health situation. Similarly, the cumulative acceptor figure in the family planning program is not large enough or does not represent a retention pattern of sufficient duration (most being acceptors for less than a year) to mark an impact on the demographic situation.

About 2,600 project area residents participated in the functional education program and about one-half of this number is reported to have completed the lessons. We are not sure, however, what the completion of the course means in terms of new skills, knowledge, and attitudes. Most of the completers do not appear to have acquired a usable level of reading and writing skills, nor is there evidence (as far as the implementation of the program in Sulla Phase II is concerned) that any systematic effort was made to help the learners make the connection between the lessons and individual and collective self-help projects. Methodology and content of the functional education program was a distinct improvement over the traditional adult literacy efforts, but during Phase II of Sulla an effective approach was yet to be developed of making functional education truly functional, that is of its having a significant bearing on the current circumstances and future life prospects of the participants.

The agricultural promotion activities benefited less than 1,000 households, including 600 farmers in the "support blocks" and 300 landless laborers, although the extent of improvement in the economic status of these households was not clear from available information. Another 10,000 families were reported to have benefited from the distribution of vegetable seeds and fruit plants and saplings.

The effort to help improve the status of women through conventional skill training did not succeed and was abandoned in favor of more systematically organized collective economic and self-help projects through cooperatives and joint savings. It was possible to organize only a small number of such group activities by the end of the second phase of Sulla. BRAC also encouraged the

formation of more traditional farmers' cooperatives and assisted in improving the performance of the existing ones. BRAC's efforts created a firm base for the extension of the government's Integrated Rural Development Program (centered on a two-tier structure of primary cooperatives and a central association of the primary societies) to the project area. The cooperatives facilitated the supply and distribution of agricultural inputs for the members; however, the total number of beneficiaries was small and the cooperative structure was yet to take a firm root, expand its coverage, and become the main instrument for agricultural and rural transformation that it was intended to be.

It should be noted along with this catalog of achievements and nonachievements that the total time-span of the second phase of Sulla was about three years (and considerably less for some of the component activities), the total financial resources committed were less than Tk 4 million, and the involved BRAC staff comprised less than 100 young people--most without any professional expertise or high level training.

The most enduring achievement of the Sulla project so far is to be found, not in the quantitative record of performance of the sectoral activities, but rather in the fact that it brought to the surface various problems of development programs intended to help the rural poor, established a base of institutional structures and experienced personnel, and pointed the direction to be taken in reshaping and reorienting the program during the third phase of Sulla and in other new projects. The questions raised above can be fruitfully explored if we look at the BRAC experience in this light--as a continuous striving towards the development of a viable integrated approach for helping the needy and disadvantaged to help themselves through collective efforts.

The Integrated Development Approach

BRAC recognized the need and significance of an integrated approach and in pursuing this approach put different rural development components together in the Sulla Project. However, the resources and manpower committed to the project did not permit a sufficient participation of the people in the project area needing the various services offered by the project. The program management also did not provide for the mutual linkages and reinforcement of the different program activities essential for an integrated approach. The result was a series of parallel sectoral activities with only incidental overlap to the beneficiaries.

The program approach taken was an identification of certain general needs of the population and an attempt to meet them with a number of sectoral activities devised by the prevalent conventional wisdom about what constituted a rural development program. The needs that were identified (such as basic health care, agricultural development, functional education, cooperatives and so on) were genuine enough in a general sense, and a certain number of the project population undoubtedly benefited from the services provided; but, as we have seen, the program after three years of operation of its developmental phase has not brought about a major improvement in the quality of life of a significant proportion of the population--least of all, in the life of the poorest groups. Evidently the project activities needed to be tailored specifically to the needs of specific groups (especially if the purpose was to help the economically weaker and the disadvantaged sections of the community) but also made flexible enough in different combinations of components for a variety of groups.

Apparently the assumption behind the sectoral activities undertaken was that the individual participant, in assimilating their separate benefits would somehow effect an integration of them in terms of his own plan for managing his resources and improving his socioeconomic situation. This assumption was probably valid for those who were economically and socially in a relatively advantageous position. The sectoral approach (in contrast to the "people approach") inevitably gravitated towards a norm of operational goals and patterns that benefited the easily reachable and the relatively better-off at the cost of the disadvantaged.

In operational terms, a shift of emphasis from separate sectoral activities to an integrated "people" approach means that different relatively homogenous socioeconomic groups have to be identified and organizational structures developed accordingly. This is the logical approach when the goal is to help the disadvantaged groups rather than to offer a series of services for the benefit of the general public. This is the approach towards which BRAC appears to have moved for the third phase of the Sulla Project and for other new projects.

Integrated rural development (in contrast to the parallel functioning of sectoral activities in the same geographical location or the coordination of different sectoral activities through various administrative devices) requires a focus on the participant population--their circumstances, their own perception of their critical needs, and their preference and values. The implication of this premise for national rural development efforts is that, instead of attempting to reach the rural population with vertical sectoral programs, a means must be found to form local organizations of homogeneous interest groups and make them serve as the instrument for integrating and managing the sectoral activities of the beneficiary population. A strong local government structure, adequately representative of the total rural population, can become a mechanism for coordination among the network of local organizations and institutions and for mediation between the local groups and the higher tiers of government agencies at the regional and national levels.

Since health care and family planning have been implemented in BRAC virtually as one sub-program, a question of particular interest is how this integration has affected the performance of both health care and family planning activities. One may also ask what the consequences might be for health care and family planning performance under a more effective overall integration of the different components of BRAC.

We have to admit that a definitive and totally unequivocal conclusion in this regard cannot be drawn from the BRAC experience. BRAC obtained certain results by organizing the health care and family planning services in a particular way, important features of which were the following: (a) the medical and clinical backup of the family planning services was provided by the health care staff and facilities; (b) at the field level, special family planning workers were used for contact with clients and distribution of contraceptives but they were under the direct and close supervision of the paramedics who also played an important motivational role regarding family planning; and (c) the local people perceived the two activities as related--BRAC's medical services being the most well-known and widespread of all BRAC activities--and knew that for any medical problem arising from the acceptance of family planning, they could get help from BRAC medical service.

We do not know what the results would be if a family planning program were not backed by the health service, not identified with a multifaceted rural development program, and only had community-based field agents with supervision and backstopping provided by the family planning organization itself. The government family planning program is run along this line (though, in principle, maternity and child health care is regarded as a part of the family planning program), and its performance so far compares less than favorably with the BRAC program. But because of its many management and logistical problems, the government program, at least at the present time, is not a good example of a "single-purpose" family planning program and does not provide a good basis for comparison.

While a "proof" cannot be offered on the basis of BRAC experience in favor of or against a combined health and family planning program or a more integrated approach, a number of pertinent factors must be taken into account in considering the issue. First, given the evidence regarding prenatal deaths of women and high postnatal infant and children's mortality, a high rate of births per child-bearing age women, and a large family size are themselves serious health problems as far as the mothers and children are concerned. Second, it imposes an unaffordable and unnecessary economic burden on poor countries to duplicate the technical and professional support manpower and support facilities for both family planning and primary health care. Third, the problem of establishing credibility and inspiring confidence about the family planning program is more easily overcome when it is offered in conjunction with activities that meet the perceived needs about health problems.

The basic question, however, is not one of the technical efficiency of the single-purpose approach (on which ground alone the case for it is argued), but of values regarding all development efforts--whether the concern is about meeting certain sectoral quantitative targets or improving the welfare of people. The question needs to be posed in this stark form to get at the heart of the integration issue, and it needs to be underscored that reduction of population growth and gaining acceptance of the norm of a small family size are not ends in themselves. (It is, by no means, certain that even on technical efficiency grounds the single-purpose approach is superior.)

In a similar vein, it may be argued that health and family planning efforts will be better accepted, will have a more sustained impact, and will achieve goals in line with the preference and the value system of the beneficiary population if implementation of these efforts is made a component of the collective and organized self-help activities that improve the socioeconomic situation of homogeneous rural interest groups. In other words, the health care and family planning program is likely to be more effective if the rural communities themselves can take charge of planning and managing the delivery end of the services, in the context of tackling other survival and development problems, with appropriate technical assistance and resource support from the higher tiers of government and other external sources.

Community Participation

Despite the intentions and efforts behind the functional education program and the formation of cooperatives, community participation was not a strong feature of the early phase of BRAC. The sectoral approach it adopted and the heavy reliance on its own relatively large field organization for management

and implementation of the sectoral activities undermined the principles of community participation.

Community participation has many dimensions which, in the context of a program to help the disadvantaged sections of the rural community, might well include the following: (a) organizing services in the community on a community basis and making the services widely and easily accessible; (b) contribution by the community to the operation and maintenance of the services; (c) participation of the community in planning and management of the services within the community; (d) community input in overall strategies, policies, and work plan of the development program transcending individual communities; and (e) overcoming factionalism and interest conflicts in the community to achieve broad-based participation, particularly of the disadvantaged groups.

Participation of the beneficiary population in a development program along these dimensions is essentially a problem of building local organizations and institutional structures in such a way that participation is a significant and meaningful contribution rather than a token gesture. This in turn raises the problems of rationale for forming viable local organizations, the best approach to mobilizing people for collective action and creating a "consciousness" about collective or class identity and class interests, and the best means for building the necessary competence and capacity for collective action.

In rural societies characterized by peasant farming and large segments of landless and other disadvantaged groups, creation of participatory institutions and promotion of the participatory process require basic changes in the overall configuration of the intergroup social and economic relationships. For instance, the participatory institutions must overcome the entrenched factionalism in village communities that are nurtured by powerful and influential families and groups; break the semi-feudal patron-client bondage; and give the disadvantaged groups the self-confidence, hope, and courage that will convince them of their collective strength.

There is need for a clear conceptualization of the participatory process and its goals in a given rural context. A strategy for identifying and forming the homogeneous interest groups must be determined, activities must be devised and implemented that are within group capacity but also strike at the root of their subjugation and deprivation. The educational process becomes a central element in this strategy.

Ensuring participation in all its dimensions, as the evolution of the Sulla Project and the plans for other new projects indicate, calls for a lessening of emphasis on the sectoral approach and building an organizational structure that, instead of managing the program for the beneficiary population, permits the growth of the local groups towards greater self-reliance and autonomy. As we have noted earlier, the sectoral approach and an organizational model that inhibits popular control of the development program tend to go hand-in-hand; conversely, effective integration and meaningful participation are like two sides of the same coin.

Finally, the efforts to promote participation can succeed only with unambiguous commitment on the part of the development agency, whether a voluntary organization or a government department, to serve the interests

of the disadvantaged groups--the landless farm workers, women from poor families, young people, small farmers, and rural artisans struggling to eke out a living from traditional occupations.

Education

BRAC's program approach is distinguished by the systematic use of varied educational approaches in support of its objectives. Three major categories of educational activities in BRAC are: (a) programs for the beneficiary population with the aim of raising their levels of awareness and understanding and making them better participants in the development activities, such as functional education and village workshops; (b) devices that develop the special skills and competence of specialized program workers, such as paramedics, village health auxiliaries, family planning workers, cooperative accountants, instructors for poultry raising, functional education teachers, and so on; and (c) training for general BRAC field workers and potential youth group organizers.

Given the overall goals of supporting self-sustaining development and helping the rural poor, it was no surprise that the conventional literacy program launched by BRAC did not serve its purpose. The program was quickly abandoned and a new functional education approach was introduced. The new program was marked by substantial innovation in methodology, content material, and relevance to the learner's life. Apparently, even this, a series of prestructured lessons taught through a relatively standardized pedagogical approach to a group formed without any specific rationale, was not adequately functional as far as the life of most of the learners was concerned. BRAC recognized that the functional education learning groups had to be formed with people who had common socioeconomic interests and that the educational program must be linked more directly and intimately with collective development action. This is the direction that had been taken by the functional education activities in the newer BRAC projects. "Consciousness raising" and engaging in collective self-help action had gained precedence over the traditional goals of acquiring literacy and numeracy skills, although these were not seen as alternatives. Village workshops introduced in Sulla could be described as a form of relatively unstructured functional education without the literacy and numeracy content and reflected a concern about making the educational program an active instrument for promoting development action.

The evolution of the functional education program in BRAC suggests that the lessons and the methodology of the functional education course cannot be inserted into any situation and expected to promote development, unless the particular situation permits the formation of relatively homogeneous interest groups and unless the atmosphere exists for using the educational program to plan and initiate collective self-help activities.

In the training of health workers and other field-level specialized personnel, BRAC evolved a low-cost but effective formula by shunning the trappings of such conventional training programs as classroom lectures, theoretical studies, highly structured syllabuses, full-time professional trainers, and special training facilities. It relied on supervised apprenticeship in real-life work situations followed by adequate technical support when the apprentices took independent responsibilities. BRAC also demonstrated that with continuous technical backup, people of both sexes, varied socioeconomic background, and little or no formal education could be entrusted with specialized development functions. Even with the "informal" training approach, a large variety of com-

petence and skills (such as those of paramedics, shevikas, and LFPOs) could be differentiated and developed as demanded by the circumstances.

It might be noted that paramedics, with their short informal training, would probably not be recognized as "paraprofessionals" by government standards, although even they could not be afforded at the base of the service delivery system--hence another layer of auxiliaries, the shevikas. This raises questions about the manpower policies and training requirements of government programs that raise public costs and make services out of the reach of the rural people. An alternative model of manpower development and utilization deserves serious consideration and trial, one that relies on practical apprenticeship and relatively intensive technical supervision as the basic approach for all field level workers of development services.

For the improvement of skills and competence of general field level workers BRAC has moved from an informal on-the-job learning approach to a more systematic training program. This appears to be in part the result of the accumulated BRAC experience in the field that has led to the identification of certain skills and knowledge that need to be developed by all field workers and for which a training process may be devised. The emphasis on a special training program also reflects a shift in the program approach away from a large BRAC field organization to a greater reliance on the leaders of local organizations. The local group leaders are not full-time BRAC workers and, unlike BRAC's own full-time field agents, are not under the continuous supervision and guidance of BRAC personnel.

It is evident that the rural development approach of BRAC requires the field workers--whether full-time members of BRAC staff or members of local organizations--to acquire basic skills and understand the communication process, group dynamics, survey and analysis of the local socioeconomic situation, planning group projects, following through the implementation steps of a plan and assessing results, and the use of the functional education approach for initiating and organizing collective self-help efforts.

Programs that are relatively large in size or are expanding to new geographical areas and programs that are concerned with developing local leadership and agents of change cannot entirely rely on an informal apprenticeship approach. A more systematic and somewhat institutionalized training process becomes inevitable. Any application of the BRAC program strategies in government programs is hardly possible without a well-organized training program for workers.

What needs to be watched is that the training program, with special physical facilities and a full-time staff, does not become an artificially contrived and sterile process removed from the realities that the field workers would face in the villages. As for the skills and understanding required to be developed by field workers, institutionalized training cannot be seen as a full substitute for learning from practical apprenticeship and experience. The training program can at best complement such learning or prepare the new field workers to benefit more fully from on-the-job experience. The training programs, therefore, are likely to be effective only under certain conditions: if the inherent limitations of the structured training courses are recognized, a balance is maintained between institutionalized training and the practical apprenticeship approach, and a recurrent approach is followed through short intermittent courses permitting

the field workers to come back periodically to the training center and the trainers to rotate between field work and training. In such a scheme, the training interlude can be the occasion to analyze the collective experience of the field workers, to examine the applicability of general principles in specific situations, and to devise new solutions for specific problems.

If the training program for general field workers--as opposed to specific training for technical skills such as maintaining the books of the cooperative society or artificial insemination of cattle--is seen as an integral and interacting element of a development program, it would be difficult to offer "pre-packaged" courses for the workers of different organizations with varying objectives and philosophic rationale. There are, of course, certain technical contents in training "modules" on communication or group dynamics that may be helpful for all rural development workers. However, as in the case of functional education, the effectiveness of the training of field workers is bound to be minimized when training as a recurrent process is not linked directly with the development actions in which the field workers are engaged.

Reaching the Poorest

Poverty, whether defined in terms of a minimum per capita income or access to a set of basic goods and services, is pervasive in rural Bangladesh. One-half to three-quarters of the rural population, depending on the estimate of income or consumption level considered necessary to rise above the poverty line, live in poverty. But among the poor, some are poorer than others. The hardest hit groups, living virtually on the fringe of physical survival, are the families of the landless farm laborers, the destitute women without able-bodied males in the family, and members of certain traditional artisan castes (such as potters, weavers, cobblers) for whom the economic base of the occupation has eroded because of problems of market, raw materials, and competition from industry.

Despite the avowed concern for the poorest, in the early phase of Sulla there seems to have been insufficient attention to the differentiation of the relative levels of poverty among the total population; the varying socio-economic circumstances of such groups as the landless laborers, the destitute women, and the unemployed artisans; and the need for different program strategies for improving their situation. In the later phase of Sulla and in the new project activities of BRAC, there is a much greater awareness of the relative levels of deprivation among the poor and the need for a sharper focus on the most deprived groups as reflected in the emphasis on mobilizing functional interest groups for collective self-help activities.

Available evidence, as we have noted earlier, shows that the general development services of BRAC--health care, family planning and functional education--as sectoral activities (and not integrated with the collective self-help projects of homogeneous interest groups) have benefited the relatively better-off sections of the rural population more than the poorest. The agricultural support activities and the promotion of farmers' cooperatives, for inherent reasons, have also helped the less poor among the rural population.

Given the fact that cultivable land, the most important productive resource in the rural areas, is owned and controlled by a relatively small minority that also enjoys the social, economic, and political power derived from this control, it is inevitable that the benefits of any general development program will be shared disproportionately by the powerful minority, unless ways are found to con-

centrate the program efforts on the specific needs of the poorest. A general development program for improving agricultural production and providing essential social services can benefit the total rural community only if a large section of the community is not left out of the control and utilization of the productive resources of the community. This apparently has been recognized by BRAC, and its project activities have shifted towards more selective activities focusing on the most disadvantaged and deprived groups of the rural population.

The selective focus on the poorest groups has its inherent limitations as long as this happens in the context of existing production and power relationships in the rural community. It will take hard work and imaginative approaches to make the poorest groups participants and beneficiaries of the social services such as health care, family planning and education. But with the scarce productive resources (land being controlled by a section of the community and economic opportunities in general being limited), it is difficult to visualize more than marginal improvement in the economic situation of the most deprived groups. Insignificant progress on the economic front, in turn, is likely to undermine the efforts to widen participation in the social services. This is the fundamental reality that BRAC efforts bring to the surface and has to be faced by all rural development agencies and the national policymakers.

Special Role of Voluntary Organizations

Small-scale development programs managed by voluntary organizations have well recognized advantages of flexibility and freedom from bureaucracy that large public programs normally do not enjoy. Voluntary organizations are also able to select the scope of their activities, the geographical locations for the programs, and their participants to a much greater extent than public programs. Voluntary agencies also tend to attract idealistic and well-motivated people as paid and unpaid workers in their development activities. All of these favorable factors make it possible for voluntary programs to vary program approaches for specific locations and clienteles within the same project, modify initial plans in the light of experience, and take quick policy decisions when necessary. The evolution of BRAC's program approach from relatively conventional sectoral activities to a development approach concentrating on the promotion of local self-help groups on the basis of the early Sulla experience is a demonstration of the special strength of the voluntary programs. This change came about without the fanfare of formal evaluation studies or review missions of international experts—not that systematic evaluation of projects is unnecessary.

The unique characteristics of the small-scale nongovernment programs make them good instruments for testing and developing innovative ideas and approaches that may be difficult to try within the constraints of public programs. Many program ideas already applied in the various sub-projects of the multifaceted BRAC program suggest themselves as good candidates for testing for their potential adoption or adaptation into government programs on a large scale. Of course, apart from their inevitable bureaucratic tendencies, the government programs do not enjoy the flexibility of the voluntary organizations; therefore, straight transplantation of certain elements of the voluntary program into the government program is almost never advisable.

A practical way of transferring lessons learned in voluntary programs to government programs would be for the government and the voluntary organization to embark on a kind of "joint venture" in the shape of pilot

projects in one or more specific locations.

Once the viability of an approach is demonstrated in small-scale programs and some basic criteria of viability and feasibility (such as compatibility of objectives between the private program and a national program) for a large-scale expansion appear likely to be met, a pilot phase can be initiated on the basis of close collaboration between the government and the voluntary organization in a limited area (preferably in a standard territorial unit of administration, such as a thana). The objective of such a venture would be two-fold: first, to test and develop the specific adaptations and modifications of the approach of the small program inevitably needed for a national and public program; and second, to work out the operational steps for moving beyond the pilot phase and to use the pilot phase for training and orientation of the government functionaries in anticipation of further expansion of the approach. The government, obviously, has to be enthusiastically committed to giving the pilot project a fair trial and to following it up appropriately. The voluntary organization, on its part, should be appreciative of the problems of national programs and large bureaucracies and be willing to be flexible without sacrificing the essence of its own approach.

Besides being the testing ground for innovative techniques in integrated rural development, an equally significant potential role of voluntary organizations is that of an institutional mechanism complementary to the local government structure. The government rural development approach in Bangladesh, represented by the Integrated Rural Development Project (IRDP), visualizes a strong thana-level development guidance and coordination body composed of elected representatives and government personnel as the means for decentralizing development responsibilities. As we have noted, it is also BRAC's expectation that a thana-level apex organization representing various primary cooperatives and organizations in the villages will eventually take over the support and coordination of local development projects and services, permitting BRAC to dismantle its own field organization. Whether this institutional design for rural development will be effectively established and whether it will serve the interests of all the rural people including the poorest instead of being captured by the powerful minority will depend on the success of the efforts to mobilize and organize the local interest groups of the deprived and the disadvantaged.

If BRAC, through its projects for "conscientizing" and generating homogeneous interest groups of the poor for collective self-help activities, can demonstrate a feasible approach for organizing the poor into constituent primary interest groups (and, to a degree, a countervailing political force) for the local government and local development coordination body, it will be a far-reaching contribution to building an effective rural development strategy. The mobilization of the poor for self-help also opens up the possibility of conflicts between the organized poor and others who would want to retain their control over the local institutions. The rights and interests of the poor majority cannot be safeguarded without facing this possibility.

LESSON 2

IDENTIFYING DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS

Learning Objectives

The participants will:

1. Understand more thoroughly issues surrounding rural development through discussion of the BRAC case study.
2. Have better understanding of the history of rural development.
3. Recognize some important issues of problem identification in specific situations.

Activities

1. Discussion of BRAC case. (30 min)
 - a) What were the most important issues discussed in the case?
 - b) How did the perspective of the author affect the kind of information presented in the case?
 - c) Are there other factors and considerations omitted in the case presentation?
2. Discussion of writing assignments. (30 min)
 - a) What was the most difficult/easiest part of the assignment?
 - b) How did you feel when you were doing the assignment?
 - c) How would you improve the assignment if at all?
3. Lecturette-history of rural development since WWII. (20 min)
 - a) Context of development before WWII.
 - b) Trends in development of theories and their ramifications to rural development.
 - c) Current trends in rural development.
4. Break (10 min)
5. Simulation in problem identification. (1 hour)
 - a) Outsider from class will enter and inform class that they have been chosen by an outside agency to receive funding for a project to benefit their community. S/he would like for them to submit a preliminary proposal on what they will do with the \$100 dollars, the objectives they will achieve, exactly how the money will be spent, and how they will evaluate their success. The deadline for budget allocations for projects of this agency is in one hour so he will return to receive the proposal then. The rules governing the funds are that they may only be used to benefit their community as a whole, that they cannot divide the funds among themselves and that they must account for how the funds will be spent.

6. Process consultation (20 min)
a) discussion on simulation and issues that arose.

7. Handout Homework number 2 - Observing Others. (10 min)

Materials required

1. Water and cups.
2. \$100 dollars cash.
3. Outsider to play role of development agency official. (Greg?)

HOMEWORK 2

OBSERVING OTHERS

1. Read:

1. Oliver, Education and Community, pp.83-123.
2. Rogers, Diffusion of Innovation, pp. 1-37.
3. Vogeler, Dialectics of Third World Development, pp.3-25.
4. Moris, chapter 3, pp.31-46.
5. Shah, "The Story of Fire."

2. Write:

In at least two pages describe what you might do to increase the learning capacity of the people involved in your rural development problem/issue/topic.

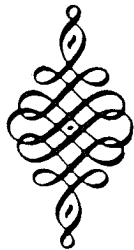
Guiding questions you might wish to consider:

1. How would the aspects of human nature outlined by Oliver affect your actions?
2. What factors would Rogers deem essential in determining your strategy?

3. Revise your writing from homework number 1 if you need to. Make any ammendments to your problem. This is the last opportunity you will have to change your mind. After this the commitment has been made and you must see the development process through to the end of the course.

Education and Community

A Radical Critique
of Innovative Schooling



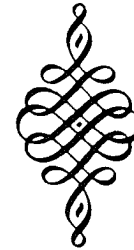
Donald W. Oliver

Harvard University

McCutchan Publishing Corporation
2526 Grove Street
Berkeley, California 94704

4

The Potentialities of Human Nature



In this book we are attempting to present a way of looking at the human species which will emphasize criteria for judging quality of life and the evolutionary limitations placed on man in his quest for a positive life. The most basic source of these limitations is in man's nature itself. In a very direct way man's potentialities are limited by the physical equipment that has evolved with him over the millions of years life has been transforming itself on this planet. In a more obvious way this equipment includes prehensile forelimbs, bipedalism, and a highly differentiated central nervous system which is capable of complex information storage and problem-solving. In a somewhat less obvious way, man is a species with a large number of social capacities and tendencies, some of which he shares with his primate neighbors: temporal biological rhythms, the capacity and need for physical and emotional attachments, the tendency to create and teach stable role patterns, the tendency to polarize social life in

terms of ingroup-amity—outgroup-enmity, and the need to legitimate social patterns with cultural rules overtly expressed in cognitive statements and symbolic gesture and celebration.

To move directly from statements about human nature—tendencies, capacities, instincts, or the like—to supporting evidence, illustrations, or social implications short circuits a number of significant and clarifying analytic categories. We think that man's nature—both its limits and flexibilities—is expressed in any setting through four channels or subsystems: environment, culture, social structure, and personality (see figure 4.1).

These channels suggest a limited set of structured potentials through which the full range of human possibilities can be described. It assumes, for example, that male-female dyads, nuclear or restricted families, full or extended families, bands or villages are natural human social forms each of which has special limiting characteristics. It is possible to imagine social forms in which males and females relate promiscuously, or adults and young people relate only casually and randomly, or adolescent females direct and control all others. It happens, however, that these structures rarely occur.

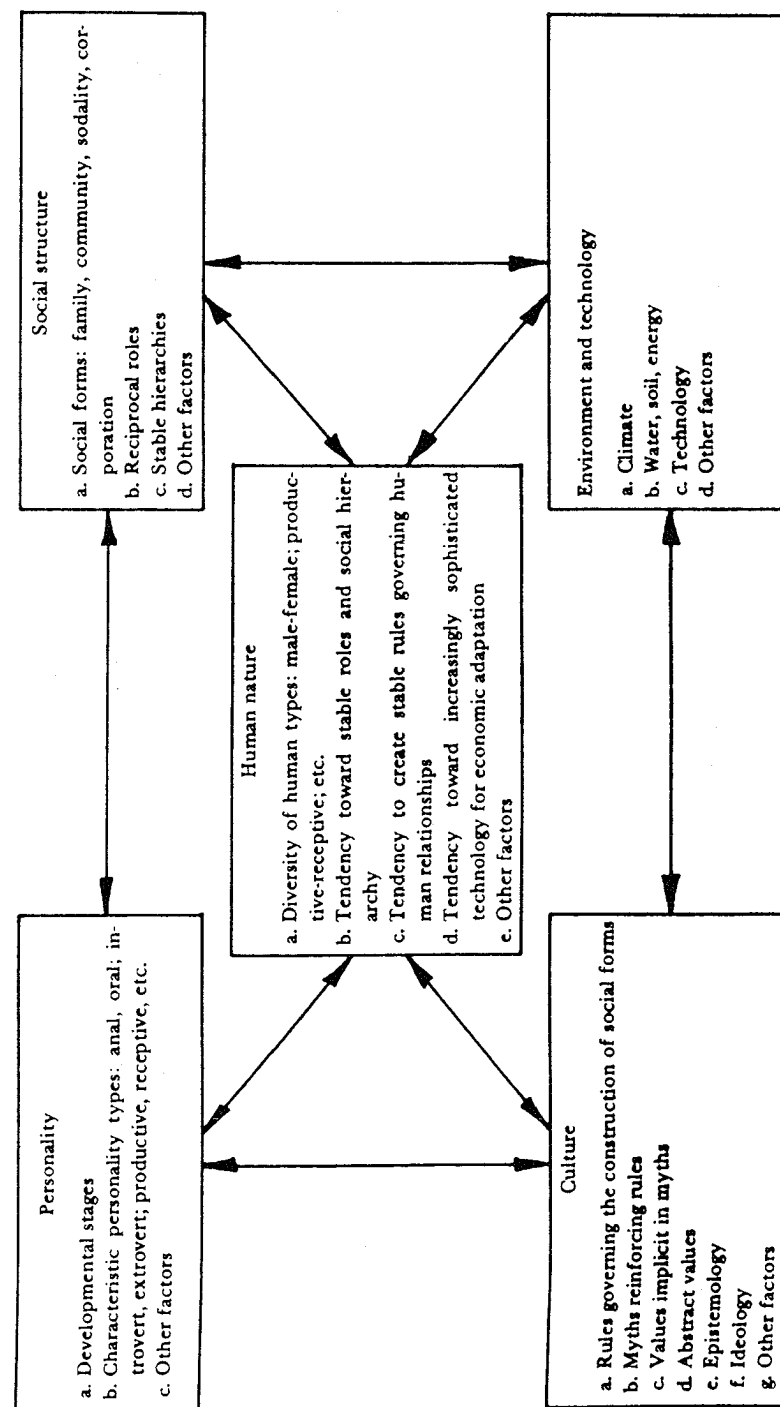
We assume that the same kinds of limited possibilities occur for personality, culture, and environment. Regarding personality, for example, Fromm says:

Freud's clinical descriptions of the oral-receptive, oral-exploitative, and anal character seem to us essentially correct and confirmed by experiences in the analysis of individuals, as well as analytical research into the character structure of groups. (Fromm and Maccoby 1970, p. 13)

Freud's classification refers, of course, to only one complex dimension of human personality.

Below we shall suggest subsets within these channels. Conceptually it is important to understand that the channels are present and limiting because of the underlying characteristics of the species. If we hypothesize, for example, with Wallace (1970), that age and sex are related to social hierarchy, we would expect to find this fact represented in social structures (families, communities); in culture (beliefs about who is in authority); in personality (some types would be predisposed in voice, gesture, and manner to express dominant behavior; some types would be predisposed to express submissive behavior); as well as in the way technology is organized. Furthermore, it is critical

Figure 4.1
Channels Through Which the Limits and Potentialities of Human Nature Are Expressed



to understand, as the above example suggests, that the channels through which human tendencies are expressed are interrelated—not independent. Social structures must take account of variations in personality; culture tends to reinforce social structure; human technology demands certain types of social structures, and so on. High quality of life presumably occurs only when the channels are related in complex ways, for example, when there are sufficiently varied social forms (including diverse and reciprocal social roles) to include the full range of human personality types; when the culture is loose enough to accommodate this diversity but defined enough to give direction and meaning to people's lives; when technology has created sufficient economic wherewithal to meet minimal human needs, but not impose overwhelming amounts of alienating machinery (e.g., factories, office buildings) on human lives. These distinctions are, of course, commonly made by social systems analysts. (See, for example, Parsons 1971.) Parsons attempts to link *subsystems* through which human behavior is channeled with *functional requirements* of human societies. His classic set of analytic relationships is summarized in table 4.1. Our own analysis suggests that there is no

Table 4.1
Parsons' Paradigm

	Subsystems	Primary function	Structural components	Aspects of developmental process
Social	Societal community	Integration	Norms	Inclusion
Cultural	Pattern maintenance	Pattern maintenance	Values	Value generalization
Personality	Polity	Goal attainment	Collectivities	Differentiation
Behavioral organism	Economy	Adaptation	Roles	Adaptive upgrading

Source: Adapted from Talcott Parsons, *The System of Modern Societies* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1971): pp. 6, 11.

intrinsic relationship between specific functional requirements of a society—economics (adaptation), politics (decision making), ideology (belief and values)—and the societal subsystems discussed here. That is, we do not see human adaptation, for example, as intrinsically

linked or parallel with only the economic system (what we would call environment and technology).

Environment and Technology

A basic limiting factor in human society is the level of support offered by the environment and the extent to which environment has or can be adapted by technology for human survival and comfort. What man needs for survival is, of course, problematical, but there are obvious necessities: food, air, water, shelter, and usually external energy in the form of domestic animals, wind and water power, fossil fuels, etc. Beyond these environmental or material requirements, what man calls poverty is somewhat relative to what his neighbor has. It is clear, for example, that the early Eskimos lived on the margin of successful adaptation. Minor changes in environmental pressures or technology might lead to extinction or to a serious depletion of the population. (Their loving abandonment of old people is legendary.) It is difficult to argue, however, that the Eskimo had a lower quality of life than, for example, Banfield's Italian peasant who probably had less environmental pressure (Banfield 1958). The peasant of Montegrano lives in a marginal environment.

If all the measures that have been suggested here [for improving the standard of living] were pursued actively and effectively, there would be no dramatic improvement in the economic position of the village. . . . Under the best of circumstances, it will be a very long time before the people of Montegrano have enough to eat. (p. 166)

But at least as important as the stark environmental pressures are the relative standards of the "good life" which the peasant has in his head.

By the standards of the larger society, the peasant's work, food, and clothing all symbolize his degradation. It is on this account, as much as for biological reasons, that he finds them unsatisfying and even hateful. Italians attach great importance to being mannerly (*civile*); the peasant feels that he is the very opposite: association with earth and animals, he thinks, has made him dirty and animal-like. . . .

La miseria, it seems safe to conclude, arises as much or more from social as from biological deprivations. (p. 65)

Technology is currently seen as the destiny and salvation of

man's ills, on the one hand, and the undermining of more primitive conditions for a decent and humane life on the other. There is little doubt that man has the capacity to create destructive, ugly, and demeaning technology, just as he has the capacity to create destructive culture or sadistic personality. Moving from intuitive quality-of-life judgments regarding environment and technology to systematic or persuasive criteria, however, is difficult. The Goodmans (1960, p. 171) deal with this issue:

SOME ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES FOR THE MORAL SELECTION OF MACHINES

1. Utility (functionalist beauty)
2. Transparency of operation
 - A. Repairability by the average well-educated person (freedom)
 - B. Constructivist beauty
3. Relative independence of machine from non-ubiquitous power
4. Proportion between total effort and utility (neo-functionalist beauty)

Mumford makes a similar search for standards by which to judge not only the quality but the limits of technology. He sees the positive limits in terms of what he calls "dynamic equilibrium."

Dynamic equilibrium, not infinite progress, is the mark of the opening age: balance, not rapid one-sided advance: conservation, not reckless pillage. The parallel between neolithic and neotechnic times holds even here: for the main advances which were consolidated in neolithic times remained stable, with minor variations within the pattern, for between 2500 and 3500 years. Once we have generally reached a new technical plateau we may remain on that level with very minor ups and downs for thousands of years. What are the implications of this approaching equilibrium?

First: equilibrium in the environment. This means first the restoration of the balance between man and nature. The conservation and restoration of soils, the re-growth wherever this is expedient and possible, of the forest cover to provide shelter for wild life and to maintain man's primitive background as a source of recreation, whose importance increases in proportion to the refinement of his cultural heritage. . . .

Second, equilibrium in industry and agriculture. . . .

This state of balance and equilibrium—regional, industrial, agricultural, communal—will work a further change within the domain of the machine itself: a change of tempo. . . . It is not the absolute speed assumed by any part of the machine system that indicates efficiency: what is important is the relative speed of the various parts with a view to the ends to be accomplished: namely, the maintenance and development of human life. (1963, pp. 431-32)

Both the quality and quantity of man's control over his natural environment are complex and debatable issues. What seems clear, however, is that modern societies often use technology and create environments with little or no regard for the requirements of man's underlying nature, aside from what seems comfortable or convenient in the most superficial way. One might entertain with some certainty, for example, the principle (as the Goodmans suggest) that technology which obscures or denies man's biological self is potentially dangerous and destructive. Seeing food only in its frozen or canned state obscures our absolute dependence on the sun for food; having waste products carted away in trucks or flushed down toilets and drains obscures the fact that we are intrinsically involved in a critical life-sustaining ecological chain. This latter illusion Slater calls the Toilet Assumption.

Prior to the widespread use of the flush toilet all of humanity was daily confronted with the immediate reality of human waste and its disposal. They knew where it was and how it got there. Nothing miraculously vanished. Excrement was conspicuously present in the outhouse or chamber pot, and the slops that went out the window went visibly and noticeably into the street. . . .

Our ideas about institutionalizing the aged, psychotic, retarded, and infirm are based on a pattern of thought that we might call the Toilet Assumption—the notion that unwanted matter, unwanted difficulties, unwanted complexities and obstacles will disappear if they are removed from our immediate field of vision. (1970, p. 15)

It is our position that there are environments and technology which are more and less consistent with underlying human requirements in much more profound ways than the superficial principles of comfort and convenience. The convenience of the garbage disposal and the flush toilet, for example, might well be weighed against the alienation caused by man living with the illusion that he has no waste products at all.

More important than simple statements we make about the material environment alone is the differential power of control over environment and technology various groups within the society exercise and for whose benefit that power and control are used. This, of course, is the thrust of Marxist thinking. The life one can imagine is a function of the material surroundings within which one finds oneself. Marx imagined beyond his immediate surroundings into a projective

history, a history which had less to do with the tyranny of technology and the human systems which manage them and more to do with who had the power to control and benefit from the blessings of technology.

More recent analysts of postindustrial society seriously challenge the assumption that science and technology are value free—that it is only how humans use them that gives them normative significance. It is important to distinguish here between simplistic materialism—the idea that man is simply a conditioned product of his material surroundings—and the Faustian idea that man can be seduced into styles of life which emphasize materialism, consumerism, greed, and alienation from his natural sense of human sociality, cooperation, and relatedness to other forms of life and the broad conditions that sustain them. Man's vulnerability to seduction by technological and political power is perhaps the most serious threat to a decent quality of life in the contemporary world. From an evolutionary point of view, the problem is that man has never developed inhibitory mechanisms which move him to control or limit the size and complexity of his social and natural settings so they will be consistent with the scale of his hunter-gatherer past, the past within which much of his adaptive constitution was forged. Control of personal or private property, for example, is minimal for the hunter-gatherer, for there is little to control; there is little surplus wealth. Likewise, abusive and arbitrary use of political power is limited by the fact that humans live in small units; all know one another intimately; all share a sense of protective concern for all members of the band.

The problem of technology, then, is really grounded in man's paradoxical evolutionary development. He has the technical capacities—as well as an inclination to use them—to destroy the material and social conditions within which he can feel comfortable or, at least, adequate. Faced with increasing material wealth and social power made possible by the control of complex technology, he tends to create highly stratified societies, for which his hunter-gatherer past ill-equipped him. For, as Lenski notes, “if any single feature of the life of hunting and gathering societies has impressed itself upon observers, it is the relative equality of the members” (1966, p. 102).

Culture

With the exception of our concern for environment and technology, our distinctions between culture, social structure, and personality are much like those developed by Spiro. Spiro sees social systems (what we would call social structure) as “configurations of reciprocal roles which are shared by members of a group in virtue of their inheritance from a prior generation” (1972, p. 588). He states that there are three bases for such social systems or structures: genetic inheritance (as in the case of social insects); roles acquired through social learning (as in the case of some mammals, including primates); and roles inherited not through social learning, but which are symbolically prescribed. This latter potential is almost exclusive to man.

I would now argue . . . that culture consists, among other things, of the norms which govern social relationships; that these norms are to be distinguished analytically from that system of social relationships which may be termed the social system of a society; and that both are to be distinguished from personality, by which I understand the motivational system (including internalized norms) that characterize individuals. (p. 589)

Very generally, culture would be defined as implicit or explicit rules which channel behavior. In their most obvious form, they appear as prescriptions or proscriptions. They are, however, surrounded by belief systems or ideology which rationalize and set the rules in broader context—value statements, facts, generalizations, law, systematic social theory, philosophy, symbols, myths, history, folktales, as well as methods for validating and knowing.

If we construe culture as largely language or concept-bound, then human limits on culture are set by the way man uses language, symbols, and concepts. There is evidence that he has a universal grammar (Chomsky 1968). His nervous system is wired in a particular way which limits and determines his logical potential.

He tends toward a dichotomized construction of reality (George Kelly 1955), and perhaps even toward specific dichotomies such as good-bad, strong-weak, active-passive. He tends toward metaphor and analogy which links his experience with the natural phenomena around him (Jung 1968; Lévi-Strauss 1963). His thinking tends to

function on a continuum from fluid imagery to sensory messages to very directed purposeful instrumental thinking (Jung).

The language characteristics seen as "human" vary considerably among individuals. There is, for example, a wide range of ability to think along the concrete-abstract dimension, or to create imagery in symbolic terms (e.g., poetry). Piaget (1955) has discovered a developmental sequence through which humans ordinarily pass in their ability to symbolize and "think about thinking." There are degrees to which individual humans internalize culture or rule-systems. For example, attitudes may be formed and shift because (1) one wishes to *comply* with a message source (presumably an authority), (2) one *identifies* with the message source, or (3) one has genuinely *internalized* the meaning and force of the message. Kohlberg and Mayer (1972) make a similar set of distinctions in their study of the way humans handle moral dilemma stories verbally or conceptually. Moral judgments may have a "preconventional basis" (the rightness of a position is justified on the basis of force, fear of punishment, etc.); a "conventional basis" (the rightness is justified on the basis of group consensus, opinion, or specific rules which maintain order within the group); or a "postconventional basis" (the rightness is justified on the basis of an abstract principle of justice such as utilitarianism). The extent to which culture is conscious or unconscious is, of course, a central concern of depth psychologists. Conflicts between culture and personal drives are presumably often handled by unconscious coping and defense mechanisms such as denial, repression, overcompensation, and the like.

Universal ideological dimensions of culture have been schematized by Florence Kluckhohn (1961), and are shown in table 4.2. Human cultures can also be described in terms of more abstract qualities: for example, *comprehensiveness* (extent to which potential or real social behavior patterns are covered by rules, values, or ideology); *level of specificity* (how detailed and delineated are the rules); and *level of integration* (extent to which rules in various behavioral domains such as work, love, religion, and play, are interrelated).

Judgments about the quality of life which various societies encourage, allow, or prevent are often difficult if not impossible to make within the framework of culture as a single dimension of a society. In general, such judgments apply to sociocultural or culture-and-personality relationships. One might, however, hazard the following speculations.

Table 4.2
Dimensions of Culture

Orientation	Postulated range of variations					
Human nature	Evil		Neutral	Mixture of good and evil		Good
	Mutable	Immutable	Mutable	Immutable	Mutable	Immutable
Man-nature	Subjugation-to-nature		Harmony-with-nature			
Time	Past		Present		Future	
Activity	Being		Being-in-becoming		Doing	
Relational	Lineality		Collaterality		Individualism	

Notes:

(1) This table is based on the following assumptions:

- (a) There is an ordered variation in value-orientation systems;
- (b) There is a limited number of common human problems for which all peoples at times must find some solution;
- (c) All alternatives of all solutions are present in all societies at all times but are differentially preferred.

(2) Explanation of terms which are not self-evident:

- (a) Being orientation—preference for kind of activity which is a spontaneous expression of what is conceived to be "given" in the human personality;
- (b) Being-in-becoming orientation—emphasizes that kind of activity which has as its goal the development of all aspects of the self as an integrated whole;
- (c) Doing orientation—demand for the kind of activity which results in accomplishments that are measurable by standards conceived to be external to the acting individual;
- (d) Individualism—each individual's responsibility to the total society and his place in it are defined in terms of goals and roles which are structured as autonomous;
- (e) Collateral—primacy of the goals and welfare of the laterally extended group;
- (f) Lineal—group goals again have primacy; in addition, continuity through time and ordered positional succession within the group become crucial issues.

1. Culture which seriously inhibits the normal functioning of basic human drives is destructive (e.g., rules preventing normal heterosexual relations until ten years after puberty, rules which prevent outgroup aggression).

2. Culture which greatly enhances the value of behavior which is difficult for large numbers of people to learn or perform is destructive (e.g., the rule that all humans should have control over reading and writing complex and abstract language; rules which press for transcendent levels of human consciousness).

3. Culture which legitimizes human exploitation is destructive (e.g., rules which allow or require some humans to live in poverty while others live in luxury).

Social Structure

A third analytic component or behavioral channel in a social system we would call *social structure*. Social structures can be construed in individual terms as roles or learned behavior patterns which occur predictably and regularly through time regardless of what individual plays them. Structure can be thought of more generally as sets of interrelated or reciprocal roles which together constitute *institutions*. The family might be seen as an institution in which various age and kinship roles are filled; a factory might be seen as an institution in which various authority-power and instrumental work roles are filled.

A continuing source of ambiguity is the extent to which we see institutions as universal, that is, occurring across different societies versus the extent to which we see them as the invention of a specific society or type of society. Families, villages, and cities are often seen as universals; schools, factories, and offices are often seen as society—or culture—specific. We make the distinction between general social forms and specific institutions. We maintain that social forms are universal types of collective behavior which man will generally create under certain specified circumstances. We would suggest the following, for example, as universal social forms:

- Intense dyads (lovers, marriage partners, friends, parent-child)
- Nuclear families
- Sodalities (work groups, friendship groups)
- "Bands," neighborhoods, villages

- Corporate organizations (factories, businesses, offices, schools etc.)

- Preindustrial cities

- "Modern" societies

Universal social forms which human societies create can be described along a number of dimensions, for example, complexity basis of cohesion or integration, degree of integration or cohesion the looseness or tightness of behavior patterns, or the harshness or leniency of sanctions used to enforce prescribed patterns. In general more complex social forms use a greater variety of methods of integration or cohesion. We would consider the following mechanisms representing man's more important integrative capacities:

- Biosocial bonding (heterosexual bonding, cooperative work bonding, nurturance-dependency bonding)

- Dominance hierarchies

- Division of labor

- Cultural codes or formal political structures legitimizing and rationalizing dominance hierarchies

- Negotiated contracts

The concept of tight versus loose social structures seems to us especially important because of its relationship to more primitive societies characterized by tribal or band relationships and more modern societies characterized by corporate organizations. It is not necessarily the case that communal or tribal relationships are loose or tight, but rather that they can be, while corporate organizations always tend toward highly bureaucratic structured relationships.

Looseness or tightness of social structures may be characterized as: (1) the extent to which roles or role relationships within a social system are clear and explicit; (2) the extent to which roles are closely related to or locked into a set of reciprocal relationships; (3) the extent to which there are limited categories of people who can play roles (e.g., is the biological father the only person who can play child's father-role, or can the role easily be played by uncles, older siblings, etc.); (4) the extent to which there is behavioral variation or flexibility within a role; (5) the extent to which there are harsh or lenient sanctions (and forgiveness) for deviation from role expectations.

The general issue of tight and loose social structures was examined in an essay by Embree (1969, pp. 3-15) in which he compares

Japanese and Thai village life. The essay sparked considerable controversy because of the seeming contradiction between social structure as a categorical characteristic of a social system and the implication that "tight" equalled "more" and "loose" equalled "less." If social systems have, by definition, social structures, you cannot have more or less of a social structure—you simply have different types of structures.

Putting this somewhat academic argument aside, we would maintain that the tight-loose distinction makes a good deal of sense, as suggested by our defining characteristics given above. Piker (1969, pp. 61-76), for example, states that role demands for Thai villagers are loose for a number of reasons:

1. Civil servants are given much paid leave (job truancy is legitimated);
2. It is difficult to offend someone beyond forgiveness;
3. There are few stable expectations about lifestyles others are to maintain over the long run (except for ritualized politeness in face-to-face settings);
4. There is relatively open social mobility.

Piker then concludes:

... these findings suggest two conclusions with respect to the correspondence between personality and the social system in rural Thai society: if such correspondence does in fact obtain, it consists largely, first, of the adequacy of the sum total of institutions for the expression of those diverse personality traits that are widespread in the population and, second, of the accessibility of these institutions to the bearers of diverse personality traits. (p. 74)

Phillips made a related comment on Thai personality:

... cooperative, mutually expectable interaction as we know it in the West does not "simply take place" in Bang Chan. Rather, there is always the intervening factor of whether individuals want it to take place. . . . It is the individual that is primary, not the social relationship. The assumption is: "If he did not do it, he must have had his own good reason." (1965, p. 60)

Both writers seem to suggest considerably looser role demands on the individual personality than in highly organized modern societies. Schooling in modern societies, for example, makes uniform demands on very diverse personalities, especially for younger children.

While the social structure of societies or groups can be described along such dimensions as degree of integration, basis of integration, or looseness or tightness of structure, statuses or roles themselves can be described along another set of meaningful dimensions first developed by Parsons.

[Parsons] uses a set of 5 "pattern variables" to distinguish the aspects of any social relationship. According to Parsons, each time we act, and in each role in which we act, we are, in effect, emphasizing one or another of the 5 basic divisions. If a role is *specific*, our relationship is limited to one particular narrowly defined exchange; if it is *diffuse*, our involvement will extend over a wide variety of problems or relationships. We stress either *affectivity* (that is, feeling, emotion, and gratification), or *affective neutrality*, which means we place more emphasis on instrumental or moral considerations. We manifest *particularism* when we give special consideration to people because of their relationship to us whereas if we evidence *universalism*, we treat more or less alike all who come before us in a given status-position. If my treatment of you is mainly on the basis of what you are in yourself, in contrast to what you do or have done, stress *quality over performance* (ascribed status vs. achieved status). When my concern is mainly to advance the goals of the group, I display a *collectivity orientation*, whereas if I am most concerned to advance my own interest through our relationship, I stress *self-orientation*. Described in these terms, the relations of husband and wife, and indeed all nuclear family relations, tend to be diffuse, affective, and particularistic, and reflect stress on quality and collectivity-orientation. The relationship between a clerk and a customer would be at the opposite pole on each dimension. (Inkeles 1964, p. 74)

As Inkeles suggests, Parsons' pattern variables are obviously derived from an intuitive sense that so-called primary groups (groups with sustained face-to-face relationships) are somehow fundamentally different from secondary groups.

With this level of analytic differentiation, we might speculate about what characteristics of social structure tend toward high quality of life and which tend to diminish the quality of life in human societies. One might ask the following questions:

1. To what extent is the availability of primordial social forms such as the nuclear family, the extended family, sodalities, and small communities or neighborhoods a prerequisite for emotional health, security, and adequate societal integration?
2. To what extent can humans function with reasonable equa

imity or without great stress in social forms which require competing types of social integration, for example, in neighborhoods integrated by sexual, kinship, and sentiment bonding and at the same time in corporate organizations (stores, offices, factories, schools) where integration is maintained through cultural codes, centralized control of sanctions, and negotiated contracts?

3. To what extent can humans function with equanimity or without great stress in a variety of social forms which are either highly integrated (as a religious commune) or highly fragmented (as suburban life in modern society)?

4. To what extent are societies or social forms characterized as having tight or loose or moderate social structures conducive to high or low human stress?

5. To what extent does role diffuseness or specificity or the looseness or tightness of roles lead to higher or lower stress?

6. To what extent do institutions having social forms which mix primary and secondary characteristics (e.g., schools and small family businesses) generate greater or lesser stress compared with institutions which have pure forms (e.g., family, or large corporate business)?

Personality

Personality refers to underlying motivational structures or overt behavior patterns which characterize individual humans. The forces which shape personality and affect individual behavior are multiple: human constitution (via inheritance, imprinting, or early biosocial learning); socialization (learned orientations toward basic human functions such as work, love and attachment, play, dream and fantasy); the interaction between constitution and socialization, especially during critical developmental periods in the human career; and finally the press of sociocultural systems (institutions, roles, etc.) within which the individual always functions.

A central tension in any human society is the fact that culturally defined or general rules, ideology, and roles must be channeled through diverse human beings. Wallace has described this tension by suggesting that there are two ways of looking at culture and society: one as the "replication of uniformity," and another as "the organization of diversity." From the point of view of the "replication of uniformity":

the society may be regarded as culturally homogeneous and the individuals will be expected to share a uniform nuclear character. If a near-perfect correspondence between culture and individual nuclear character is assumed, the structural relation between the two becomes nonproblematical, and the interest of processual research lies rather in the mechanisms of socialization by which each generation becomes, culturally and characterologically, a replica of its predecessors. (1970, pp. 22-23)

From the point of view of "the organization of diversity":

Culture . . . becomes not so much a superorganic entity, but policy, tacitly and gradually concocted by groups of people for the furtherance of their interests, and contract, established by practice, between and among individuals to organize their strivings into mutually facilitating equivalence structures. (p. 24)

We are here focusing on human diversity as the central problem of personality, that is, we need to categorize the major sources of variation through which different aspects of human nature are channeled. We would suggest two significant categories of variation: (1) the salience and complexity with which different levels (in the Freudian sense) of personality are expressed; and (2) the differences in common human characteristics such as age, sex, temperament, talent, etc. Regarding the first type of variation one can imagine that human personality is constructed as a set of layers:

Cultural values and rules, which rationalize role behavior
 ↑
 Learned social roles through which underlying personality type is expressed
 ↑
 Patterned constitutional tendencies interacting with environment (e.g., oral or anal personalities)
 ↑
 Universal human strivings (e.g., love, work, meaning)
 ↑
 Undifferentiated libidinal energy

Given this model, one can imagine basic human strivings as more or less crudely or directly expressed, or as more or less refined by socialized roles or cultural values.

One can speculate that there are archetypal social callings which, when matched with archetypal personality types, require less role behavior and are a more direct expression of underlying impulses

The clown or buffoon, the reflective teacher, the priest or shaman, the doctor or healer—all may be an expression of such role archetypes. When the bland unquestioning personality type, for example, takes on the work of reflective teacher, we would guess that the behavior is much more an expression of a highly socialized role than the underlying need to probe the meaning of his social or natural world.

Personalities vary in their degree of socialization potential; some are relatively easily socialized; some are socialized with great difficulty. Relating the concept of socialization potential to quality of life, one might argue that a higher quality of life is possible in a society in which humans who socialize with great difficulty can select themselves into roles which are reasonably consistent with their underlying constitutional tendencies; or conversely, a society in which those humans who socialize easily are not required to creatively fashion innovative roles. If normal human variation yields more clowns, buffoons, or comedians, for example, than can be accommodated in a society (especially where there is the technology of mass media), and comedians are then forced to become bank clerks or shoe salesmen (more exacting and highly socialized roles), presumably there is considerable human stress. Or conversely, if society demands a great many questioning, interesting, and charismatic teachers who cannot be found, their places must be filled by oversocialized bank clerks.

The second category of human variation includes such characteristics as age, sex, temperament, talents, etc. We might suggest the following as examples.

1. Energy level

As Robert White states:

When one assists at the birth of a litter of puppies it is impossible not to see differences among the new arrivals with respect to activity and vigor. The mother dog notices the differences and may even callously push aside a puppy that does not meet her minimum standards of responsiveness. . . . It is hard . . . to think of high vitality and zest as traits that could be wholly learned if they were not built into the organism in the first place. Some babies do not display these qualities and develop in a consistently quieter and less colorful way. (1966, pp. 236-37)

2. Sensory-conceptual modes of relating to the environment

There is some systematic evidence and a good deal of intuitive

evidence that different humans relate to the environment through emphasis on different sensory processes. Three strong candidates for "relational modes" are *kinesthetic-motor*, *sensory*, and *conceptual-verbal*. These terms might be defined by considering very talented people who express themselves through each mode. Professional athletes and dancers have a dominant kinesthetic-motor way of relating. Painters and film-makers have extraordinary sensory sensibilities. Scientists and academics relate in a more conceptual-verbal mode. Obviously any individual is a mix of these (and other) modes of relating, all of which are, to a considerable extent, subject to learning.

3. Interpersonal tendencies

It is possible to make a case for extroversion-introversion as a dominant dimension along which individuals relate to one another.

4. Physique and temperament

William Sheldon has probably done the most systematic study on the relationship between physique or body type and temperament. White summarizes Sheldon's work as follows:

Sheldon reached the conclusion . . . that temperament could be described as having three main components. The first, which he called *visceratonia*, was represented by a cluster of traits such as relaxation, love of comfort, amiability, and a need for affection and approval of others. The second component, named *somatotonia*, was characterized by vigorous assertiveness, a love of action, and a dominating but somewhat insensitive attitude toward other people. The third component, *cerebrotonia*, had as its chief traits a tense vigilance, sensitiveness, a tendency for action to be inhibited, and a certain ineptitude in social situations. All three components are present in everyone, but in different relative strengths. . . .

Sheldon seemed to give his components of temperament a more clearly constitutional cast when he developed a systematic scheme for the measurement of physique, and related visceratonia to a soft rounded physique, somatotonia to a solid muscular one, and cerebrotonia to a slender, lightly built frame. (1966 pp. 231-32)

5. Male-femaleness

While there is considerable controversy over the extent to which personality differences between sexes and the masculinity-femininity dimension within each sex is biologically or socioculturally based, substantial differences seem universal. Males, for example, seem more object- and task-oriented, more aggressive, and have more focused sexual interests. Females appear more people-oriented, have stronger interpersonal needs, seem less openly aggressive, and have more diffusely expressed sexuality.

6. *The human career cycle*

While it is obvious that infants, children, and old people have specific, constitutionally-based developmental resources and needs, there is little systematic information on differences among other adults at different points in the human career. Erikson (1964) has suggested that developmental crises occur throughout life, and that each crisis requires a new integration with previous developmental problems. We would speculate that the orientation of American society (and of modern societies more generally) is toward construing all adult humans as equal and interchangeable—hence we become somewhat insensitive to age differences in our public discourse. There is, of course, a tremendous cosmetic industry which attempts to make plausible the illusion that everyone is the same age—through wigs, hair coloring, face lifting, cosmetics, and the like.

We would argue that the essential criterion for quality of life for personality is the extent to which an authentic self can be constructed and expressed (at whatever age). The primary problem for the realization of such authentic personalities is the tendency of culture to construct a range of worthy types of people which is more limited than the normal range of differences which commonly occur within the species. Social roles, moreover, tend to be ordered on a hierarchy of privilege or prestige such that some individuals are constantly tempted to “not be themselves” in order to gain prestige or avoid discrimination (e.g., the friendly generous teacher who is told to be tough with rowdy students). In this sense the potential for authentic personalities within a society is very much dependent on the range of roles within the social structure, the privileges associated with these roles, and the definition of these roles by the culture.

Interaction Among Personality, Culture, and Social Structure

Disciplinarians in the various social sciences constantly war over the relative importance of various subsystems of human society. Psychologists tend to stress the significance of individual learning, especially early childhood experience. Anthropologists stress the impact of common culture, often assuming a level of cultural uniformity that defies common-sense experience. Sociologists and social anthropologists stress the importance of institutions and roles, construing the significance of personality simply as a constellation of

internalized others; or they assume that different personality types cancel each other out, and thus account for no great impact on a society.

This kind of analytic fragmentation leads toward several kinds of social mischief. First, it leads individual social scientists or “schools” of social science to grossly oversell the level of reliability with which any particular analytic orientation or theory can make a useful contribution to theories of social amelioration. Behavioristic psychology (Skinner) and more recently developmental psychology (Kohlberg) are examples.

Second, disciplinary blinders often prevent social scientists from developing more complex theories which would square better with the realities of common-sense human experience. A case in point where disciplinary blinders have been somewhat removed is Fromm’s theory of social character. Fromm (1970) suggests that there are relationships between personal constitution, early socialization experience, and sociocultural press. The socialization requirements which would allow an individual to achieve authentic love and productive work, for example, may be very different for the tender-minded, sensitive person than for the aggressive, task-oriented person. And more importantly, sociocultural constraints in the larger society may prevent one or the other type from achieving an authentic self because of the press it makes on the primary group environment. Social stratification which places different values on people at different levels of society (on their work, their lifestyles, their values, their speech, etc.) may in fact be a way of sorting out people according to their constitutional abilities to adapt to the dominant cultural values and structural constraints in the society. It may then be more realistic to talk about *modal adaptations* to a given sociocultural system than to talk about modal personalities.

Conclusion

We have taken the general position that human nature is channelled through four societal subsystems—environment and technology, culture, social structure, and personality—and that each component or subsystem has natural limits and tendencies which bear on the quality of life in society. Describing or developing these components is a way of elaborating our position regarding the more general

limits placed on man by the direction of his own evolution. Regarding technology, for example, man can respect or ignore his own evolutionary connectedness with his natural environment, but if he ignores it, there is a cost in quality of life. Regarding culture, man has the capacity to create, understand, and maintain certain limited kinds of rules, and quality of life is improved if the rules are consistent with such basic needs as personal security and support. (The cultural rule in this society that all worthy people must have gainful employment, for example, is probably destructive of quality of life.) Regarding social structure, man has the capacity to create certain limited types of social forms which provide stable social roles. When certain primordial forms are destroyed, such as the extended family or neighborhood, he becomes anxious and insecure. In terms of personality, broad natural diversity requires a breadth and looseness of culture and social form.

Our central point is that the concept of channels suggests that under certain conditions human behavior and institutions flow in some directions more easily than others. The irony of the human condition is that despite his reflective nature, man often creates destructive environments, cultures, social structures, and personalities, and thus directs his nature away from its more obvious channels. And it is for this reason we find the concept of quality of life an issue at all.

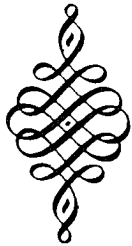
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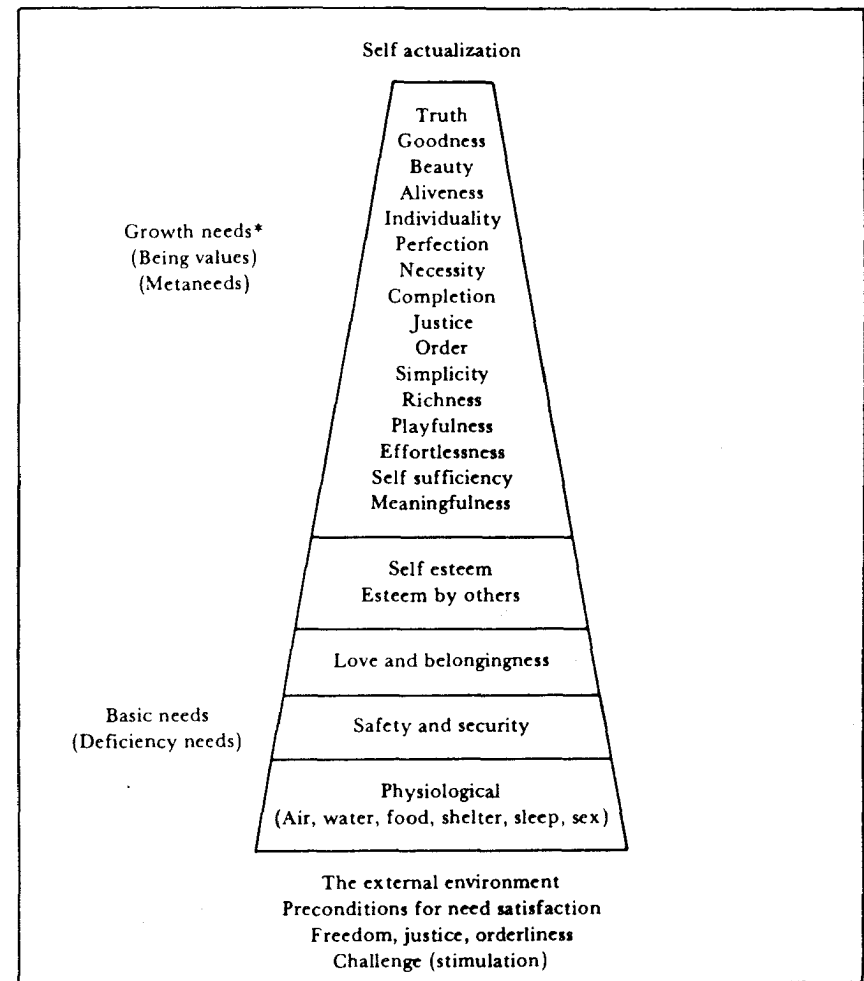
The Functional Requirements of Human Society



We have attempted to derive criteria for quality of life by looking at underlying qualities of human nature directly or by looking at characteristics of channels through which human nature is expressed in society, such as environment-technology, personality, social structure, and culture. Another way of deriving quality-of-life criteria is by looking at the functional requirements of man or society or man-in-society. Maslow, for example, has developed what he calls a hierarchy of human needs (see figure 5.1).

The functionalists in sociology and anthropology have attempted to develop a similar list of requirements for society. (One thinks especially of Parsons and Malinowski.) More recently Aberle et al. (1950, pp. 100-11) developed a statement of what they call the "functional prerequisites of a society." These functional prerequisites include:

Figure 5.1
Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



*Growth needs are all of equal importance (not hierarchical)

Source: Frank G. Goble, *The Third Force* (New York: Grossman Publishers, 1970): p. 50.
Copyright 1970 by Thomas Jefferson Research Center.

1. *Provision for adequate relationship to the environment and for sexual recruitment.* . . . providing for basic physiological needs of enough adult members to insure reproduction and to man the essential status positions. (p. 104)
2. *Role differentiation and role assignment.* . . . the systematic and stable division of activities. (p. 105)
3. *Communication.* No society, however simple, can exist without shared, learned symbolic modes of communication, because without them it cannot maintain the common-value structure or the protective sanctions which hold back the war of each against all. (p. 106)
4. *Shared cognitive orientations.* In any society the members must share a body of cognitive orientations which (a) make possible adaptation to and manipulation of the situation; (b) make stable, meaningful and predictable the social situations in which they are engaged; and (c) account for those significant aspects of the situation over which they do not have adequate predication and control. (p. 107)
5. *A shared, articulate set of goals.*
6. *The normative regulation of means.* That these means must be stated clearly for the sake of order and the effective functioning of the society follows from (a) the nature of other functional prerequisites and (b) the *anomie* that must result from the lack of recognized legitimized means. First, role differentiation specifies *who* is to act, while the common articulated set of goals defines *what* is to be done. The normative regulation of means tells *how* those goals may be won. Second, the absence of normative regulation of means invites apathy or the war of each against all. (p. 108)
7. *The regulation of affective expression.*
8. *Socialization.* . . . socialization includes both the development of new adult members from infants and the induction of an individual of any age into any role of the society or its subsystems where new learning is required. (p. 109)
9. *The effective control of disruptive forms of behavior.*

Whether one focuses on the individual or the society, we think it is extremely useful to stress the fact that man is a multifunctional animal. From this point of view a central element in judging the quality of life in society is the adequacy and authenticity with which the various essential human functions are performed as well as the extent to which they are carried on in some reasonably balanced and integrated relationship to each other.

Specifically, our list of functions includes the following:

1. Attachment, love, bonding;
2. Adaptation, work, coping;

3. Renewal, play, sleep, relaxation, fantasy, dreaming;
4. Planning, deciding, conflict resolution;
5. Celebration or acting out of universal events in the human condition, story telling, drama, sports, dance;
6. Creation of myth and meaning: placing man in relationship to past and future events or human and cosmic events.

We are not concerned here with an elegant scheme or a carefully developed rationale to justify our particular functional categories—any such selection and categorization of “basic human functions” is somewhat arbitrary. We are concerned that one look at the requirements of society as a whole, as several interrelated functions. As O’Dea states:

. . . functional theory sees society as an ongoing equilibrium of social institutions which pattern human activity in terms of shared norms, held to be legitimate and binding by the human participants themselves. This complex of institutions, which as a whole constitute the *social system*, is such that each part (each institutionalized element) is interdependent with all the other parts and that changes in any part affect the others, and the condition of the system as a whole. (1966, p. 2)

This “unity-equilibrium” viewpoint in functional theory bears directly on the problem of inventing or maintaining constructive culture. It assumes that there is a limited fund of human energy to be expended; energy not spent in the fulfillment of one function will presumably be expended on another. The critical point, however, is that functional theory assumes that a set of problems are continuously present and must be solved or at least handled simultaneously, and that when some problems are not adequately resolved, energy will be diverted to the unsolved problems. If inadequate resolutions persist, compensatory mechanisms come into play, comparable on the societal level to adjustive or defensive mechanisms hypothesized by psychoanalytic theory for individual personality. And like Freudian defense mechanisms, societal compensatory mechanisms do not really solve problems; they simply expend human energy, often in a dysfunctional way, so that one has the illusion of successful coping. At a personal level, for example, the anal-compulsive individual may reduce anxiety by constantly washing his hands, but the underlying problem (for example, guilt over unconscious strivings toward sex or

autonomy) is never touched. Likewise, at the societal level if there is no adequate meaning system or symbolic ritual to explain or work through inevitable conditions of human pain (e.g., personal loss of a friend, climatic catastrophes, sickness and death), unrelieved emotional pain or anxiety may be suppressed by compulsive work. The work will drain off energy, but the nagging concern over the meaning of the human suffering will continue in a potentially destructive way. For as work itself loses meaning, it may take the threat of survival itself (through fabricated fears of internal subversion or external conquest) to keep the system going. From this point of view war may be construed as a compensatory mechanism integrating work, celebration, myth-making, and the rechanneling of sexual energy through aggression, which temporarily staves off the more profound long-term problem of a meaningful life in a less crisis-ridden society. But like washing one's hands, war "solves" the problem of a meaningful life for relatively brief periods of time (unless, of course, it is institutionalized).

In a sense the distinction between functional solutions and dysfunctional compensatory mechanisms is arbitrary. Functional solutions apply to constructive cultural elements or social institutions which allow humans to cope without inordinate stress; dysfunctional compensatory mechanisms apply to cultural elements which make it possible for humans to live under unnecessarily high stress. In general we assume as a practical matter that it is possible to distinguish whether the quality of life is enhanced or diminished by alternative functional institutions. Below we attempt to suggest various analytic distinctions as a way of clarifying this assumption.

Criteria for Successful Functional Solutions

1. Attachment, love, bonding

The quality of human attachments is, of course, a very large subject in religion, philosophy, psychology, etc. While we might discuss human attachments within the framework of a multitude of theories, we shall simply suggest Fromm's analysis as one insightful way to think about human relating. Fromm (1970) distinguishes among the following kinds of interpersonal relatedness:

1. *Symbiotic relatedness*: In the symbiotic relatedness the person is related to others but loses or never attains his independence; he avoids the danger of

aloneness by becoming part of another person, either by being "swallowed" by that person or by "swallowing" him. The former is the root of what is clinically described as *masochism*. Masochism is the attempt to get rid of one's individual self, to escape from freedom, and to look for security by attaching oneself to another person. . . . The impulse to swallow others is the active form of symbiotic relatedness and is sadism. It is the attempt to dominate others, and is rooted in and compensates for deep—and often unconscious—feelings of impotence and powerlessness. (pp. 73-74)

2. *Withdrawal-destructiveness*: The feeling of individual powerlessness can be overcome by withdrawal from others who are experienced as threats. . . . Its emotional equivalent is the feeling of indifference toward others, often accompanied by a compensatory feeling of self-inflation. Withdrawal and indifference can, but need not, be conscious. . . . in our culture they are mostly covered by a superficial kind of interest and sociability. . . . Destructiveness is the perversion of the drive to live; it is the energy of *unlived life* transformed into energy for the destruction of life. (p. 74)
3. *Narcissism*: In this form of relatedness (or unrelatedness) only that which refers to one's ego, i.e., body, sensations, feelings, thoughts, is experienced as fully real, hence important. The reality outside, while perceived, has no weight, no importance, because one is not related to it. . . . the world outside is perceived without depth or intensity. (p. 75)
4. *Love* is the productive form of relatedness to others and to oneself. It implies responsibility, care, respect, and knowledge, and the wish for the other person to grow and develop. It is the expression of intimacy between two human beings under the condition of preservation of each other's integrity. (p. 76)

Although it is clear that of Fromm's four types of relatedness, love is the "good" one, the successful one, it should be understood that an individual is not a caricature of one form of relatedness, but rather there are blends of the various components within the personality. Our own guess is that within limits humans might bond normally by any of the mechanisms listed.

2. Adaptation, work, coping

To describe work in terms of quality of life is a more fragmented task than to describe human attachment. A variety of criteria, however, come to mind.

a. *Adequacy* for meeting the burden of survival and the basic economic needs of a society. It should be understood that adequacy is construed more in absolute than in relative terms. From our point of view it means meeting the basic biological needs of the society as well as biosocial functional needs (e.g., celebration, play). There is, of course, a delicate line between an absolute definition of adequacy and a relative definition. Many of the activities of civilization, such as

building pyramids, museums, universities, etc. allow humans to do productive meaningful work. Whether or not the absence of these institutions would make a society's work functionally inadequate, however, is highly doubtful. We would describe a society that is required to practice infanticide, or to abandon old people, or where there is highly competitive intraspecific behavior in obtaining food and shelter, as inadequate in absolute terms. Societies with high death rates from starvation, malnutrition, and exposure are at the extreme of negative adaptation.

b. *Efficiency*, or the relationship between energy expended and the production of goods and services the society presumably needs. A low-energy-high-production economy would be considered efficient. (One might make distinctions between expenditure of human energy versus the expenditure of mechanical energy or the energy of domestic animals, and suggest that conserving human energy is more efficient.) The distinction between adequacy and efficiency is obvious: one might have an affluent economy which is either efficient or wasteful.

c. *Authenticity*, or the extent to which one can justify a specific kind of work or adaptation as genuinely related to the needs of human survival. While one can make delicate distinctions in the gray area between the necessities and the luxuries of a society, it is less difficult to make the case at the extremes. In American society, for example, farming is probably more authentic work than is embalming; preparing food is probably more authentic than making television commercials.

d. *Nondestructive or nonexploitative work*. Work can be destructive ecologically, that is, destructive to the natural environment required for the long-term survival of the species and the planet. Work can also be destructive in human terms, either physically (breathing coal dust in a mine), or emotionally (doing monotonous work on an assembly line). Work might be healthy for the individuals participating in it, but destructive for other people (building high-rise "projects" in the ghettos or building barracks to house soldiers training for war).

Another criterion applied to the quality of work might be the extent to which work done by one group is productive at the expense of other groups or individuals. An extreme example would be poor Haitians selling blood to help affluent Americans regain their health.

e. *Fair distribution of meaningful work*, or the extent to which monotonous, physically dangerous, or repetitive work is carried out by one group of people, while others do more meaningful work.

f. *Meritocratic dependency*. Some members of a society are more competent to carry out certain tasks than others. In general, however, elites emerge which combine the resources of political leadership, intellectual creativity, and inclination to act on the world. It is relatively easy for a society to build stable socioeconomic strata in which groups on the lower end of the scale depend for direction and the definition of work on those on the upper end of the scale. Our hypothesis is that stratified meritocratic societies generate dependency, poverty, and survival anxiety in the lower strata as well as insensitivity, sadism, and guilt in the upper strata.

g. *Flexibility to meet changing conditions*, or the extent to which adaptive institutions can change as human needs or natural conditions change: for example, to what extent can a modern society deal with the need to reduce energy use?

Before we proceed to our four other functions, it should be stated that the first two (often referred to as love and work) have the most fundamental place in any scheme of human needs or societal functions. The problem of healthy human attachments, while it can be construed as a separate functional issue, permeates all other functions. One cannot talk about work or play or celebration without some sense that they are affected by the various qualities of human relatedness. We would argue, moreover, along with Fromm, that while man has no specific set of instincts which guide his work and personal relationships, his common biological equipment and bio-social history (e.g., long period of dependency) create a limited set of alternative modes of relating to people and to the world. Thus, while man is not an instinctual animal with a universal set of behavior patterns, he is also not a plastic animal. His behavior tends to fall into major slots and can be understood (though poorly predicted and changed with difficulty) in these terms. The significance of this point is its relationship to criteria for the quality of life. We assume that there are a limited number of models through which man comes to relate himself to people or to work; and that some modes or qualities are healthier than others.

Fromm (1970), in his theoretical formulation of this issue, for example, describes a number of streams into which love or work orientations flow. According to Fromm there are behavioral com-

plexes which develop as individual members of a society cope with the problem of establishing stable modes of human attachment (socialization) and work (assimilation). These complexes he calls "social character" and are defined as the "relatively permanent form in which human energy is structuralized in the process of assimilation and socialization" (p. 11). A gross distinction is made between productive and nonproductive characters, loving and nonloving characters. More specific distinctions are then made among various character types or orientations in which qualities of love and work come together. Those orientations which have the greatest pathological potential consist of:

Receptive orientation: feels the source of all good (affection, love, knowledge, material goods) can only be acquired by having it given—in exchange for being "good," or "ill," or "in need."

Exploitative orientation: does not produce anything for himself; it must be obtained by taking it from other people, either by force or cunning.

Hoarding orientation: has little faith in anything new he might get from the outside world; security is based on hoarding and saving.

Marketing orientation: has little faith that he can produce anything of value; but he can "sell himself" as in a monetary transaction.

The productive or healthy orientation is difficult for Fromm to describe. In general, it is a fundamental attitude, a mode of relatedness in which the person feels himself to be an actor, an agent in which he can exercise power in a constructive way. Nor is the power used exploitatively. "The productive person gives birth to his own faculties and gives life to persons and to things" (1970, p. 72).

While the nonproductive orientations tend toward pathological or neurotic forms of attachment and work, this is not necessarily so. We see these various character orientations as common channels or archetypal modes of relating to one's material and personal surroundings. As Fromm further states (although this is somewhat contradictory to his major premise regarding pathological relating):

There is no person whose orientation is entirely productive, and no one who is completely lacking in productiveness. But the respective weight of the produc-

tive and nonproductive orientations in each person's character structure varies and determines the *quality* of the nonproductive orientations. In the foregoing description of the nonproductive orientations it was assumed that they were *dominant* in a character structure. We must now supplement the earlier description by considering the qualities of the nonproductive orientations in a character structure in which the *productive* orientation is *dominant*. Here the nonproductive orientations do not have the negative meaning they have when they are dominant but have a different and constructive quality. In fact, the nonproductive orientations, as they have been described, may be considered as distortions of orientations which in themselves are a normal and necessary part of living. Every human being, in order to survive, must be able to *accept* things from others, to *take* things, to *save* and to *exchange*. He must also be able to *accept authority*, to *guide others*, to be *alone*, and to *assert* himself. Only if his way of acquiring things and relating himself to others is essentially nonproductive does the ability to accept, to take, to save, or to exchange turn into the craving to receive, to exploit, to hoard, or to market as the dominant ways of acquisition. The nonproductive forms of social relatedness in a predominantly productive person—loyalty, authority, fairness, assertiveness—turn into submission, domination, withdrawal, destructiveness in a predominantly nonproductive person. Any of the nonproductive orientations has, therefore, a positive and a negative aspect, according to the degree of productiveness in the total character structure. The following list of the positive and negative aspects of various orientations may serve as an illustration for this principle. (1970, pp. 78-80)

Fromm then suggests negative and positive characteristics of personality which might be associated with three of his major character orientations.

Exploitative Orientation (Taking)

<i>Positive aspect</i>	<i>Negative aspect</i>
active	exploitative
able to take initiative	aggressive
able to make claims	egocentric
proud	conceited
impulsive	rash
self-confident	arrogant
captivating	seducing

Hoarding Orientation (Preserving)

<i>Positive aspect</i>	<i>Negative aspect</i>
practical	unimaginative
economical	stingy

<i>Positive aspect</i>	<i>Negative aspect</i>
careful	suspicious
reserved	cold
patient	lethargic
cautious	anxious
steadfast, tenacious	stubborn
imperturbable	indolent
composed under stress	inert
orderly	pedantic
methodical	obsessional
loyal	possessive

Receptive Orientation (Accepting)

<i>Positive aspect</i>	<i>Negative aspect</i>
accepting	passive, without initiative
responsive	opinionless, characterless
devoted	submissive
modest	without pride
charming	parasitical
adaptable	unprincipled
socially adjusted	servile, without self-confidence
idealistic	unrealistic
sensitive	cowardly
polite	spineless
optimistic	wishful
trusting	gullible
tender	sentimental

The most interesting aspect of Fromm's theory from the quality-of-life perspective is its affirmation of the fact of human diversity at a very basic level of personality. One must take this fact into account in looking at the interface between personality, culture, and social structure. That is to say, there must be available respected and worthy roles supported by positive cultural rules and values which allow the full range of social character to express itself in the society. While no one is so naive as to suggest that all statuses in any society are likely to end up equally valued—all human societies tend toward dominance and leadership hierarchies and humans seem anxious without them—one can argue (1) that all statuses should be seen as

having essential worth, and (2) that no one will be forced to occupy statuses and play roles which substantially violate their authentic sense of self. From this point of view the marketing orientation might be viewed as either sick or well. A healthy marketing orientation would allow a temperamentally outgoing gregarious individual to spend time "making himself liked" because that is his own authentic way of relating to people. The person with a pathological marketing orientation—perhaps under the stress of competition and job success—might lose any sense of authentic self in the process of selling himself.

3. *Renewal, play, sleep, relaxation, fantasy, dreaming*

The human organism is biologically constructed so that it must pass through cycles of physical stress and emotional anxiety on the one hand and relaxation, renewal, and sleep on the other. Although in Western societies we see the work-rest cycle in terms of a means-ends relationship, with a little reflection it becomes somewhat difficult to distinguish the means from the end. One can imagine work as a nagging distraction from play-fantasy-sleep; or one can imagine rest as the necessary pause that refreshes so that one can get back to work. Few would question the fact that play and human renewal are necessary functions of society; controversy arises over its purposes and relative place among other functions. Some possible criteria are:

a. *Authenticity*. Modes of renewal must relate to the developmental needs of individuals: babies, children, adolescents, adults, and old people have different renewal modes and needs. Contrived or managed renewal, such as Esalen type experiences, may be more work than play, and in this sense nonauthentic. Highly controlled sports like basketball or football, involving adolescent boys, may be experienced more as work than renewal, and therefore may provide less play-fantasy-dreaming than classroom activities.

b. *Fantasy-participation balance*. Renewal carried out totally by active physical or social play or totally by fantasy-dreaming would seem inadequate. The working person in a modern society whose only source of renewal is silently sharing television fantasies, as well as inventing fantasies of his own through his autistic processes, is probably missing something.

c. *Diversity*. Renewal should be diverse enough to meet the needs of different kinds of people (e.g., verbal play, physical play, artistic activity).

4. *Planning, deciding, conflict resolution*

To some extent society is the spontaneous playing out of complex behavior patterns, some of which are fully learned and some of which are improvised. Many activities are not spontaneous, but are carefully directed and managed. Human management requires planning and decision making, and one can search for quality-of-life criteria which apply to decision making.

a. *Requirement that decisions be just.* A criterion for justice might be some reasonable balance between utilitarianism (greatest good for the greatest number) and respect for the dignity and worth of the individual.

b. *Consensuality.* A second criterion might be the extent to which members of a society feel they have some say in how decisions are made, what decisions are made, and how they are implemented.

c. *Legitimation.* This is the acceptance by members of the society that decisions are binding on them without force or coercion.

d. *Efficiency.* This is the relationship between the amount of energy spent making decisions and the quality of the decisions (in such terms as utilitarianism or justice).

5. *Celebration or acting out of universal events in the human condition, story telling, drama, sports, dance*

Celebration is similar to renewal, but its purpose is more integrative, that is, directed toward personal expression and binding of groups, tribes, or societies to provide security against individual frailty by dealing successfully with anxieties and limitations. The celebration of birth, harvest, death (rebirth), marriage, or community is on the whole positive, although man has invented pathological celebrations to serve short-run goals (e.g., witch trials and burnings, mass meetings in Nazi Germany). Quality-of-life criteria for human celebration are similar to those for human renewal.

a. *Authenticity.* Are there genuinely shared joys, anxieties, and hardships? Is there genuine fellowship?

b. *Transcendence of man's anthropocentric bias.* There are universal elements in the human condition and universal elements in nature which bind man-in-society to the planet. Transcendent celebrations recognize not only human life but life more generally; the biological unity of many forms of life and nonlife; man's evolutionary past, bound to other forms of life in a common history (e.g., man has salt in his veins because he rose from the sea).

c. *Diversity.* Can the diversity of humans in a society (old-young, weak-strong, men-women, conceptual-sensuous-kinesthetic, etc.) find authentic meaning in a common celebration?

6. *Creation of myth and meaning: placing man in relationship to past and future events or human and cosmic events*

As O'Dea says, "Culture is the creation by man of a world of adjustment and meaning, in the context of which human life can be significantly lived" (1966, p. 3). Both because it is instrumentally useful (symbols and concepts are tools) and because man has a drive for a sense of purpose, societies create constellations and systems of meaning which surround their lives. The loss of meaning leads to suicide.

While secular thinkers are prone to separate empirical knowledge from religion, both spheres are included in our term "belief system." We would argue that modern religion has become trivialized precisely because it is separated from the common concerns and everyday facts of life encompassed by instrumental (useful) "true" knowledge.

Functionalists such as O'Dea state explicitly that the purpose of religion is to deal with man's need to transcend common human experience. The need for transcendence, according to O'Dea, is rooted in man's frailty—his sense of uncertainty, powerlessness, and scarcity, and the consequent frustration at not being able to control these conditions. Our own view is that man's drive for meaning is rooted in the nature of the organism itself—man inherently has the capacity and the need to create and communicate meaning. Most forms of life exist in conditions of uncertainty, powerlessness, and scarcity, but few if any have a meaning system in the human sense. Man is driven not only to ask the ultimate "why" of the human condition, but also to ask the why of day-to-day events—why did his friend let him down? why did he injure himself or become ill? Man's life is enclosed within a web of meaning. From our point of view it is somewhat misguided to separate out the more ultimate questions as sacred and call the day-to-day questions secular, especially since the domains of reality shift about within these two categories. (The nation-state or the Communist Party may replace the Roman Catholic Church as a sacred domain.)

O'Dea argues that a major social and cultural development of the last several centuries has been the secularization of culture.

We have seen that in primitive and traditional societies religion is a pervasive matter, and that religious beliefs and rites play an important part in the activities of various kinds of groups, from the family to occupational groups. We have seen that in such societies religion tends to provide the over-all point of view—the ideological system or complex of thought-ways—in whose context human experience in general is understood. (p. 81)

On the other hand, in modern societies this world view has become fragmented and emptied of strong emotional response, in short, secularized.

Secularization may be said to consist fundamentally of two related transformations in human thinking. There is first the "*desacralization*" of the attitude toward persons and things—the withdrawal of the kind of emotional involvement which is to be found in the religious response, in the response to the sacred. Secondly, there is the *rationalization of thought*—the withholding of emotional participation in thinking about the world. Rationalization implies both a cognitive attitude relatively free of emotion, and the use of logic rather than an emotional symbolism to organize thought. (p. 81)

One could describe a sacred meaning system for contemporary man, including a sacred attitude toward such ideas as technology and purposeful progress, and such artifacts as automobiles and electrical appliances. Moreover, it is doubtful that medieval monks and priests behaved with stronger feelings about their day-to-day religious beliefs than do their modern counterparts (e.g., psychiatrists, physicians, engineers, and television celebrities).

Our point is that man has probably changed as a species very little over the past centuries. What we call sacred today seems archaic only because we need sufficient historical distance to understand what has contemporary spiritual significance. We are embedded in sacred meanings in contemporary times precisely because man needs that level or intensity of experience.

Given these general remarks we would suggest the following as quality-of-life criteria for a human meaning system.

a. *Authenticity*. To what extent does our world view authentically describe the human condition on the planet? One might look, for example, at the contrast between Social Darwinism and Quakerism in terms of the problem of human aggression. Social Darwinism sees man as an aggressive, competitive, predatory animal and celebrates the fittest who survive. Quakerism sees man as a friendly,

cooperative animal and celebrates his ability to solve problems of human conflict through peaceful negotiation. At least superficially, both would seem inadequate.

b. *Range of abstraction*. To what extent do beliefs deal with human meaning at various levels of abstraction and concreteness so all members of a society can share in the meaning? One might take as an example of this issue the problem of man coming to terms with the origin of life and the origin of his own species. The most authentic meaning system currently available is derived from theories of biological evolution and organic chemistry, both of which are abstract and complex. So most humans live with an archaic belief system (Genesis, or a similar myth), because no religio-scientific thinker has bothered to translate organic chemistry or evolution into sufficiently simple and concrete symbols or meanings so that common people can share in the more authentic system.

c. *Comprehensiveness*. To what extent are there domains of human life which are avoided or omitted from a meaning system? For contemporary man in modern societies the meaning of death, for example, is quite obscure. Given our dominant orientation toward technology and science it is somewhat disconcerting that we have so little to say about human death. It is interesting that technology-science does have an elaborate meaning system for human health and illness, including countless artifacts and symbols. Perhaps we assume that keeping people healthy will, in the long run, make them immortal.

d. *Level of integration*. It is probably safe to assume that a meaning system which can relate various domains of human action, at least in some loose way, is going to be more adequate than one which deals with the human career as a set of fragments. Puritanism, for example, suggests relationships among human attachment, work, and celebration. Modern Freudian meaning systems, including the Frommian analysis in this paper, attempt to relate love and work.

One can generate quality-of-life criteria by looking separately at individual functional requirements (as we have), by looking at relationships among various functional requirements, and finally by consideration of the requirements as a whole. In the last category, one might say that any society or subsociety with a relatively balanced expression of basic human functions might have a higher quality of

life than one which has focused most of its energies on one or two functions. One might consider the decision-making executive, the playboy, or the compulsive worker as exhibiting pathological lifestyles on a *prima facie* basis. One can also look at the whole set of functional requirements in terms of the extent to which various functions are integrated within common activities. Slaughtering an animal might, for example, be seen as a religious act (as celebration imbued with meaning), as an act of human sharing (bonding), and as adaptation or work. Our suspicion is that highly integrated societies tend to be oppressive because their structures must be so tight and controlled; that poorly integrated or fragmented societies tend toward insecurity and stress because any single function seems in itself marginally significant and therefore dispensable.

Analytic Systems and the Integrity of Human Community

However one looks at human community or society, we assume that quality of life is derived in some final sense by intuitive, albeit careful, sustained reflective thinking. In the last analysis, man's capacity for human society is a product of a long and poorly understood evolutionary process, while man's conception of his own condition is based on one small evolutionary product, the human mind. In the words of Hallowell:

Society, culture, and personality may, of course, be conceptually differentiated for specialized types of analysis and study. On the other hand, it is being more clearly recognized than heretofore that society, culture, and personality cannot be postulated as completely independent variables. Man as an organic species, evolved from a primate ancestry, constitutes our basic frame of reference, and we find ourselves confronted, as observers, with the complexities of the human situation that have resulted from this process. Here I wish to consider man as the dynamic center of characteristic modes and processes of adjustment that are central to a human existence, in order to emphasize the integral reality of society, culture, and personality structure as human phenomena. It is this integral reality that constitutes the human situation as our unique subject matter. Our abstractions and constructs, which may be ordered in different ways and for different purposes and which may vary in their heuristic value, are derived from observations of the same integral order of phenomena. (1953, p. 600)

It is to this "integral reality" we must always return for the validation of whatever judgments we make about the sanity, stress, and quality of life in human societies.

Conclusion

We have presented two schema by which one might describe human communities. It is our hope that through such analyses one might systematically generate a more complex and holistic set of criteria by which to judge quality of life. One might look, for example, at the interaction between channels and functions as suggested by the following matrix:

Functions	Channels		
	Social structure	Culture	Personality
Work			
Renewal			
Attachment			
Meaning			
Celebration			
Decision making			
Conflict resolution			

Looking across line one of this matrix, one can ask:

1. Within what social forms or institutions is work carried out? in families? sodalities? corporate organizations?

2. What is the culture (rules, ideology) of work within these institutions?

3. What types of personalities are best adapted or least well adapted for the kinds of work carried on in the society? How is human diversity handled within work settings? Are workers of different types and statuses segregated (as in a modern corporation)? Do they work and relate together (as in a kibbutz)?

4. What are the environmental conditions within which work is carried out (e.g., household industry, factories)?

One might also look at relationships within and among channels or functions. Regarding channels, for example, one might ask to what extent the various channels mutually support and reinforce or contradict one another. A society which carries on human interaction in relatively intimate social forms (e.g., household industry)

yet whose culture stresses impersonalness or distance might well create dissonance and stress. A society, like our own, which functions within three major social forms—intimate dyads, nuclear families, and impersonal corporate work settings—presumably must create somewhat contradictory sets of cultural rules. The central myth of the intimate dyad, for example, is that fulfillment comes from finding the perfect love; fulfillment in the corporate setting comes from work success.

One might look at the extent to which a society is functionally integrated; that is, the extent to which several functions are carried on in common settings, or the extent to which several functions are at least culturally (ideologically) related. Puritanism, for example, developed a meaning system which related work (successful work was considered evidence of grace), celebration (church-related activities), and decision making (elders in the church were seen as wise decision makers). In the Bruderhof described by Zablocki (1971) virtually all human functions are tied together around a common meaning system, a common culture in an isolated and intimate setting. Modern societies are comparatively highly fragmented. Celebrations, for example, are carried on quite independently and focus on a wide variety of human meanings: football games celebrate violence, manliness, competition, and discipline; rock concerts celebrate hedonistic release; quiz shows and shopping malls celebrate material success and consumerism; school ceremonies celebrate the value of difficult and often meaningless work.

While we feel that our analytic schema of channels and functions have considerable heuristic value in generating hypotheses about quality of life, we have a continuing concern about the relationship between quality of life and the potentials, constraints, and contradictions in the human condition based on the evolutionary nature of the species. The most focused statement of this concern might be the extent to which any human society incorporates in its functions and channels some expression of the human potential along the primal-modern continuum. (See tables 5.1 and 5.2 for a summary comparison.)

From an evolutionary point of view, we have assumed that man's more primal capacities and characteristics continue to make substantial demands on individuals and societies which, if ignored, lead to dysfunctional stresses and personal alienation. The central

Table 5.1
Modern-Primitive Aspects of Human Nature Channels

Primitive	Culture	Modern
Religious or magical bonds with nature	Scientific tentative view of reality	Formal operations: ideas and words separated from concrete objects and phenomenon
Concrete operations: words inextricably linked with objects	Progressive ameliorative view of the human condition	Principled morality
Cyclical nonprogressive view of the human condition	Universal knowledge	Rational, purposeful, directed behavior
Conventional morality; grounded in sensitivity to immediate interpersonal realities	Personal	Formal operations
Dreams and fantasies taken as serious reality	Use of "primitive" defense mechanisms, e.g., denial, repression, displacement	Tolerance for ambiguity; nonauthoritarian
Use of "primitive" defense mechanisms, e.g., denial, repression, displacement	Concrete operations	Use of higher coping mechanisms; intellectualization and rationalization
Tendency toward stable traditions, faith in tradition	No highly developed skills or talents	Specialized knowledge and skills
Acceptance of various kinds of incompetent people as well as "natural" callings	Social structure	General civic competence
Social forms emphasize extended primary group life: bands, villages, neighborhoods, guilds, etc.	Two major social forms: specialized corporations based on contracts and instrumental efficiency, and nuclear family to prepare for a future life	
Roles emphasize primary form of human integration: kinship, friendship, visible division of labor, visible charismatic leadership	Schooling used as a transitional social form to separate young people from the family for life in the corporation	
	Impersonal objective criteria used for selection of people into roles	
	Environment-technology	
Labor intensive economy	Capital intensive economy	
Use of beasts of burden	Omnipresence of human artifacts	
Visibility of man's dependence on nature	Disappearance of unmodified natural objects	
Visibility of ecological chains	High use of nonhuman energy	

Table 5.2
Modern-Primitive Aspects of Human Functions

<i>Primitive</i>	<i>Work</i>	<i>Modern</i>
<p>Visible relationship between work and requirements for survival</p> <p>Nonuniformity of products; personal relationships between people and products</p> <p>Less fragmentation of work roles</p> <p>Visible relationship between division of labor and efficiency; various parts of a task are visible to all</p> <p>Tasks tend to be associated with the personalities of people, rather than being seen as abstract jobs</p> <p>Contribution of various members of society cannot be reduced to common denominator—money</p> <p>Work performed with simple tools owned or controlled by worker</p>		<p>Relationship between tasks performed and requirements for survival often remains opaque</p> <p>Products of work are uniform and replaceable</p> <p>Highly developed division of labor and work roles</p> <p>Relationship between individual task and other tasks required to complete a whole task is often opaque</p> <p>Jobs have abstract requirements separated from the personalities of individual workers</p> <p>Value or contribution of individual members of society can be reduced to a common denominator and expressed quantitatively through money</p> <p>Work performed with complex expensive tools owned by impersonal corporate groups</p>
	<i>Attachment</i>	
<p>Primary bonds are at band or extended kinship level rather than in nuclear family or to produce corporate work</p> <p>Long-term bonds, often for life</p> <p>Tendency toward more diffuse bonds; less intensive, more extensive</p> <p>Age, sex, and kinship relationships tend to permeate relationships rather than job roles or specialized interests</p>		<p>Primary bonds are within transitory nuclear family or in job roles</p> <p>Geographic mobility leads to short-term bonds</p> <p>Tendency toward small number of intense relationships</p> <p>Tendency toward relationships based on common interest, common jobs</p> <p>Age, sex, and kinship minimized as bases for relationships</p>
	<i>Renewal</i>	
<p>Spontaneous social relating; fantasy, gossip, small talk</p> <p>No sharp line between reality, fantasy, and dreaming</p>		<p>Organized play; continuing concern with self-improvement or performing recreation</p> <p>Fantasy and dreaming demarcated and labeled</p>
	<i>Celebration</i>	
<p>General participation, often with specialized parts based on age, sex, and kinship relationships</p> <p>Often linked to natural cycles: human life cycle, daily or seasonal cycles</p> <p>Accompanied by music, dance, bodily movement</p> <p>Related to religious or magical meaning</p> <p>Embedded in tradition; tendency toward repetitiveness</p>		<p>Participation by professional performers based on special talent, competence, and training; large group of nonperformers act as audience and share experience vicariously</p> <p>Often not linked to natural cycles; performances based on utilitarian criteria such as size of audience and availability of talent</p> <p>Performers active; audience passive</p> <p>Tendency to celebrate quality of performance rather than religious or magical significance of the celebration</p> <p>Innovation and novelty valued</p> <p>Because performances are novel and follow a literate script, they must be highly managed and practiced</p> <p>Impersonal relationship between performers and audience</p>
	<i>Creation of meaning</i>	
<p>Embedded in natural environment</p> <p>Slowly evolving</p> <p>Nonrelativistic; words and symbols intrinsically linked with the reality they describe</p> <p>Meaning in the environment to be discovered and used by man</p>		<p>Tendency toward description of man-made environment</p> <p>Rapidly changing</p> <p>Relativistic; words and symbols seen as abstractions to be manipulated and played with</p> <p>Meaning only partly in the environment; meaning partly related to man's sensing equipment and nervous system</p>
	<i>Decision making and conflict resolution</i>	
<p>Authority based on tradition, often linked with age and sex</p> <p>Strong press for consensus of small face-to-face groups</p> <p>Sanctioning of emotional outbursts and personal conflict and violence</p>		<p>Authority based on meritocratic requirements of instrumental accomplishment</p> <p>Acceptance of authoritarian hierarchy based on impersonal contracts</p> <p>Strong sanctions against personal emotional outbursts; support of impersonal managed violence and destruction of people</p>

challenge for creating positive culture in modern society is inventing social institutions in which primal and modern elements of human evolution are allowed expression in nondestructive or noncompetitive ways; or in which the modern and primal are integrated within a common setting.

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DIFFUSION OF INNOVATIONS

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CHAPTER 1

Elements of Diffusion

To get the bad customs of a country changed and new ones, though better, introduced, it is necessary first to remove the prejudices of the people, enlighten their ignorance, and convince them that their interests will be promoted by the proposed changes; and this is not the work of a day.

Benjamin Franklin (1781)

There is nothing more difficult to plan, more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to manage than the creation of a new order of things. . . . Whenever his enemies have occasion to attack the innovator they do so with the passion of partisans, while the others defend him sluggishly so that the innovator and his party alike are vulnerable.

Niccolò Machiavelli
The Prince (1513)

ONE REASON WHY THERE IS SO MUCH INTEREST in the diffusion of innovations is because getting a new idea adopted, even when it has obvious advantages, is often very difficult. There is a wide gap in many fields, between what is known and what is actually put into use. Many innovations require a lengthy period, often of some years, from the time when they become available to the time when they are widely adopted. Therefore, a common problem for many individuals and organizations is how to speed up the rate of diffusion of an innovation.

The following case illustration provides insight into some common difficulties facing programs of diffusion.

Water Boiling in a Peruvian Village: A Diffusion Campaign that Failed *

The public health service in Peru attempts to introduce innovations to villagers to improve their health and lengthen their lives. This change agency

* This case illustration is adapted from Wellin (1955, pp. 71-103), and is used by permission.

enjoys a reputation for efficiency throughout Latin America. It encourages people to install latrines, to burn garbage daily, to control house flies, to report cases of infectious diseases, and to boil drinking water. These innovations involve major changes in thinking and behavior for Peruvian villagers, who do not understand how sanitation is related to illness.

Water boiling is an important health practice for villagers and urban poor in Peru. Unless they boil their drinking water, patients who are cured of infectious diseases in village medical clinics often return within a month to be treated again for the same disease.

A two-year water-boiling campaign conducted in Los Molinos, a peasant village of 200 families in the coastal region of Peru, persuaded only eleven housewives to boil water. From the viewpoint of the public health agency, the local health worker, Nelida, had a simple task: to persuade the housewives of Los Molinos to add water boiling to their pattern of daily behavior. Even with the aid of a medical doctor, who gave public talks on water boiling, and fifteen village housewives who were already boiling water before the campaign, Nelida's diffusion program failed. To understand why, we need to take a closer look at the culture, the local environment, and the individuals in Los Molinos.

THE VILLAGE OF LOS MOLINOS. Most residents of Los Molinos are peasants who work as field hands on local plantations. Water is carried by can, pail, gourd, or cask. Children are the usual water carriers; it is not considered appropriate for adult men to carry water, and they seldom do. The three sources of water in Los Molinos include a seasonal irrigation ditch close to the village, a spring more than a mile away from the village, and a public well whose water the villagers dislike. All three are subject to pollution at all times and show contamination whenever tested. Of the three sources, the irrigation ditch is most commonly used. It is closer to most homes, it has the advantage of being running water rather than stagnant, and the villagers like its taste.

Although it is not feasible for the village to install a sanitary water system, the incidence of typhoid and other water-borne diseases could be reduced by boiling the water before consumption. During her two-year residence in Los Molinos, Nelida made several visits to every home in the village but devoted especially intensive efforts to twenty-one families. She visited each of these selected families between fifteen and twenty-five times; eleven of these families now boil their water regularly.

What kinds of persons do these numbers represent? We describe three village housewives—one who boils water to obey custom, one who was persuaded to boil water by the health worker, and one of the many who rejected the innovation—in order to add further insight into the process of diffusion.

Mrs. A: Custom-Oriented Adopter. Mrs. A is about forty and suffers from sinus infection. The Los Molinos villagers call her a "sickly one." Each morning Mrs. A boils a potful of water and uses it throughout the day. She

has no understanding of germ theory, as explained by Nelida; her motivation for water boiling is a complex local custom of "hot" and "cold" distinctions. The basic principle of this belief system is that all foods, liquids, medicines, and other objects are inherently hot or cold, quite apart from their actual temperature. In essence hot-cold distinctions serve as a series of avoidances and approaches in such behavior as pregnancy, child rearing, and the health-illness system.

Boiled water and illness are closely linked in the folkways of Los Molinos; by custom, only the ill use cooked, or "hot" water. Once an individual becomes ill, it is unthinkable for him to eat pork (very cold) or to drink brandy (very hot). Extremes of hot and cold must be avoided by the sick; therefore, raw water, which is perceived to be very cold, must be boiled to overcome the extreme temperature.

Villagers learn from childhood to dislike boiled water. Most can tolerate cooked water only if flavoring, such as sugar, cinnamon, lemon, or herbs, is added. Mrs. A likes a dash of cinnamon in her drinking water. The village belief system involves no notion of bacteriological contamination of water. By tradition, boiling is aimed at eliminating the innate "cold" quality of unboiled water, not the harmful bacteria. Mrs. A drinks boiled water in obedience to local custom, because she is ill.

Mrs. B: Persuaded Adopter. The B family came to Los Molinos a generation ago, but they are still strongly oriented toward their birthplace high in the Andes Mountains. Mrs. B worries about lowland diseases that she feels infest the village. It is partly because of this anxiety that the change agent, Nelida, was able to convince Mrs. B to boil water.

Nelida is a friendly authority to Mrs. B (rather than a "dirt inspector," as she is seen by most other housewives), who imparts knowledge and brings protection. Mrs. B not only boils water but also has installed a latrine and has sent her youngest child to the health center for a check-up.

Mrs. B is marked as an outsider in the community by her highland hairdo and stumbling Spanish. She will never achieve more than marginal social acceptance in the village. Because the community is not an important reference group to her, Mrs. B deviates from village norms on health innovations. With nothing to lose socially, Mrs. B gains in personal security by heeding Nelida's advice. Mrs. B's practice of boiling water has no effect on her marginal status. She is grateful to Nelida for teaching her how to neutralize the danger of contaminated water, a lowland peril as she perceives it.

Mrs. C: Rejector. This housewife represents the majority of Los Molinos families who are not persuaded by the efforts of the change agent during the two-year health campaign. In spite of Nelida's repeated explanations, Mrs. C does not understand germ theory. How, she argues, can microbes survive in water that would drown people? Are they fish? If germs are so small that they cannot be seen or felt, how can they hurt a grown person? There are enough real threats in the world to worry about—poverty and

hunger—without bothering about tiny animals one cannot see, hear, touch, or smell. Mrs. C's allegiance to traditional customs is at odds with the boiling of water. A firm believer in the hot-cold superstition, she feels that only the sick must drink boiled water.

UNDERSTANDING WHY THE DIFFUSION OF WATER BOILING FAILED. This intensive two-year campaign by a public health worker in a Peruvian village of 200 families, aimed at persuading housewives to boil drinking water, was largely unsuccessful. Nelida was able to encourage only about 5 percent of the population, eleven families, to adopt the innovation. In contrast, change agents in other Peruvian villages were able to convince 15 to 20 percent of the housewives. Reasons for the relative failure of the diffusion campaign in Los Molinos can be traced partly to the cultural beliefs of the villagers. Local tradition links hot foods with illness. Boiling water makes it less "cold," and hence, appropriate only for the sick. But if a person is not ill, he is prohibited by village norms from drinking boiled water. Only the individuals who are least integrated into local networks risk defying community norms on water boiling. An important factor affecting the adoption rate of any innovation is its compatibility with the values, beliefs, and past experiences of the social system. Nelida and her superiors in the public health agency should have understood the hot-cold belief system, as it is found throughout Peru (and, in fact, in most nations of Latin America, Africa, and Asia).

Nelida's failure demonstrates the importance of interpersonal networks in the adoption and rejection of an innovation. Socially an outsider, Mrs. B was marginal to the Los Molinos community, although she had lived there for years. Nelida was a more important referent for Mrs. B than were her neighbors, who shunned her. Anxious to secure social acceptance from the higher-status Nelida, Mrs. B adopted water boiling, not because she understood the correct health reasons, but because she wanted to obtain Nelida's approval. Thus we see that the diffusion of innovations is often a social process, as well as a technical matter.

Nelida worked with the wrong housewives if she wanted to launch a self-generating diffusion process in Los Molinos. She concentrated her efforts on village women like Mrs. A and Mrs. B. Unfortunately, they were perceived as a sickly one and a social outsider and were not respected as social models of water-boiling behavior by the other women. The village opinion leaders, who could have activated local networks to spread the innovation, were ignored by Nelida.

How potential adopters view the change agent affects their willingness to adopt his or her ideas. In Los Molinos, Nelida was perceived differently by lower- and middle-status housewives. Most poor families saw the health worker as a "snooper" sent to Los Molinos to pry for dirt and to press already harassed housewives into keeping cleaner homes. Because the lower-status housewives had less free time, they were unlikely to initiate visits with

Nelida about water boiling. Their contacts outside the community were limited, and as a result, they saw the technically proficient Nelida with eyes bound by the social horizons and traditional beliefs of Los Molinos. They distrusted this outsider, whom they perceived as a social stranger. Nelida, who was middle class by Los Molinos standards, was able to secure more positive results from housewives whose socioeconomic level and cultural background were more similar to hers. This tendency for more effective communication to occur with those who are more similar to change agents occurs in most diffusion campaigns.

In general Nelida was too "innovation-oriented" and not "client-oriented" enough. Unable to put herself in the role of the village housewives, her attempts at persuasion failed to reach her clients because the message was not suited to their needs. Nelida did not begin where the villagers were; instead she talked to them about germ theory, which they could not (and probably did not need to) understand.

We have cited only some of the factors that produced the diffusion failure with which Nelida is charged. It will be easier to understand the water-boiling case once the remainder of this book has been read. We shall return to discuss lessons learned from the Los Molinos case in future chapters.

What Is Diffusion?

Diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system. It is a special type of communication, in that the messages are concerned with new ideas. *Communication* is a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding. This definition implies that communication is a process of convergence (or divergence) as two or more individuals exchange information in order to move toward each other (or apart) in the meanings that they ascribe to certain events. We think of communication as a two-way process of convergence, rather than as a one-way, linear act in which one individual seeks to transfer a message to another (Rogers and Kincaid, 1981). Such a simple conception of human communication may accurately describe certain communication acts or events involved in diffusion, such as when a change agent seeks to persuade a client to adopt an innovation. But when we look at what came before such an event, and at what follows, we often realize that such an event is only one part of a total process in which in-

formation is exchanged between the two individuals. For example, the client may come to the change agent with a problem or need, and the innovation is recommended as a possible solution. And if we look at the change agent–client interaction in a broader context, we may see that their interaction continues through several cycles, and is indeed a process of information exchange.

So diffusion is a special type of communication, in which the messages are concerned with a new idea. It is this newness of the idea in the message content of communication that gives diffusion its special character. The newness means that some degree of uncertainty is involved.

Uncertainty is the degree to which a number of alternatives are perceived with respect to the occurrence of an event and the relative probability of these alternatives. Uncertainty implies a lack of predictability, of structure, of information. In fact, information represents one of the main means of reducing uncertainty. *Information* is a difference in matter–energy that affects uncertainty in a situation where a choice exists among a set of alternatives (Rogers and Kincaid, 1981, p. 64).^{*} As we show in a later section of this chapter, a technological innovation embodies information and thus reduces uncertainty about cause–effect relationships in problem solving. For instance, my adoption of residential solar panels for water heating reduces my uncertainty about future price increases in the cost of oil. We find it useful to conceptualize the diffusion and adoption of innovations in terms of a framework based on information and uncertainty. The use of these key concepts helps us to understand the diffusion of technological innovations as one type of communication process.

Diffusion is a kind of *social change*, defined as the process by which alteration occurs in the structure and function of a social system. When new ideas are invented, diffused, and are adopted or rejected, leading to certain consequences, social change occurs. Of course, such change can happen in other ways too, for example, through a political revolution or through a natural event like a drought or earthquake.

Some authors restrict the term “diffusion” to the spontaneous, unplanned spread of new ideas, and use the concept of “dissemina-

tion” for diffusion that is directed and managed. We use diffusion and dissemination interchangeably in this book because the distinction often is not very clear in actual practice. And the general convention is to use the word “diffusion” to include both the planned and the spontaneous spread of new ideas.

But we do find it useful to distinguish between centralized and decentralized diffusion systems. In a centralized diffusion system, decisions about such matters as when to begin diffusing an innovation, who should evaluate it, and through what channels it will be diffused, are made by a small number of officials and/or technical experts at the head of a change agency. In a decentralized diffusion system, such decisions are more widely shared by the clients and potential adopters; here, horizontal networks among the clients are the main mechanism through which innovations spread. In fact, in extremely decentralized diffusion systems there may not be a change agency; potential adopters are solely responsible for the self-management of the diffusion of innovations. New ideas may grow out of the practical experience of certain individuals in the client system, rather than coming from formal R & D activities. Originally, it was assumed that relatively centralized diffusion systems like the agricultural extension service were an essential ingredient in the diffusion process, but in recent years several relatively decentralized diffusion systems have been investigated and evaluated, and found to represent an appropriate alternative to centralized diffusion under certain conditions (as detailed in Chapter 9).

Controlling Scurvy in the British Navy: Innovations Do Not Sell Themselves

Many technologists think that advantageous innovations will sell themselves, that the obvious benefits of a new idea will be widely realized by potential adopters, and that the innovation will therefore diffuse rapidly. Unfortunately, this is very seldom the case. Most innovations, in fact, diffuse at a surprisingly slow rate.

Scurvy control provides an interesting historical case of how slowly an obviously beneficial innovation spread (Mosteller, 1981). In the early days of long sea voyages, scurvy was the worst killer of the world’s sailors, worse than warfare, accidents, and all other causes of death. For instance, of Vasco de Gama’s crew of 160 men who sailed with him around the Cape of Good Hope in 1497, 100 died of scurvy. In 1601, an English sea captain, James Lancaster, conducted a kind of experiment to evaluate the ability of

^{*} “Information is something which reduces uncertainty. Communication is exchange of information. Most writers in the field of communication research would have no difficulty in agreeing with the first definition above. Just as many writers, no doubt, would like to change the second definition” (Wiio, 1980, p. 18).

lemon juice to prevent scurvy. Captain Lancaster commanded four ships that sailed from England on a voyage to India; he served three teaspoonfuls of lemon juice every day to the sailors on the biggest of his four ships. Most of these men stayed healthy. But on the three smaller ships, by the halfway point in the journey, 110 out of 278 sailors had died from scurvy. The three smaller ships constituted Lancaster's "control group"; they were not given any lemon juice. So many of these sailors were sick, in fact, that Lancaster had to transfer men from the large ship to staff the three smaller ships.

These results were so clear-cut that one might expect that the British Navy would decide to adopt citrus juice as a scurvy prevention on all its ships, or at least to carry out further investigations on the effects of citrus fruit. But it was not until 1747, *about 150 years later*, that James Lind, a British Navy physician who knew of Lancaster's results, carried out another experiment on the ship *Salisbury*. To each scurvy patient on this ship, Lind prescribed either two oranges and one lemon, or one of five other diets: a half-pint of sea water, six spoonfuls of vinegar, a quart of cider, nutmeg, or seventy-five drops of vitriol elixir. The scurvy patients who got the citrus fruits were cured in a few days, and were able to help Dr. Lind care for the other patients. Unfortunately, the supply of oranges and lemons was exhausted in six days.

Certainly, with this further solid evidence of the ability of citrus fruits to combat scurvy, one would expect the British Navy to adopt this technological innovation for all ship's crews on long sea voyages, and in fact, it did so. *But not until 1795, forty-eight years later*. Scurvy was immediately wiped out. And after a further wait of only *seventy more years*, in 1865, the British Board of Trade adopted a similar policy, and eradicated scurvy in the merchant marine.

Why were naval authorities so slow to adopt the idea of citrus for scurvy prevention? Historians are not able to provide a very clear explanation. But it seems that other, competing remedies for scurvy were also being proposed, and each such cure had its champions. For example, Captain Cook's reports from his voyages in the Pacific did not provide support for curing scurvy with citrus fruits. Further, Dr. Lind was not a very prominent figure in the field of naval medicine, and so his experimental findings did not get much attention in the British Navy. While scurvy prevention was generally resisted for years by the British Navy, other innovations like new ships and new guns were accepted more readily.

Many other historical illustrations could also be cited to show that more than just a beneficial innovation is necessary for its diffusion and adoption to occur. The reader may think that such slow diffusion could only happen in the distant past, before a scientific and experimental approach to evaluating innovations was very well accepted. We answer by calling the reader's attention to the contemporary case of the nondiffusion of the Dvorak typewriter keyboard.

Nondiffusion of the Dvorak Keyboard*

Most of us who use a typewriter—and this includes about 18 million individuals who earn their living as typists—don't even know that our fingers tap out words on a keyboard that is called "QWERTY," named after the first six keys in the upper row of letters. Even fewer of us know just how inefficient the QWERTY keyboard is. For example, this typewriter keyboard takes twice as long to learn as it should, requires twice as long to use as it should, and makes us work about twenty times harder than we should. But QWERTY has persisted out of inertia since 1873, and today unsuspecting individuals are still being taught to use the QWERTY keyboard, unaware that a much more efficient typewriter keyboard is available.

Where did QWERTY come from, and why does it continue to be used, instead of much more efficient alternative keyboard designs? QWERTY was invented by Christopher Latham Sholes in 1873, who designed this keyboard to slow the typist down. In that day, the type bars on a typewriter hung down in a sort of basket, and pivoted up to strike the paper; then they fell back in place by gravity. When two adjoining keys were struck rapidly in succession, they often jammed. Sholes rearranged the keys on a typewriter keyboard to minimize such jamming; he "anti-engineered" the arrangement to make the most commonly used letter sequences awkward and slow to use. By thus making it difficult for a typist to operate the machine, and slowing down typing speed, Sholes' QWERTY keyboard allowed these old typewriters to operate satisfactorily. His design was used in the manufacture of all typewriters.

Prior to about 1900, most typists used the two-finger, hunt-and-peck system. But thereafter, as touch typing became popular, dissatisfaction with the QWERTY keyboard began to grow. Typewriters became mechanically more efficient, and the QWERTY keyboard design was no longer necessary to prevent key jamming. The search for an improved design was led by Professor August Dvorak at the University of Washington, who in 1932 used time-and-motion studies to create a much more efficient keyboard arrangement. The Dvorak keyboard has the letters A, O, E, U, I, D, H, T, N, and S across the home row of the typewriter. Less frequently used letters were placed on the upper and lower rows of keys. About 70 percent of the typing is done on the home row, 22 percent on the upper row, and 8 percent on the lower row. On the Dvorak keyboard, the amount of work assigned to each finger is proportionate to its skill and strength. Further, Professor Dvorak engineered his keyboard so that successive keystrokes fell on alternative hands; thus, while a finger on one hand is stroking a key, a finger on the other hand can be moving into position to hit the next key. Typing rhythm is thus facilitated; this hand alternation was achieved by putting the vowels

* Further detail on the Dvorak keyboard may be found in Dvorak et al (1936), Parkinson (1972), and Lessley (1980).

(which represent 40 percent of all letters typed) on the left-hand side, and placing the major consonants that usually accompany these vowels on the right-hand side of the keyboard.

Professor Dvorak was able to avoid many of the typing inefficiencies of the QWERTY keyboard. For instance, QWERTY overloads the left hand; it must type 57 percent of ordinary copy. The Dvorak keyboard shifts this emphasis to 56 percent on the stronger right hand and 44 percent on the weaker left hand. Only 32 percent of typing is done on the home row with the QWERTY system, compared to 70 percent with the Dvorak keyboard. And the newer arrangement requires less jumping back and forth from row to row; with the QWERTY keyboard, a good typist's fingertips travel more than twelve miles a day, jumping from row to row. These unnecessary intricate movements cause mental tension, typist fatigue, and lead to more typographical errors.

One might expect, on the basis of its overwhelming advantages, that the Dvorak keyboard would have completely replaced the inferior QWERTY keyboard by now. On the contrary, after more than 40 years, almost all typists are still using the inefficient QWERTY keyboard. Even though the American National Standards Institute and the Computer and Business Equipment Manufacturers Association have approved the Dvorak keyboard as an alternate design, it is still almost impossible to find a typewriter (or a computer) keyboard that is arranged in the more efficient layout. Vested interests are involved in hewing to the old design: manufacturers, sales outlets, typing teachers, and typists themselves.

No, technological innovations are not always diffused and adopted rapidly. Even when the innovation has obvious and proven advantages.

As the reader may have guessed by now, the present pages were typed on a QWERTY keyboard.

Four Main Elements in the Diffusion of Innovations

Previously we defined *diffusion* as the process by which (1) an *innovation* (2) is *communicated* through certain *channels* (3) *over time* (4) among the members of a *social system*. The four main elements are the innovation, communication channels, time, and the social system (Figure 1-1). They are identifiable in every diffusion research study, and in every diffusion campaign or program (like the diffusion of water boiling in a Peruvian village).

The following description of these four elements in diffusion constitutes an overview of the main concepts and viewpoints that will be detailed in Chapters 2 through 11.

1. The Innovation

An *innovation* is an idea, practice, or object that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption. It matters little, so far as human behavior is concerned, whether or not an idea is "objectively" new as measured by the lapse of time since its first use or discovery. The perceived newness of the idea for the individual determines his or her reaction to it. If the idea seems new to the individual, it is an innovation.

Newness in an innovation need not just involve new knowledge. Someone may have known about an innovation for some time but not yet developed a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward it, nor have adopted or rejected it. The "newness" aspect of an innovation may be expressed in terms of knowledge, persuasion, or a decision to adopt.

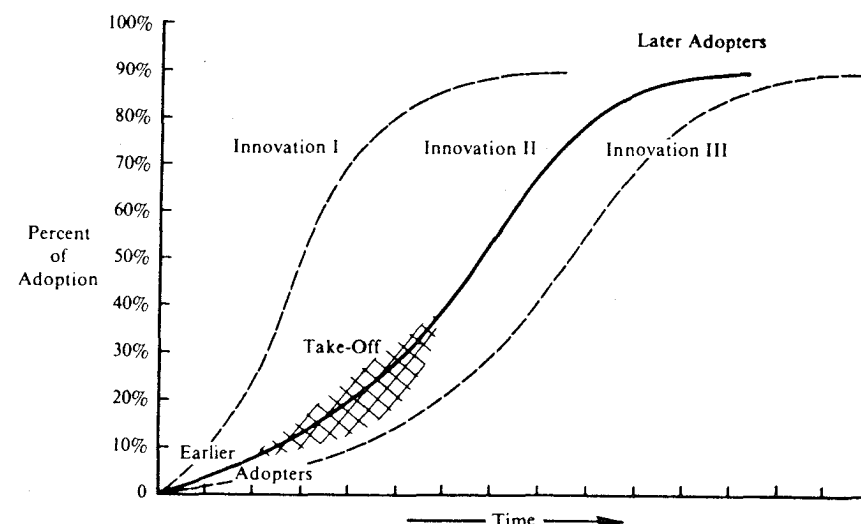


Figure 1-1. Diffusion is the process by which (1) an *innovation* (2) is *communicated* through certain *channels* (3) *over time* (4) among the members of a *social system*.

Among the important research questions addressed by diffusion scholars are (1) how the earlier adopters differ from the later adopters of an innovation (Chapter 7), (2) how the perceived attributes of an innovation, such as its relative advantage, compatibility, etc., affect its rate of adoption, whether relatively more rapidly (as for innovation I above) or more slowly (innovation III), as is detailed in Chapter 6, and (3) why the s-shaped diffusion curve "takes off" at about 10 to 25 percent adoption, when interpersonal networks become activated (Chapter 8).

It should not be assumed that the diffusion and adoption of all innovations are necessarily desirable. In fact, there are some studies of harmful and uneconomical innovations that are generally not desirable for either the individual or his or her social system. Further, the same innovation may be desirable for one adopter in one situation but undesirable for another potential adopter in a different situation. For example, mechanical tomato pickers have been adopted rapidly by large commercial farmers in California, but these machines were too expensive for small-sized tomato growers, and thousands have thus been forced out of tomato production (Chapter 4).

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATIONS, INFORMATION, AND UNCERTAINTY

Almost all of the new ideas analyzed in this book are technological innovations, and we often use "innovation" and "technology" as synonyms. A *technology* is a design for instrumental action that reduces the uncertainty in the cause-effect relationships involved in achieving a desired outcome.* A technology usually has two components: (1) a *hardware* aspect, consisting of the tool that embodies the technology as material or physical objects, and (2) a *software* aspect, consisting of the information base for the tool. For example, we often speak of (1) "computer hardware," consisting of semiconductors, transistors, electrical connections, and the metal frame to protect these electronic components, and (2) "computer software," consisting of the coded commands, instructions, and other information aspects of this tool that allow us to use it to extend human capabilities in solving certain problems. Here we see an illustration of the close interaction between a tool and the way it is used. The social embedding of the hardware aspects of technology are usually less visible than its machinery or equipment, and so we often think of technology mainly in hardware terms. Indeed, sometimes the hardware side of a technology is dominant. But in other cases, a technology may be almost entirely comprised of information; examples are a conservative political philosophy, a religious idea like Transcendental Meditation, a news event, a rumor, assembly-line production, and management by

* This definition is based upon Thompson (1967) and on personal communication with Dr. J. D. Eveland of the National Science Foundation. Both stress the uncertainty-reduction aspect of technology, and thus the important role of information, a view of technology that has not been very widely recognized.

objective (MBO). The diffusion of such software innovations has been investigated, although a methodological problem in such studies is that their adoption cannot be so easily traced or observed in a physical sense.

But even though the software component of a technology is often not so apparent to observation, we should not forget that technology almost always represents a mixture of hardware and software aspects. According to our definition of technology, it is a means of uncertainty reduction for individuals that is made possible by the information about cause-effect relationships on which the technology is based. This information usually comes from scientific R & D activities when the technology is being developed, but sometimes a new technology comes out of practice (even then, it is often subjected to a scientific evaluation before it is widely diffused). Thus, there is generally an implication that a technological innovation has at least some degree of benefit or advantage for its potential adopters. But this advantage is not always very clear-cut or spectacular, at least not in the eyes of the intended adopters. They can seldom be very certain that an innovation represents a superior alternative to the previous practice that it might replace.

So a technological innovation creates one kind of uncertainty in the minds of potential adopters (about its expected consequences), as well as representing an opportunity for reduced uncertainty in another sense (that of the information base of the technology). The latter type of potential uncertainty reduction (the information embodied in the technological innovation itself) represents the possible efficacy of the innovation in solving an individual's felt need or perceived problem; this advantage provides the motivation that impels an individual to exert effort in order to learn about the innovation. Once such information-seeking activities have reduced the uncertainty about the innovation's expected consequences to a tolerable level for the individual, a decision concerning adoption or rejection will be made. If the new idea is used by the individual, further evaluative information about the technological innovation is thus obtained and uncertainty about its effects is further reduced. Thus, the innovation-decision process is essentially an information-seeking and information-processing activity in which the individual is motivated to reduce uncertainty about the advantages and disadvantages of the innovation (Chapter 5).

For the sake of clarity, we need to distinguish between the two kinds of information that we have been discussing in respect to a technological innovation.

1. *Software information*, which is embodied in a technology and serves to reduce uncertainty about the cause-effect relationships involved in achieving a desired outcome.
2. *Innovation-evaluation information*, which is the reduction in uncertainty about an innovation's expected consequences.

The main questions that an individual typically asks in regard to software information are, "What is the innovation?" "How does it work?" and "Why does it work?" In contrast, the individual usually wants to know such innovation-evaluation information as, "What are the innovation's consequences?" and "What will its advantages and disadvantages be in my situation?"

TECHNOLOGY CLUSTERS

One of the conceptual and methodological issues facing diffusion researchers and practitioners is the determination of the boundaries around a technological innovation. In essence, the practical problem is how to determine where one innovation stops and another one begins. If an innovation is an idea that is perceived as new, the boundary question obviously ought to be answered by the potential adopters who do the perceiving. In fact, this approach is used by diffusion scholars and by market researchers in "positioning" studies (described in Chapter 6). For example, a California study of the diffusion of recycling found that households that recycled paper were also likely to recycle bottles and cans, but that many families only recycled paper (Leonard-Barton and Rogers, 1980a); presumably the two recycling behaviors represented two innovations that were part of an interrelated cluster. A *technology cluster* consists of one or more distinguishable elements of technology that are perceived as being closely interrelated. Some change agencies promote a cluster or package of innovations because they find that the innovations are thus adopted more rapidly.

CHARACTERISTICS OF INNOVATIONS

It should not be assumed, as sometimes has been done in the past, that all innovations are equivalent units of analysis. This is a gross oversimplification. While it may take consumer innovations like blue jeans

or pocket calculators only five or six years to reach widespread adoption in the United States, other new ideas such as the metric system or using seat belts in cars may require several decades to reach complete use. The characteristics of innovations, as perceived by individuals, help to explain their different rate of adoption.

1. *Relative advantage* is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as better than the idea it supersedes. The degree of relative advantage may be measured in economic terms, but social-prestige factors, convenience, and satisfaction are also often important components. It does not matter so much whether an innovation has a great deal of "objective" advantage. What does matter is whether an individual perceives the innovation as advantageous. The greater the perceived relative advantage of an innovation, the more rapid its rate of adoption is going to be.

2. *Compatibility* is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as being consistent with the existing values, past experiences, and needs of potential adopters. An idea that is not compatible with the prevalent values and norms of a social system will not be adopted as rapidly as an innovation that is compatible. The adoption of an incompatible innovation often requires the prior adoption of a new value system. An example of an incompatible innovation is the use of contraception in countries where religious beliefs discourage use of birth-control techniques, as in Moslem and Catholic nations.

3. *Complexity* is the degree to which an innovation is perceived as difficult to understand and use. Some innovations are readily understood by most members of a social system; others are more complicated and will be adopted more slowly. For example, the villagers in Los Molinos did not understand germ theory, which the health worker tried to explain to them as a reason for boiling their drinking water. In general, new ideas that are simpler to understand will be adopted more rapidly than innovations that require the adopter to develop new skills and understandings.

4. *Trialability* is the degree to which an innovation may be experimented with on a limited basis. New ideas that can be tried on the installment plan will generally be adopted more quickly than innovations that are not divisible. Ryan and Gross (1943) found that every one of their Iowa farmer respondents adopted hybrid-seed corn by first trying it on a partial basis. If the new seed could not have been sampled experimentally, its rate of adoption would have been much slower. An innovation that is trialable represents less uncertainty to

the individual who is considering it for adoption, as it is possible to learn by doing.

5. *Observability* is the degree to which the results of an innovation are visible to others. The easier it is for individuals to see the results of an innovation, the more likely they are to adopt. Such visibility stimulates peer discussion of a new idea, as friends and neighbors of an adopter ask him or her for innovation-evaluation information about it. Solar panels on a household's roof are highly observable, and a California survey found that the typical solar adopter showed his equipment to about six of his peers (Rogers et al, 1979).

About one-fourth of all California homeowners know someone who has adopted solar equipment (even though only about 2.5 percent of the state's homeowners had adopted by 1979), and about two-thirds of this one-fourth (15 percent of all homeowners) have seen their friend's solar panels. Solar adopters often are found in spatial clusters in California, with three or four adopters located on the same block. Other consumer innovations like home computers or videotape recorders are relatively less observable, and thus may diffuse more slowly.

In general, innovations that are perceived by receivers as having greater relative advantage, compatibility, trialability, observability, and less complexity will be adopted more rapidly than other innovations. These are not the only qualities that affect adoption rates, but past research indicates that they are the most important characteristics of innovations in explaining rate of adoption.

RE-INVENTION

Until about the mid-1970s, it was assumed that an innovation was an invariant quality that was not changed as it diffused. I remember interviewing an Iowa farmer in 1954 about his adoption of 2,4-D weed spray. In answer to my question about whether he used this innovation, the farmer described in some detail the particular and unusual ways in which he used the weed spray on his farm. At the end of his remarks, I simply checked "adopter" on my questionnaire. The concept of re-invention was not in my theoretical repertoire, so I condensed his experience into one of my existing categories.

Then, in the 1970s, diffusion scholars began to pay more attention to the concept of *re-invention*, defined as the degree to which an innovation is changed or modified by a user in the process of its adop-

tion and implementation. Some researchers measured re-invention as the degree to which an individual's use of a new idea departed from the "mainline" version of the innovation that was promoted by a change agency (Eveland et al, 1977). Once scholars became aware of the concept of re-invention and began to work out measures for it, they began to find that a fair degree of re-invention occurred for some innovations. Other innovations are more difficult or impossible to re-invent; for example, hybrid seed corn does not allow a farmer much freedom to re-invent, as the hybrid vigor is genetically locked into seed (for the first generation) in ways that are too complicated for a farmer to change. But certain other innovations are more flexible in nature, and they are re-invented by many adopters who implement them in different ways.

We should remember, therefore, that an innovation is not necessarily invariant during the process of its diffusion. And adopting an innovation is not necessarily a passive role of just implementing a standard template of the new idea.

Given that an innovation exists, communication must take place if the innovation is to spread beyond its inventor. Now we turn our attention to this second element in diffusion.

2. Communication Channels

Previously we defined *communication* as the process by which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding. Diffusion is a particular type of communication in which the information that is exchanged is concerned with new ideas. The essence of the diffusion process is the information exchange by which one individual communicates a new idea to one or several others. At its most elementary form, the process involves: (1) an innovation, (2) an individual or other unit of adoption that has knowledge of, or experience with using, the innovation, (3) another individual or other unit that does not yet have knowledge of the innovation, and (4) a communication channel connecting the two units. A *communication channel* is the means by which messages get from one individual to another. The nature of the information-exchange relationship between the pair of individuals determines the conditions under which a source will or will not transmit the innovation to the receiver, and the effect of the transfer.

For example, mass media channels are often the most rapid and ef-

ficient means to inform an audience of potential adopters about the existence of an innovation, that is, to create awareness-knowledge. *Mass media channels* are all those means of transmitting messages that involve a mass medium, such as radio, television, newspapers, and so on, which enable a source of one or a few individuals to reach an audience of many. On the other hand, interpersonal channels are more effective in persuading an individual to adopt a new idea, especially if the interpersonal channel links two or more individuals who are near-peers. *Interpersonal channels* involve a face-to-face exchange between two or more individuals.

The results of various diffusion investigations show that most individuals do not evaluate an innovation on the basis of scientific studies of its consequences, although such objective evaluations are not entirely irrelevant, especially to the very first individuals who adopt. Instead, most people depend mainly upon a subjective evaluation of an innovation that is conveyed to them from other individuals like themselves who have previously adopted the innovation. This dependence on the communicated experience of near-peers suggests that the heart of the diffusion process is the modeling and imitation by potential adopters of their network partners who have adopted previously (Chapter 8).

HETEROPHILY AND DIFFUSION

An obvious principle of human communication is that the transfer of ideas occurs most frequently between two individuals who are alike, similar, or homophilous. *Homophily** is the degree to which pairs of individuals who interact are similar in certain attributes, such as beliefs, education, social status, and the like. In a free-choice situation, when an individual can interact with any one of a number of other individuals, there is a strong tendency for him to select someone who is most like him- or herself.

There are many reasons for this principle of homophily. Similar

* This concept and its opposite, heterophily, were first called to scientific attention by Lazarsfeld and Merton (1964, p. 23). *Heterophily*, the mirror opposite of homophily, is defined as the degree to which pairs of individuals who interact are different in certain attributes. The term homophily derives from the Greek word *homotos*, meaning alike or equal. Thus, homophily literally means affiliation or communication with a similar person.

individuals usually belong to the same groups, live or work near each other, and are drawn by the same interests. This physical and social propinquity makes homophilous communication more likely. Such communication is also more likely to be effective, and thus to be rewarding. *More effective communication occurs when two individuals are homophilous.** When they share common meanings, a mutual subcultural language, and are alike in personal and social characteristics, the communication of ideas is likely to have greater effects in terms of knowledge gain, attitude formation and change, and overt behavior change. When homophily is present, communication is therefore likely to be more rewarding to both individuals. As they become gradually conditioned to homophily, the choice of other homophilous network partners is made even more likely.

One of the most distinctive problems in the communication of innovations is that the participants are usually quite heterophilous. A change agent, for instance, is more technically competent than his clients. This difference frequently leads to ineffective communication. They simply do not talk the same language. In fact, when two individuals are identical regarding their technical grasp of an innovation, no diffusion can occur as there is no new information to exchange. The very nature of diffusion demands that at least some degree of heterophily be present between the two participants.† Ideally, they would be homophilous on all other variables (education, social status, and the like) even though they are heterophilous regarding the innovation. Usually, however, the two individuals are heterophilous on all of these variables because knowledge and experience with an innovation are highly related to social status, education, and the like.

* A further refinement of this proposition includes the concept of *empathy*, defined as the ability of an individual to project him- or herself into the role of another: *more effective communication occurs when two individuals are homophilous, unless they have high empathy.* Heterophilous individuals who have high empathy are, in a social-psychological sense, really homophilous. The proposition about effective communication and homophily can also be reversed: *effective communication between two individuals leads to greater homophily in knowledge, beliefs, and overt behavior.*

† We shall see in later chapters that individuals often seek network links with others who are slightly, but not too much, more technically competent about innovations than themselves. For instance, opinion leaders who are sought for information about innovations are usually somewhat more innovative in adopting new ideas than their followers, yet the opinion leaders are seldom innovators, seldom the very first to adopt. This suggests that there is an optimal degree of heterophily in interpersonal networks for effective diffusion to occur.

3. Time

Time is an important element in the diffusion process. In fact, most other behavioral science research is timeless in the sense that the time dimension is simply ignored. Time is an obvious aspect of any communication process, but most (nondiffusion) communication research does not deal with it explicitly. Perhaps it is a fundamental concept that cannot be explained in terms of something more fundamental (Whitrow, 1980, p. 372). Time does not exist independently of events, but it is an aspect of every activity.

The inclusion of time as a variable in diffusion research is one of its strengths, but the measurement of the time dimension (often by means of respondents' recall) can be criticized (as we point out in Chapter 3). The time dimension is involved in diffusion (1) in the innovation-decision process by which an individual passes from first knowledge of an innovation through its adoption or rejection, (2) in the innovativeness of an individual or other unit of adoption—that is, the relative earliness/lateness with which an innovation is adopted—compared with other members of a system, and (3) in an innovation's rate of adoption in a system, usually measured as the number of members of the system that adopt the innovation in a given time period.

THE INNOVATION-DECISION PROCESS

The *innovation-decision process* is the process through which an individual (or other decision-making unit) passes from first knowledge of an innovation to forming an attitude toward the innovation, to a decision to adopt or reject, to implementation of the new idea, and to confirmation of this decision. We conceptualize five main steps in the process: (1) knowledge, (2) persuasion, (3) decision, (4) implementation, and (5) confirmation. *Knowledge* occurs when an individual (or other decision-making unit) is exposed to the innovation's existence and gains some understanding of how it functions. *Persuasion* occurs when an individual (or other decision-making unit) forms a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the innovation. *Decision* occurs when an individual (or other decision-making unit) engages in activities that lead to a choice to adopt or reject the innovation. *Implementation* occurs when an individual (or other decision-making unit) puts an innovation into use. Re-invention is especially likely to occur at the implementation stage. *Confirmation* occurs when an individual (or other

decision-making unit) seeks reinforcement of an innovation decision that has already been made, but he or she may reverse this previous decision if exposed to conflicting messages about the innovation.

Previously we stated that the innovation-decision process is an information-seeking and information-processing activity in which an individual obtains information in order to decrease uncertainty about the innovation. At the knowledge stage an individual mainly seeks software information that is embodied in a technological innovation, information that reduces uncertainty about the cause-effect relationships that are involved in the innovation's capacity to solve a problem. At this stage an individual wants to know what the innovation is, and how and why it works. Mass-media channels can effectively transmit such software information.

But increasingly at the persuasion stage, and especially at the decision stage, an individual seeks innovation-evaluation information in order to reduce uncertainty about an innovation's expected consequences. Here an individual wants to know the innovation's advantages and disadvantages in his or her own situation. Interpersonal networks with near-peers are particularly able to carry such evaluative information about an innovation. Such subjective evaluations of a new idea are especially likely to influence an individual at the decision stage, and perhaps at the confirmation stage.

The innovation-decision process can lead to either *adoption*, a decision to make full use of an innovation as the best course of action available, or to *rejection*, a decision not to adopt an innovation. Such decisions can be reversed at a later point; for example, *discontinuance* is a decision to reject an innovation after it had previously been adopted. Discontinuance may occur because an individual becomes dissatisfied with an innovation, or because the innovation is replaced with an improved idea. It is also possible for an individual to adopt the innovation after a previous decision to reject it. Such later adoption and discontinuance occur during the confirmation stage of the innovation-decision process.

The innovation-decision process involves time in the sense that the five steps usually occur in a time-ordered sequence of knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation. The *innovation-decision period* is the length of time required to pass through the innovation-decision process. Exceptions to the usual sequence of the five stages may occur, such as when the decision stage precedes the persuasion phase.

For purposes of simplicity, we have restricted our present discus-

sion of the innovation-decision process mainly to a single individual, and thus to the case of individual-optional innovation-decisions. But many innovation-decisions are made by organizations or other types of adopting units, rather than by individuals. For example, an organization may decide to purchase word-processing equipment on the basis of a staff decision or by an official's authority decision; the individual office worker in the organization may have little or no say in the innovation-decision. When an innovation-decision is made by a system, rather than by an individual, the decision process is usually much more complicated (we discuss the innovation-decision process in organizations in Chapter 10).

Nevertheless, time is still an important dimension in this innovation-decision process.

INNOVATIVENESS AND ADOPTER CATEGORIES

Innovativeness is the degree to which an individual or other unit of adoption is relatively earlier in adopting new ideas than the other members of a system. Rather than describing an individual as "less innovative than the average member of a social system," it is handier and more efficient to refer to the individual as being in the "late majority" or some other adopter category. This short-hand notation saves words and contributes to clearer understanding, for diffusion research shows that members of each of the adopter categories have a great deal in common. If the individual is like most others in the late majority category, he is low in social status, makes little use of mass-media channels, and secures most of his new ideas from peers via interpersonal channels. In a similar manner, we shall present a concise word-picture of each of the other four adopter categories (in Chapter 7). *Adopter categories* are the classifications of members of a social system on the basis of innovativeness. The five adopter categories are: (1) innovators, (2) early adopters, (3) early majority, (4) late majority, and (5) laggards.

Innovators are active information seekers about new ideas. They have a high degree of mass media exposure and their interpersonal networks extend over a wide area, usually reaching outside of their local system. Innovators are able to cope with higher levels of uncertainty about an innovation than are other adopter categories. As the first to adopt a new idea in their system, they cannot depend upon the

subjective evaluations of the innovation from other members of their system.

Obviously, the measure of innovativeness and the classification of the system's members into adopter categories are based upon the relative time at which an innovation is adopted.

RATE OF ADOPTION

There is a third specific way in which the time dimension is involved in the diffusion of innovations. *Rate of adoption* is the relative speed with which an innovation is adopted by members of a social system. When the number of individuals adopting a new idea is plotted on a cumulative frequency basis over time, the resulting distribution is an s-shaped curve. At first, only a few individuals adopt the innovation in each time period (such as a year or a month, for example); these are the innovators. But soon the diffusion curve begins to climb, as more and more individuals adopt. Then the trajectory of the rate of adoption begins to level off, as fewer and fewer individuals remain who have not yet adopted. Finally, the s-shaped curve reaches its asymptote, and the diffusion process is finished.

Most innovations have an s-shaped rate of adoption. But there is variation in the slope of the "s" from innovation to innovation; some new ideas diffuse relatively rapidly and the s-curve is quite steep. Another innovation may have a slower rate of adoption, and its s-curve will be more gradual, with a slope that is relatively lazy. One issue addressed by diffusion research is why some innovations have a rapid rate of adoption, and why others are adopted more slowly (Figure 1-1).

The rate of adoption is usually measured by the length of time required for a certain percentage of the members of a system to adopt an innovation. Therefore, we see that rate of adoption is measured using an innovation or a system, rather than an individual, as the unit of analysis. Innovations that are perceived by individuals as possessing greater relative advantage, compatibility, and the like, have a more rapid rate of adoption (as we pointed out previously in this chapter).

There are also differences in the rate of adoption for the same innovation in different social systems. Clearly, there are aspects of diffusion that cannot be explained only by the nature of individual behavior. The system has a direct effect on diffusion, and also an in-

direct influence through its individual members. What is a social system?

4. A Social System

A *social system* is defined as a set of interrelated units that are engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal. The members or units of a social system may be individuals, informal groups, organizations, and/or subsystems. The system analyzed in a diffusion study may consist of all the peasants in an Asian village, high schools in Wisconsin, medical doctors in a hospital, or all the consumers in the United States. Each unit in a social system can be distinguished from other units. All members cooperate at least to the extent of seeking to solve a common problem in order to reach a mutual goal. This sharing of a common objective binds the system together.

It is important to remember that diffusion occurs within a social system, because the social structure of the system affects the innovation's diffusion in several ways. The social system constitutes a boundary within which an innovation diffuses. Here we shall deal with the following topics: how the social structure affects diffusion, the effect of norms on diffusion, the roles of opinion leaders and change agents, types of innovation decisions, and the consequences of innovation. All these issues involve relationships between the social system and the diffusion process that occurs within it.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND DIFFUSION

To the extent that the units in a social system are not all identical in their behavior, structure then exists within the system. We define *structure* as the patterned arrangements of the units in a system. This structure gives regularity and stability to human behavior in a social system; it allows one to predict behavior with some degree of accuracy. Thus, structure represents one type of information in that it decreases uncertainty. Perhaps we see an illustration of this predictability that is provided by structure in a bureaucratic organization like a government agency; there is a well-developed social structure in such a system consisting of hierarchical positions, giving officials in higher-ranked positions the right to issue orders to individuals of lower rank. Their orders are expected to be carried out. Such patterned social rela-

tionships among the members of a system constitute *social* structure, one type of structure.

In addition to this formal structure among the units in a social system, there is also an informal type of structure that exists in the interpersonal networks linking a system's members, determining who interacts with whom and under what circumstances. We define such *communication structure* as the differentiated elements that can be recognized in the patterned communication flows in a system. Previously we mentioned the homophily principle, that most individuals in a system talk with others who are similar to themselves; a communication structure is thus often created in a system in which homophilous sets of individuals are grouped together in cliques. A complete lack of communication structure in a system would be represented by a situation in which each individual talked with equal probability to each other member of the system. Such a situation might occur when a set of complete strangers first come together. But regularized patterns soon begin to occur in the communication network of the system. And these aspects of communication structure predict, in part, the behavior of individual members of the social system.

The structure of a social system can facilitate or impede the diffusion of innovations in the system. The impact of the social structure on diffusion is of special interest to sociologists and social psychologists, and the way in which the communication structure of a system affects diffusion is a particularly interesting topic for communication scholars. Katz (1961) remarked, "It is as unthinkable to study diffusion without some knowledge of the social structures in which potential adopters are located as it is to study blood circulation without adequate knowledge of the structure of veins and arteries."

Compared to other aspects of diffusion research, however, there have been relatively few studies of how the social or communication structure of a system affects the diffusion and adoption of innovations in that system. One explanation may be that, methodologically, it is a rather tricky business to untangle the effects of a system's structure on diffusion, independent from the effects of the characteristics of the individuals that make up the system. But let us consider an illustration of *system effects*, the influences of the structure and/or composition of a system on the behavior of the members of the system. Our example is drawn from a study by Rogers and Kincaid (1981, pp. 239-240): two Korean women are both illiterate, married, have two children, and are twenty-nine years of age. The husbands of both women are high-school graduates, with farms of five acres. One might

expect that both women would be about equally likely, or unlikely, to adopt a contraceptive method.

But the two women are different in one crucial respect: they live in different villages, one in Village A and one in Village B. The rate of adoption of family-planning methods is 57 percent in Village A, and only 26 percent in Village B. Obviously, the social and communication structures of these two villages are quite different regarding the diffusion of contraception, even though these innovations had been promoted equally in both villages by the national family-planning program in Korea. Certainly, we would predict that the woman in Village A would be more likely to adopt a contraceptive method (than her counterpart in Village B) because of system effects: Mrs. A's friends and neighbors are more likely, since they themselves have adopted, to encourage her to adopt, and the village leaders in Village A are especially committed to family planning, while in Village B they are not.

From this example we can see how a system can have an effect on the diffusion and adoption of innovations, over and above the effect of such variables as the individual characteristics of the members of the system. Individual innovativeness is affected both by the individual's characteristics, and by the nature of the social system in which the individual is a member.

SYSTEM NORMS AND DIFFUSION

The Korean investigation by Rogers and Kincaid (1981, p. 249) also illustrates the importance of village norms in affecting the rate of diffusion of family-planning methods. For example, our study of twenty-four villages found big differences from village to village, both in the level of adoption of family planning and in the adoption of particular types of contraceptive methods. One village had 51 percent adoption of the IUD (intrauterine device) and only one vasectomy adopter. Another village had 23 percent adoption of vasectomy. Yet another was a "pill village" in which all of the adopters chose to use contraceptive pills. Clearly these differences were not due to the nature of the national family-planning program in Korea, which had promoted the same "cafeteria" of contraceptive methods in all villages for ten years prior to our data gathering. The explanation for the different contraceptive behavior from village to village had to come mainly from within each village. One explanation was these systems' norms.

Norms are the established behavior patterns for the members of a social system. They define a range of tolerable behavior and serve as a guide or a standard for the members of a social system.

A system's norms can be a barrier to change, as was shown in our example of water boiling in a Peruvian community. Such resistance to new ideas is often found in norms that relate to food habits. In India, for example, sacred cows roam the countryside while millions of people are undernourished. Pork is not consumed by Moslems and Jews. Polished rice is eaten in most of Asia and the United States, even though whole rice is more nutritious. These are examples of cultural and religious norms. Norms can operate at the level of a nation, a religious community, an organization, or a local system like a village.

OPINION LEADERS AND CHANGE AGENTS

We have been discussing the influence of the structure of a system on its members' diffusion and adoption behavior. Now we turn to the different roles that certain individuals play in a social system and the effect of these roles on diffusion. Specifically, we look at two roles: opinion leaders and change agents.

The most innovative member of a system is very often perceived as a deviant from the social system, and he or she is accorded a somewhat dubious status of low credibility by the average members of the system. This individual's role in diffusion (especially in persuading others about the innovation) is therefore likely to be limited. On the other hand, there are members of the system who function in the role of opinion leader. They provide information and advice about innovations to many in the system.

Opinion leadership is the degree to which an individual is able to influence other individuals' attitudes or overt behavior informally in a desired way with relative frequency. It is a type of informal leadership, rather than a function of the individual's formal position or status in the system. Opinion leadership is earned and maintained by the individual's technical competence, social accessibility, and conformity to the system's norms. Much research indicates that when the social system is oriented to change, the opinion leaders are quite innovative; but when the norms are opposed to change, the behavior of the leaders also reflects this norm. By their close conformity to the system's norms, opinion leaders serve as an apt model for the innovation be-

havior of their followers. Opinion leaders thus exemplify and express the system's structure.

In any system, naturally, there may be both innovative opinion leaders and also leaders who oppose change. These influential persons can lead in the promotion of new ideas, or they can head an active opposition. In general, when opinion leaders are compared with their followers, we find that they (1) are more exposed to all forms of external communication, (2) are more cosmopolite, (3) have somewhat higher social status, and (4) are more innovative (although the exact degree of innovativeness depends, in part, on the system's norms). But one of the most striking characteristics of opinion leaders is their unique and influential position in their system's communication structure: they are at the center of interpersonal communication networks. A *communication network* consists of interconnected individuals who are linked by patterned flows of information. The opinion leader's interpersonal networks allow him or her to serve as a social model whose innovative behavior is imitated by many other members of the system. The influence and respect with which the opinion leader is held can be lost, however, as when an opinion leader deviates too far from the norms of his or her system. There is research evidence that opinion leaders can be "worn out" by change agents who overuse them. Opinion leaders may be perceived by their peers as too much like the change agents and may therefore lose their credibility with their former followers.

Opinion leaders are members of the social system in which they exert their influence. In some instances individuals with influence in the social system are professionals who represent change agencies external to the system. A *change agent* is an individual who influences clients' innovation decisions in a direction deemed desirable by a change agency. He or she usually seeks to obtain the adoption of new ideas, but may also attempt to slow down diffusion and prevent the adoption of what he or she believes are undesirable innovations. Change agents use opinion leaders within a given social system as lieutenants in diffusion campaigns.

Change agents are often professionals with university degrees in technical fields. This professional training, and the social status that goes with it, usually means that change agents are heterophilous from their typical clients, thus posing problems for effective communication about the innovations that they are promoting. However, because of a manpower shortage of professionally qualified change agents and/or because of a lack of adequate financial resources to

employ adequate numbers of them, many change agencies use change-agent aides. An *aide* is a less than fully professional change agent who intensively contacts clients to influence their innovation decisions. Aides are usually more homophilous with their average client, and thus provide one means of bridging the heterophily gap frequently found between professional change agents and their client audience.

TYPES OF INNOVATION-DECISIONS

The social system has yet another important kind of influence on the diffusion of new ideas. Innovations can be adopted or rejected (1) by individual members of a system, or (2) by the entire social system, which can decide to adopt an innovation by a collective or an authority decision.

1. *Optional innovation-decisions* are choices to adopt or reject an innovation that are made by an individual independent of the decisions of other members of the system. Even in this case, the individual's decision may be influenced by the norms of his system and by his interpersonal networks. The decision of an individual housewife in Los Molinos to adopt or reject water boiling was an optional innovation-decision, although this choice was often influenced by community factors, like the hot-cold complex. The distinctive aspect of optional innovation-decisions is that the individual is the unit of decision making, rather than the social system.

As stated previously, the classical diffusion model evolved out of early diffusion research, which comprised almost entirely investigations of optional innovation-decisions: the diffusion of hybrid corn among Iowa farmers, the spread of a new antibiotic drug among medical doctors, and the like. Only in the past decade have we begun to expand the scope of the diffusion paradigm also to include collective and authority innovation-decisions.

2. *Collective innovation-decisions* are choices to adopt or reject an innovation that are made by consensus among the members of a system. All of the units in the system usually must conform to the system's decision once it is made. For example, the voters in some California cities and counties have decided that all new homes to be constructed must be equipped with solar water heating, as must any old home that is resold; the individual homeowner has little practical choice but to adopt solar panels. On the other hand, once a city decides to have cable television, each household has to sign up individ-

ually for this new service. The freedom of choice allowed the individual depends on the nature of the collective innovation-decision.

3. *Authority innovation-decisions* are choices to adopt or reject an innovation that are made by a relatively few individuals in a system who possess power, status, or technical expertise. The individual member of the system has little or no influence in the innovation-decision; he or she simply implements the decision. For instance, the president of a large U.S. electronics corporation some years ago decided that all of his male employees should wear white shirts and dark suits; this authority decision had to be followed by every man who worked for this company.

These three types of innovation-decisions range on a continuum from optional decisions (where the adopting individual has almost complete responsibility for the decision), through collective decisions (where the individual has some influence in the decision), to authority decisions (where the adopting individual has no influence in the innovation decision). Collective and authority decisions are probably much more common than optional decisions in formal organizations, such as factories, schools, or government organizations, in comparison with other fields like agriculture and consumer behavior, where many of the innovation-decisions by farmers and consumers are optional.

Generally, the fastest rate of adoption of innovations results from authority decisions (depending, of course, on how innovative the authorities are). Optional decisions can usually be made more rapidly than collective decisions. Although made more rapidly, authority decisions are often circumvented during their implementation.

The type of innovation-decision for a given idea may change or be changed over time. Automobile seat belts, during the early years of their use, were installed in autos as optional decisions by the car's owner, who had to pay the cost of installation. Then, in 1968, a federal law was passed requiring that seat belts be included in all new cars in the United States. An optional innovation-decision thus became a collective decision. But the decision by the auto driver or passengers to fasten the belts when in the car was still an optional decision—that is, except for 1974 model cars, which a federal law required to be equipped with a seat belt-ignition interlock system that prevented the driver from starting the engine until everyone in the auto's front seat had fastened their seat belt. So for one year, the fastening of seat belts became a collective authority-decision. But the public reaction to this draconian approach was so negative that the U.S. legisla-

ture reversed this law, and the fastening of auto seat belts again became an individual-optional decision.

There is yet a fourth type of innovation-decision that is a sequential combination of two or more of the three types we have just discussed. *Contingent innovation-decisions* are choices to adopt or reject that can be made only after a prior innovation-decision. For example, an individual member of a social system may be free to adopt or not to adopt a new idea only after his system's innovation-decision. In the example just discussed, until the 1968 law (a collective innovation-decision by elected legislators representing the public), it was difficult for an auto owner to make an optional decision to install seat belts. In a university setting, a professor may not be able to make an optional decision to use a word processor until a prior authority decision to purchase the word-processing equipment has been made by the professor's department chairperson.

One can also imagine other types of contingent innovation decisions in which the first decision is of an authority sort followed by a collective decision. The distinctive aspect of contingent decision making is that two (or more) tandem decisions are required; either of the innovation decisions may be optional, collective, or authority.

The social system is involved directly in collective, authority, and contingent innovation-decisions, and perhaps indirectly in optional innovation-decisions. There is a final way in which the social system plays a role in the diffusion of innovations: it is involved in the consequences of innovations.

CONSEQUENCES OF INNOVATIONS

A social system is involved in an innovation's consequences because certain of these changes occur at the system level, in addition to those that affect the individual. We discuss consequences briefly here and in an expanded form in Chapter 11.

Consequences are the changes that occur to an individual or to a social system as a result of the adoption or rejection of an innovation. There are at least three classifications of consequences:

1. *Desirable* versus *undesirable* consequences, depending on whether the effects of an innovation in a social system are functional or dysfunctional.
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1. *Desirable* versus *undesirable* consequences, depending on whether the effects of an innovation in a social system are functional or dysfunctional.
2. *Direct* versus *indirect* consequences, depending on whether the

changes to an individual or to a social system occur in immediate response to an innovation or as a second-order result of the direct consequences of an innovation.

3. *Anticipated versus unanticipated* consequences, depending on whether the changes are recognized and intended by the members of a social system or not.

Change agents usually introduce innovations into a client system that they expect will be desirable, direct, and anticipated. But often such innovations result in at least some unanticipated consequences that are indirect and undesirable for the system's members. An illustration is the case of the steel ax introduced by missionaries to an Australian aborigine tribe (Sharp, 1952, pp. 69-72). The change agents intended that the new tool should raise levels of living and material comfort for the tribe. But the new technology also led to a breakdown of the family structure, the rise of prostitution, and "misuse" of the innovation itself. Change agents can often anticipate and predict the innovation's form, the directly observable physical appearance of the innovation, and perhaps its function, the contribution of the idea to the way of life of the system's members. But seldom are change agents able to predict another aspect of an innovation's consequences, its meaning, the subjective perception of the innovation by the clients.

Diffusion of Hybrid Corn in Iowa

We have already mentioned the Ryan and Gross (1943) study of the diffusion of hybrid seed corn as one of the most influential diffusion studies of all time. Although more will be said about this study in Chapter 2, it is an ideal illustration at this point because the hybrid corn investigation includes each of the four main elements of diffusion that we have just discussed.

The innovation of hybrid corn was one of the most important new farm technologies when it was released to Iowa farmers in 1928, and it ushered in a whole set of agricultural innovations in the 1930s through the 1950s that amounted to an "agricultural revolution" in farm productivity. Hybrid seed had been developed by agricultural scientists at Iowa State University and at other state land-grant universities. The diffusion of hybrid seed was heavily promoted by the Iowa agricultural extension service and by salesmen from seed companies. Hybrid corn yielded about 20 percent more per acre than the open-pollinated varieties that it replaced, and it was also more drought resistant and better suited to harvest with mechanical corn pickers. But the seed lost its hybrid vigor after the first generation, so farmers had to pur-

chase hybrid seed each year. Previously farmers had saved their own seed, selected from their best-looking corn plants. The adoption of hybrid corn meant that a farmer had to make important changes in his behavior.

In 1941, Bryce Ryan and Neal Gross (1943), two rural sociologists at Iowa State University, personally interviewed 259 farmers living in two small communities. Each of these respondents was asked to recall when and how he had adopted hybrid corn, and to provide certain information about themselves and their farm operation.

All but 2 of the 259 farmers had adopted hybrid corn between 1928 and 1941, a rather rapid rate of adoption. When plotted cumulatively on a year-by-year basis, the adoption rate formed an s-shaped curve over time. After the first five years, by 1933, only 10 percent of the Iowa farmers had adopted. Then, the adoption curve "took off," shooting up to 40 percent adoption in the next three years (by 1936). Soon the rate of adoption began to level off as fewer and fewer farmers remained to adopt the new idea. The overall shape of the rate of adoption looked like an "S" (Figure 1-1).

Farmers were assigned to adopter categories on the basis of when they adopted the new seed (Gross, 1942). Compared to later adopters, the innovators had larger-sized farms, higher incomes, and more years of formal education. The innovators were more cosmopolite, as measured by the number of trips they had taken to Des Moines (Iowa's largest city, located about seventy-five miles away).

Although hybrid corn was an innovation with a high degree of relative advantage over the open-pollinated seed that it replaced, the typical farmer moved rather slowly from awareness-knowledge of the innovation to adoption. The innovation-decision period from first knowledge to the adoption decision averaged about nine years for all respondents, a finding that led to a clearer realization that the innovation-decision process involved considerable deliberation by most adopters, even in the case of an innovation with spectacular results. The average respondent took three or four years after planting his first hybrid seed, usually on a small trial plot, before deciding to plant 100 percent of his corn acreage in hybrid varieties.

Communication channels played different roles at various stages in the innovation-decision process. The typical farmer first heard of hybrid seed from a salesman, but neighbors were the most frequent channel leading to persuasion. Salesmen were more important channels for earlier adopters, and neighbors were more important for later adopters. The Ryan and Gross (1943) findings suggested the important role of interpersonal networks in the diffusion process in a system. The farmer-to-farmer exchange of personal experiences with use of the hybrid seed seemed to lie at the heart of diffusion. When enough such positive experiences were accumulated by farmers (especially the innovators and early adopters) and exchanged within the community, the rate of adoption really took off. This threshold seemed to occur in about 1935. After about that point, it would have been impossible to halt

the further diffusion of hybrid corn. The farm community as a social system, including the networks linking the individual farmers within it, was a crucial element in the diffusion process.

In order to understand the role of diffusion networks and opinion leadership, Ryan and Gross (1943) should have asked sociometric questions* of their respondents, such as "From which other farmers have you obtained information about hybrid corn?" The sample design, which consisted of a complete enumeration in two communities, would have made the use of sociometric questions easy. But "information was simply collected from all community members as if they were unrelated respondents in a random sample" (Katz et al, 1963).

Even without sociometric data about diffusion networks, Ryan and Gross (1943) sensed that hybrid corn spread in the two Iowa communities as a kind of social snowball. They wrote: "There is no doubt but that the behavior of one individual in an interacting population affects the behavior of his fellows. Thus, the demonstrated success of hybrid seed on a few farms offers a changed situation to those who have not been so experimental. The very fact of acceptance by one or more farmers offers new stimulus to the remaining ones." Thus, the two rural sociologists intuitively sensed what later diffusion scholars were to gather more detailed evidence to prove: that the heart of the diffusion process consists of interpersonal network exchanges and social modeling between those individuals who had already adopted and those who then would be influenced to do so.

In her study of the invisible college of rural sociologists investigating diffusion as of the mid-1960s, Crane (1972, p. 74) identified the researchers who first utilized a new concept and/or methodological tool in studying diffusion. According to her analysis, Ryan and Gross deserve credit for launching fifteen of the eighteen most widely used intellectual innovations in the rural sociology research tradition. This is perhaps another way of saying that Bryce Ryan and Neal Gross really formed the classical diffusion paradigm.

As such, the hybrid corn study has left an indelible stamp on the history of diffusion research.

Summary

Diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system. Diffusion is a special type of communication concerned with

* *Sociometry* is a means of obtaining and analyzing quantitative data about communication patterns among the individuals in a system by asking each respondent to whom he or she is linked.

the spread of messages that are new ideas. *Communication* is a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding. It is the newness of the idea in the message content that gives diffusion its special character, as some degree of uncertainty is thus involved. *Uncertainty* is the degree to which a number of alternatives are perceived with respect to the occurrence of an event and the relative probabilities of these alternatives. The degree of uncertainty can be reduced by an individual by obtaining information. *Information* is a difference in matter-energy that affects uncertainty in a situation where a choice exists among a set of alternatives.

The main elements in the diffusion of new ideas are: (1) an *innovation*, (2) which is *communicated* through certain *channels*, (3) *over time*, (4) among the members of a *social system*. An *innovation* is an idea, practice, or object perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption. Almost all of the new ideas discussed in this book are technological innovations. A *technology* is a design for instrumental action that reduces the uncertainty in the cause-effect relationships involved in achieving a desired outcome. Most technologies have two components: (1) *hardware*, consisting of the tool that embodies the technology as material or physical objects, and (2) *software*, consisting of the knowledge base for the tool. The software information embodied in a technology serves to reduce one type of uncertainty, that concerned with the cause-effect relationships that are involved in achieving a desired outcome. But a technological innovation also creates another kind of uncertainty because of its newness to the individual, and motivates him or her to seek information by means of which the new idea can be evaluated. We call this *innovation-evaluation information*; it leads to a reduction in uncertainty about an innovation's expected consequences.

The characteristics of an innovation, as perceived by the members of a social system, determine its rate of adoption. Five attributes of innovations are: (1) relative advantage, (2) compatibility, (3) complexity, (4) trialability, and (5) observability.

Re-invention is the degree to which an innovation is changed or modified by a user in the process of its adoption and implementation.

A *communication channel* is the means by which messages get from one individual to another. Mass-media channels are more effective in creating knowledge of innovations, whereas interpersonal channels are more effective in forming and changing attitudes toward the new idea, and thus in influencing the decision to adopt or reject a

new idea. Most individuals evaluate an innovation, not on the basis of scientific research by experts, but through the subjective evaluations of near-peers who have adopted the innovation. These near-peers thus serve as social models, whose innovation behavior tends to be imitated by others in their system.

Another distinctive aspect of diffusion as a subfield of communication is that some degree of heterophily is present. *Heterophily* is the degree to which pairs of individuals who interact are different in certain attributes, such as beliefs, education, social status, and the like. The opposite of heterophily is *homophily*, the degree to which pairs of individuals who interact are similar in certain attributes. Generally, most human communication takes place between individuals who are homophilous, a situation that leads to more effective communication. Therefore, the heterophily that is often present in the diffusion of innovations leads to special problems in securing effective communication.

Time is involved in diffusion in (1) the innovation-decision process, (2) innovativeness, and (3) an innovation's rate of adoption. The *innovation-decision process* is the mental process through which an individual (or other decision-making unit) passes from first knowledge of an innovation to forming an attitude toward the innovation, to a decision to adopt or reject, to implementation of the new idea, and to confirmation of this decision. We conceptualize five steps in this process: (1) knowledge, (2) persuasion, (3) decision, (4) implementation, and (5) confirmation. An individual seeks information at various stages in the innovation-decision process in order to decrease uncertainty about the innovation. At the knowledge stage, an individual obtains software information that is embedded in a technological innovation; he or she wants to know what the innovation is and how it works. But at the persuasion and decision stages, an individual seeks innovation-evaluation information in order to reduce uncertainty about an innovation's expected consequences. The decision stage leads (1) to *adoption*, a decision to make full use of an innovation as the best course of action available, or (2) to *rejection*, a decision not to adopt an innovation.

Innovativeness is the degree to which an individual or other unit of adoption is relatively earlier in adopting new ideas than other members of a social system. We specify five *adopter categories*, classifications of the members of a social system on the basis of innovativeness: (1) innovators, (2) early adopters, (3) early majority, (4) late majority, and (5) laggards. *Rate of adoption* is the relative speed with which an innovation is adopted by members of a social system.

A *social system* is a set of interrelated units that are engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal. A system has *structure*, defined as the patterned arrangements of the units in a *system*, which gives stability and regularity to individual behavior in a *system*. The social and communication structure of a system facilitates or impedes the diffusion of innovations in the system.

Norms are the established behavior patterns for the members of a social system. Norms are often exemplified in the behavior of the opinion leaders in a system. *Opinion leadership* is the degree to which an individual is able to influence informally other individuals' attitudes or overt behavior in a desired way with relative frequency. A *change agent* is an individual who attempts to influence clients' innovation-decisions in a direction that is deemed desirable by a change agency. An *aide* is a less than fully professional change agent who intensively contacts clients to influence their innovation-decisions.

We distinguish three main types of innovation-decisions: (1) *optional innovation-decisions*, choices to adopt or reject an innovation that are made by an individual independent of the decisions of other members of the system, (2) *collective innovation-decisions*, choices to adopt or reject an innovation that are made by consensus among the members of a system, and (3) *authority innovation-decisions*, choices to adopt or reject an innovation that are made by relatively few individuals in a system who possess power, status, or technical expertise. A fourth category consists of a sequential combination of two or more of these types of innovation-decisions: *contingent innovation-decisions* are choices to adopt or reject that can be made only after a prior innovation-decision.

A final way in which a social system may function as an element in diffusion concerns *consequences*, the changes that occur to an individual or to a social system as a result of the adoption or rejection of an innovation.

Dialectics of Third World Development

edited by

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1 Dialectics of Understanding the Third World

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Almost every day we hear about Third World problems: overpopulation in the Sahel of Africa, high energy costs in India, massive urban unemployment in Brazil, and balance of payments difficulties in the banana republics of Central America. Yet there is little agreement on what causes and perpetuates these problems or how they might be eliminated.

The classic fable of five blind Indian gentlemen touching an elephant recalls this dilemma. Each gentleman feels a different part of the beast, and thinks that he can identify it correctly. The man who grabs the tail thinks it is a rope; the one who holds the leg believes it is a tree trunk; the one who touches the side of the elephant says it is a wall; the one who feels the ear proclaims it is a big leaf; and, the one who holds the trunk cries it is a snake. A concrete example will illustrate this dilemma. Consider the world food problem.¹ A hypothetical American resource pessimist declares: "Soaring numbers of people are over-running available food supplies. It seems to me that an acceptable solution to the world food supply situation is 'lifeboat ethics.' I believe that compassion is a luxury that we can no longer afford in this era of scarcity. Countries like Bangladesh are 'basket cases.' Their populations should not be recipients of American food aid, which will help only to maintain high population growth rates. We must learn to let the starving die for the survival of the human race." A United Nations adviser pipes up: "I think that high population growth rates and consequent population pressure, land fragmentation, poor soils, and unreliable rainfall keep people from feeding themselves. The best way to stabilize the overpopulation/food scarcity problem is to provide the poor with the contraceptive means to practice responsible parenthood." A World Bank official adds: "People are hungry because of insufficient food production. To solve the world food supply situation we must transform traditional agriculture which is inefficient. The only way to do this is for rich industrial countries to supply progressive farmers with imported technology, new seeds, artificial fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation, and machinery." A Marxist from Tanzania breaks in: "The cause of hunger is not the tropical environment, not too many people, not scarcity of available land, not lack of technology, and not overconsumption by greedy Americans. Every country has the capacity to feed itself. The real problem is the inequality generated by the world's political economy. The unequal distribution of global wealth is an historical product, the end result of the process by which the capitalist countries through colonialism and neo-imperialism gained control of the global economy. Today the hungry cannot be fed because of Third World elites and foreign corporations who benefit from the way things are. The only guarantee of long-term food security is for us Third World people to take control of our own food resources."

Box A

LABELING/LIBELING THE THIRD WORLD

The yawning chasm between prosperity and poverty in the world has created a language of its own. Or, is it in fact the rich person, not the yawning chasm, who has created this language? Author Göran Palm, writing for the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) journal *RAPPORT*, took a closer look at the vocabulary we use.

"The developed world" is contrasted to "the Third World." "Industrialized countries" are contrasted to "the poor in the South."

UN trade statistics commonly divide the world into three areas or "economic classes": industrialized countries or developed (Western) countries; developing countries or underdeveloped countries; socialist countries, Eastern bloc countries, or planned economies.

In addition to North America and Western Europe, the "industrialized countries" include Japan, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and sometimes Israel. The "developing countries" are mainly the nearly one hundred nations of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Oceania which within the framework of the UN, form the Group of 77 (sometimes identified with the non-aligned states). This latter includes several nations with certain ties to the Soviet Union or China such as Guinea, Yugoslavia, India, Tanzania, but also members of the "Eastern bloc." Lastly, the "socialist countries" include all nations of Eastern Europe except Yugoslavia, a handful of countries in Asia and a single country in Latin America—Cuba.

This may seem like a good enough preliminary classification but on closer inspection, we find that the first group of countries is the only one to be given an indisputably positive label. To be labelled "underdeveloped" or to represent a "developing country" is less gratifying. Such labels imply that one is somehow a little inferior or backward, that one, say, lives in tribes, worships holy cows, is afraid of contraceptives, doesn't know one's own best interests.

To be reckoned a member of the "Eastern bloc" or one of the "communist countries" is not much better. It amounts to being excluded or discriminated against on political grounds. Such countries are not a part of the "development" and "industrialization" so craved throughout the southern hemisphere.

Labels like "socialist countries" and "planned economies" are in that case more accurate, but here, too, a different norm is applied to these countries than to the other groups. They are identified not according to their level of development, but according to ideology and the nature of their economic system.

If we take industrialization as the criterion, any differences between the Eastern and Western countries evaporate. A similar lexicographical justice might be extended to all the countries outside the industrial world. Most of the countries of Latin America, Africa, and Asia depend on the production of foodstuffs and primary materials for industry for their livelihood. To sidestep the problem of ideology we may conveniently categorize the world into "industrialized countries" versus "raw materials-producing countries."

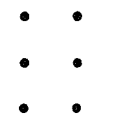
It is perfectly acceptable to say "industrialized countries" just as long as they are not contrasted to "developing countries" but to "agrarian" or "raw materials-producing countries." It is fine to say "socialist countries" as long as they are contrasted to "capitalistic countries." Fine to say "underdeveloped" just as long as it is contrasted to "overdeveloped." The old terminology is perfectly admissible; the problem lies in the misleading pairs of opposites so frequently used.

Source: "Lexical Lapses on the Line," *Development Forum*, 6, no. 10 (November-December 1978): 6.

Different perspectives on the causes of world hunger lead to different solutions with profoundly different effects on Third World people. If human suffering and misery are to be eliminated as expediently as possible, then alternative world views must be understood and the best one must be selected to solve problems of underdevelopment. The question we invite you to consider is: What perspective provides the best explanation of the facts of underdevelopment? To answer this question we will have to become aware of the different theoretical and analytical frameworks scholars use to argue their cases. And such an awareness can only be achieved if we go beyond the usual level of learning common in Western educational institutions.

We can recognize four levels to the acquisition of knowledge.² First-level learning involves simple perception of fact. For example, we are hungry and are conscious of that fact. Second-level learning occurs when at least two facts are interrelated. When there is a drought we harvest less food per acre, and therefore, the likelihood of hunger increases. When we attain a higher level of performance within an existing system of understanding we are learning on the third level. Several options are possible: (1) If there is recurring drought, we can improve food yields either by planting drought resistant crops or by irrigating traditional crops. (2) If we choose not to change our traditional agricultural practices, we will be less well fed. When fourth-level learning is achieved, we are able to perceive the nature of existing systems and to re-examine them to discover how new options can be created by improving or changing *the system*. If we stay with the overpopulation/food scarcity issue, we can consider solutions beyond improved food yields if we evaluate the entire agricultural system. For instance, we could consider expropriating prime agricultural lands which are now used to produce exports crops such as coffee and cotton. This land could be given back to local farmers who could then produce food for their own needs instead of depending on purchased food and food aid from the industrialized countries.

Western educational systems are geared primarily to third-level learning. At this level, learning in the social sciences is synonymous with status quo theories supporting existing social systems. Consequently, most scientists stress *techniques* that permit them to optimize existing institutions rather than consider a wide range of alternative paradigms. In fourth-level learning the goal is to move beyond present perceptions of reality. This point may be illustrated with a simple problem. Connect the nine points drawn here with four continuous straight lines.



In looking for a solution you will find that there is none so long as you stay within the area limited by the points. But if you move outside the self-imposed square, a solution quickly springs to mind. (For the answer, see footnote 3 in the *NOTES AND REFERENCES*.) Similarly, if we are to understand the nature and causes of Third World underdevelopment, we must be willing to broaden the basis of our

enquiry and examine alternative ideologies outside the ones currently limiting our perceptions of problems and solutions.

Most of us find it difficult to restructure the way we think and learn. Perspectives we hold about the world tend to persist. There is much danger that a perspective that subtly leads us to see the world in a particular way will prevent us from seeing the world in a more meaningful way. A drawing by Toulouse-Lautrec which is a perceptual illusion (Figure 1.1) illustrates this point. Those of us who see an old woman in the picture have difficulty seeing a young woman, and vice versa. To learn to see is to impose order on stimuli. The manner in which we impose that order is determined by our expectations and is therefore value-laden. If everything were as it seems then there would be no need for science.

In an ideological world value-free positions are impossible to maintain, even in

Figure 1.1



science. After all, science is as socially conceived and just as subject to bias and misinterpretation as all other forms of knowledge in society. To meet the challenge of Third World development problems we must become aware of alternative and competing world views. In order to select the best explanations and direction for solving Third World problems, we suggest the dialectical approach. Webster's Third International Dictionary defines "dialectic" as "The theory and practice of weighing and reconciling juxtaposed or contradictory arguments for the purpose of arriving at truth especially through discussion and debate." Not all theories can be compatible with each other, and hence scientists are forced to make difficult decisions about the adequacy and validity of competing paradigms. By affirming one paradigm, another one must be negated. In this way, the dialectical approach necessarily becomes synonymous with controversy, polemics, and challenge to status quo theories.

The dialectical approach adopted in this book provides a structure to help you determine which arguments are superior in terms of analytical strength and in terms of your own values. This book was designed as a reader because we wanted the authors to argue their own cases. To summarize or even to paraphrase the authors would prevent you from judging their arguments without distortion and bias. The readings have also been selected for their concise and well-reasoned positions on Third World problems. Individually and collectively, they are meant to be provocative, and designed to facilitate the evaluation of the presuppositions, the explanatory power, and the implications of alternative theoretical frameworks.

Analytically, the readings reflect three general perspectives: conservative, liberal, and radical.⁴ These three paradigms rest on different assumptions about human nature, normative values, and social authority, and they employ different concepts to describe the nature and causes of underdevelopment.⁵ A discussion of the major components of each paradigm will help you to begin to choose the perspective which you find most convincing.

ANALYTICAL CHOICES

The Conservative Perspective

The conservative view of the world is inherited from the ideas of Adam Smith, Ricardo, and their modern-day followers.⁶ Conservatives assume that humans need positive (wage raises) and negative (threats of unemployment) material incentives to be productive. They are convinced that a capitalistic free enterprise economy based on competition and maximizing profits allows egoistic and calculating individuals to achieve maximum personal liberty and material well-being. Individual decision-making units (individuals, households, firms) act freely and rationally to produce a harmonious and moving equilibrium by means of market forces. Consequently, the process of social and economic change is a gradual cumulative and undirectional evolution. Faith in the efficiency and optimality of private market mechanisms, especially those of supply and demand, allows conservatives to postulate a limited role for governments. Probably, the single most important function of the State is to maintain social order, that is, provide national and international law and order through use of police and military forces, so that capitalism can operate freely. Given this view of the State, conservatives

Table 1.1 Alternative Explanations of Reality under Capitalism

Alternative Paradigms	Human Nature	Work Incentives	Unit of Analysis	Analysis Based on
Conservative	Humans are naturally unproductive and individualistic	Essentially material: 1) positive—raise in income 2) negative—unemployment	Individuals: persons or companies	Classical and neo-classical economics: competition and individuals maximizing profits
Liberal	Humans are naturally unproductive, but of goodwill	Essentially material: 1) positive—raise in income 2) negative—unemployment	Individuals and groups in society	Keynesian economics: competition and individuals maximizing profits with government assistance
Radicals	Humans are naturally productive and cooperative	None really necessary; socially valuable rewards	Classes in society	Marxist economics: labor theory of value, theory of surplus value, theory of class struggle and revolution

hold that government involvement in the economy usually causes more problems than it solves. They argue that many national and international problems are due to government interference and that the solutions to these problems lie in fewer government regulations and programs. Finally, conservatives believe that social change occurs gradually through the free actions of individuals in the market place.

The conservative approach to Third World development rests on two points. First, more participation by Third World countries in the world market economy, not less as some socialists argue, will assure faster and greater economic growth. Second, difficulties of economic growth can be traced to internal obstacles in the environment and culture (Table 1.1). The most dominant theory conservatives use to assert that underdeveloped countries will benefit from more interaction in the world economy is Ricardo's Theory of Comparative Advantage. Ricardo wrote, "It is quite important to the happiness of mankind that our enjoyments should be increased by a better division of labor, by each country producing those com-

Human Goals	Nature of Market Exchange Economy	Nature of Societal Problems	Role of State	Social Change
Maximum personal liberty and material well-being	Harmonious state of equilibrium: created by supply and demand forces	1) Individuals: lack of motivation, unrealistic demands, culture of poverty, racial inferiority 2) Government interference in the economy	Ideally, only police power to maintain law and order so that the market can work freely	Gradual change results from individual interactions in the market place
Individual equality and social justice (equal opportunity)	State of equilibrium, achievable with government involvement in the economy	1) Monopolistic tendencies in major economic sectors 2) Insufficient and inappropriate government programs	Police power and offsetting inadequacies in the economy whenever basic human needs and social justice are not achieved	Rapid change through government actions
Social equality: from each according to one's ability, to each according to one's need	Contradictions and crises of production and consumption; exploitation of workers; irrational allocation of natural and human resources	Private ownership of resources; production for profit rather than for human use; alienation; class conflict; unequal regional development	Police and economic power is used to maintain and enhance capitalism	Revolutionary change through mass movements to transform society's structure and values

modities for which by its situation, its climate and its other material or artificial advantages, it is adapted, and by their exchanging them for the commodities of other countries. . . . Under a system of perfectly free commerce, each country naturally devotes its capital and labor to such employments as are most beneficial to each. This pursuit of individual advantage is admirably connected with the universal good of the whole." Ricardo illustrated his trade theory by means of a two-nation labor-cost model. The theory holds that it is in the best interests of underdeveloped countries to exchange more labor for less. According to conservatives, this unequal division of labor works to the advantage of all, for it permits each country to make the best use of its natural resources, stock of skills, and infrastructures. Moreover, any deviation from free trade sacrifices efficiency and reduces world outputs and income. An example of a contemporary Ricardian is Henry Kissinger, former U.S. Secretary of State. At the Seventh Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly in 1975, he said, "Comparative advantage and specialization, the exchange of technology and the movement of capita-

Table 1.2 Popular and Academic Examples of the Three Paradigms

Alternative Paradigms	Politicians	Entertainers	Popular Magazines	Classical Intellectuals	Contemporary Intellectuals	Academic Journals
Conservative	Amin Goldwater Kissinger Nixon Park Pinochets Schlally Somoza Sukarno Vorster	S. Davis, Jr. B. Hope F. Sinatra J. Stewart J. Wayne	<i>Business Week</i> <i>National Review</i> <i>Spectator</i> <i>Wall Street Journal</i>	Darwin Durkheim Freud Malthus Ricardo Smith Spencer Toynbee	Berg (Econ.) Buckley Friedman (Econ.) Gourou (Geog.) Lewis (Anthro.) McClelland (Psych.) Parsons (Soc.) Ayn Rand (Lit.)	<i>American Economic Review</i> <i>American Historical Review</i> <i>American Sociological Review</i> <i>Annals of the Association of American Geographers</i> <i>Commentary</i> <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> <i>Comparative Politics</i> <i>Comparative Studies in Society and History</i> <i>Economic Development and Cultural Change</i> <i>Ekistics</i> <i>Foreign Affairs</i> <i>Foreign Policy</i> <i>International Journal of Comparative Sociology</i> <i>International Studies Quarterly</i> <i>Journal, American Institute of Planners</i> <i>Journal of Political Economy</i> <i>Journal of World History</i> <i>World Development</i>
Liberal	Echeverria Friedan I. Ghandi Humphrey Johnson Kennedy Nasser U. Thant	J. Baez J. Carson D. Cavett	<i>The Economist</i> <i>Ms.</i> <i>New Republic</i> <i>Newsweek</i> <i>Time</i>	Keynes Weber E. Howard	Black (Hist.) Berry (Geog.) Galbraith (Econ.) Mead (Anthro.) Mills (Soc.) Myrdal (Econ.) Nash (Anthro.) Rogers (Soc.) Samuelson (Econ.)	<i>Alternatives: A Journal of World Policy</i> <i>Antipode: A Radical Journal of Geography</i> <i>History Workshop: A Journal of Socialist Historians</i> <i>Insurgent Sociologist</i> <i>Latin American Perspectives</i> <i>Marxist Perspective</i> <i>Peace and Change</i> <i>Politics and Society</i> <i>Radical Historical Review</i> <i>Radical Philosophy</i> <i>Review of African Political Economy</i> <i>Review of Radical Political Economics</i> <i>Third World Forum</i>
Radical	Allende Brandt Castro Chavez Hayden Ho Chi Minh Mao Tse Tung Nyerere	J. Fonda V. Redgrave P. Seeger	<i>In These Times</i> <i>Mother Jones</i> <i>New Internationalist</i> <i>The Progressive</i>	Engels E. Goldman Lenin Luxemburg Marx G. Stein	Amin (Econ.) Casteus (Soc.) Chomski (Pol. Sci.) Fanon (Lit.) Harrington (Pol. Sci.) Harvey (Geog.) Howe (Hist.) O'Connor (Soc.) Stone S. Turkel (Lit.)	

the spur to productivity that competition provides—these are central elements of efficiency and progress. For developing nations, trade is perhaps the most important engine of development" (Table 1.2).

Despite the advantages of free trade, conservatives recognize that many Third World countries have not yet developed. They explain this by considering internal obstacles in the form of local environments and indigenous cultures. The tropical environment, in particular, is viewed as a major obstacle to progress. Soils are poor and fragile; rainfall is unreliable; and numerous endemic, debilitating diseases reinforce low levels of productivity. Above all, conservatives hold that the traits of individuals, rather than international market forces, prevent the advancement of people in underdeveloped countries. They account for the lack of development on the basis of backward cultures: traditional religious beliefs, values, and habits of life, insufficient incentives and entrepreneurialship, ignorance of science and technology, and unstable political systems.

Box B

TONGUE-IN-CHEEK DEFINITIONS OF COMMON IDEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

- Socialism: You have two cows, and you give one to your neighbor.
- Communism: You have two cows, the government takes both of them, and gives you milk.
- Fascism: You have two cows, the government takes both of them, and sells you milk.
- Nazism: You have two cows, the government takes both of them, and shoots you.
- Bureaucracy: You have two cows, the government takes both of them, shoots one of them, milks the other, and pours the milk down the drain.
- Capitalism: You have two cows, you sell one of them, and buy a bull.

The Liberal Perspective

The liberal view of the world did not attract much attention until the depression of the 1930s. Keynes' General Theory analyzes the causes of unemployment and discredits the conservative belief that the capitalist economic system is self-righting. He did not think that a modern capitalist economy would sustain a high enough level of investment to maintain full employment. While advocating government control of the level of economic activity in the national interest (stabilizing capitalism), he advised that the economy in general be left free to respond to the decisions of welfare-maximizing consumers and profit-maximizing producers. Keynes presented an alternative to socialism. His theory, which permitted government to borrow and spend money to prevent economic depressions, did not amend the conservative paradigm to any great degree. It was designed less to alter market exchange economies than to preserve and revitalize them.

Like Keynes, liberals of the present day do not launch a thorough-going critique of either the conservative theory of human nature or the capitalist system (Table

1.1). Indeed, liberals share with conservatives the view that humans are naturally unproductive, and they share a faith in the capitalist system. Unlike conservatives, however, they place great emphasis on the goals of individual equality and social justice. To achieve these goals, government legislation and programs are necessary. Although liberals criticize inequality of opportunity based on wealth, position, and power, they understand that certain inequalities are based on inherited characteristics such as family structure or ethnic culture (e.g. "culture of poverty"). The State redistributes wealth by taxing the rich to assist the poor, and, therefore, societal changes can occur more rapidly than under the conservative laissez-faire model. Problems at national and international levels result from monopolistic tendencies in major economic sectors and insufficient and/or inappropriate government programs. The State must intervene on behalf of everyone whenever market mechanisms fail to satisfy consumer preferences and provide basic human needs (e.g. housing, health care, food, and adequate income). Galbraith's analyses of the industrial state and the affluent society reflect this perspective (Table 1.2).

Liberals share with conservatives many of the same assumptions about barriers to Third World development. They believe that traditional values and social institutions are the prime obstacles to development, and they are convinced that the town is the gateway for Third World innovations. As centers of innovation, large towns can transmit modern values and social institutions to smaller centers and rural areas. Although liberals also employ the "blaming the victim" approach (see Ryan's article in Section III) to explain the causes of world problems, they, unlike conservatives, are willing to provide governmental assistance to the world's needy. Consequently, liberal governments provide unilateral (e.g. U.S. Agency for International Development) and multilateral (e.g. World Bank) foreign aid, food aid (e.g. U.S. Food for Peace Program), volunteers (e.g. U.S. Peace Corps), and military and technical assistance.

The Radical Perspective

Conservative and liberal perspectives are widely accepted by social scientists, although at present the latter has more followers than the former.⁷ They are not radical because their analyses do not go to the root or origin of problems. Radicals argue that the dynamics of socio-economic organization (mode of production, to use a Marxist term) in capitalist societies produce particular kinds of class and institutional structures. Classes and institutions formed by the capitalist mode of production explain a particular set of social problems that cannot be solved without changing the form of socio-economic organization at national and international levels (Table 1.1).

Contrary to conservatives and liberals, radicals assume that humans are naturally productive and cooperative and therefore, that material rewards are not really necessary. They argue that humans are not inherently passive beings at the mercy of their cultural and physical environments; rather they are active creatures of their own destiny. If we behave passively, unproductively, or uncooperatively, it is because our economic system demands such behaviors. They reject the liberal's belief that people can enjoy equality of opportunity in a class society when the majority produce the wealth and when power is in the hands of the few. In such a

society, the pursuit of profit by the dominant class shapes all aspects of life including the quality of personal relations. Under capitalism human needs are subordinated to the needs of the market place. Only commodities (goods and services) which have exchange value are produced, while other use value remain unmet. An illustration: The United States sells (exchange value) most of its food surpluses to countries who can afford to buy it rather than distributing food to countries on the basis of need (use value).

Radicals claim that in a market economy the State predominantly serves the interests of the ruling class—the capitalists—not the workers whose labor produces more wealth than is returned to them in the form of wages. Marx called this extra wealth "surplus value." Surplus value (or the product of exploitation) is the difference between the value produced by workers (value of units of labor produced) and workers' wage (value of labor power). Marx, in discussing the labor theory of value, asked: How can one class of people, capitalists, get something for nothing? How do they acquire a portion of produced value for themselves without contributing any labor in return? Marx defined labor as a commodity, and its value is determined in just the same way as the value of any other commodity, by the amount of socially necessary labor required to produce it. This is nothing more than workers' subsistence wages. For example, if laborers have to work six hours to obtain a subsistence income, then that is the socially necessary amount of labor time required to "produce" workers. If workers have to work 12 hours instead of six hours to hold a job in a factory, Marx said, workers create surplus value, or profit for capitalists. Workers labor six hours for themselves and another six hours for their masters, and the rate of surplus value or exploitation is six hours or 100 percent.

Exploitation of workers can be intensified, and the surplus value appropriated by capitalists increased when employers stretch the working day. If the work week were stabilized, employers could expand surplus value by substituting capital for labor. Marx argued that the process of introducing even more labor-saving equipment is inimical to workers. Displaced laborers form a reserve army of the unemployed, which keeps wages at minimal levels. The existence of a pool of unemployed workers means that employed workers know that others are available to take their jobs if productivity falls.

The essence of the radical argument is that the engine which drives economic growth is capital accumulation for its own sake. Economic growth is always unbalanced. The capitalist mode of production fails to achieve equilibrium as claimed by conservatives and liberals because of the contradictory nature of competitive production. As a result, there are short-run cyclical crises (unemployment and declining rates of profit) which are connected by increasing rate of accumulation through concentration (the trend toward larger, more efficient factories in each industry), and geographical extension (imperialism). Periodic crises become more frequent over time. In each crisis big capitalists devour little capitalists, and individual capitalism becomes corporate capitalism. Capitalists seek larger outputs and bigger profits, and they deploy bigger machines which replace more and more laborers, whose work generally consists of small, insignificant, and tedious operations that are repeated for hours. This expansion intensifies the misery and alienation of workers so that increasing class struggle charts the course of socio-economic development (Table 1.2).

From this sketch of Marxist theory, it is plain that radicals argue that inequality of wealth among classes originates in the capitalist system. Exploitation of one class by another is based on the private ownership of the means of production. Irreconcilable conflict between classes is the key to understanding the need for revolutionary change through mass movements.

Uneven development pertains not only to the unequal distribution of wealth among classes, but also to spatial dimensions of development: underdevelopment and dependence. Radicals argue that Third World countries have been underdeveloped first by the development and expansion of Europe, later neo-European countries (United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand), and most recently Japan. The capitalist world economy causes underdevelopment by generating and reinforcing an infrastructure of dependency which includes institutions, social classes, and processes such as urbanization and industrialization. Thus dependency is not merely an external matter. Foreign exploitation is possible only when it finds support among local elites who profit from it. To break out of dependency and to achieve development, Third World countries must go beyond capitalism to a collectively owned and collectively governed economic system. To achieve the goals of socialism different paths may be followed: in Cuba, Castro used a military approach; and in Tanzania, Nyerere uses an evolutionary approach (Table 1.2).

It is important to remember that each of the three perspectives lumps a great many different theories and models together. Traditional social science practices *splitting*, the art of ever-increasing articulation of minute theoretical and empirical details. On the other hand, in this reader we are interested in *lumping* broadly similar scientific arguments to facilitate the reexamination of existing theoretical positions. The labels conservative, liberal, and radical are not so important as the ideas behind them. Too often we reject views which we understand poorly and

libel them by labeling them. We should not dismiss any perspective because of its label but rather, we should judge it on the basis of its theoretical merits.

These viewpoints are most useful for providing alternative *explanations* of Third World problems, not in providing detailed and specific blueprints for the future. A great deal of dissent exists among the three groups on the specific directions change should take.

How can we choose among these different perspectives? From a scientific point of view, this question can be answered easily: That approach which most accurately and completely explains the past and present realities of the Third World. The readings are designed to provide an opportunity to answer this question. From our research and field experiences in Africa, Latin America, Western Europe, and North America, we are convinced that the radical paradigm provides the most complete explanation of conditions in the Third World. In other words, we believe it explains more of reality than the other two paradigms.

VALUE CHOICES

We stated earlier that one deficiency of most Western educational institutions is that they fail to train students in fourth-level learning—that of seeking solutions outside of status-quo frameworks. Another deficiency is that most schools fail to acknowledge the values that are both explicit and implicit in their teachings, and help students to recognize and judge those values along with their own. Such learning is essential for a full comprehension of this book and of Third World issues.

Values Clarification

Comprehensive understanding requires cognitive and affective learning. Determining the analytical power of the readings is part of the cognitive realm; judging their value content falls both within the cognitive and affective realms. Each realm is an important and necessary part of each person. We all hold implicit and explicit values on a whole range of issues, which we express in verbal and written communications and through actions. We need to distinguish between our espoused values and our innermost values, often unknown even to ourselves without reflection. Among the various approaches to teaching values—inculcation, moralization, laissez-faire attitudes, and action learning—we find the values clarification method the most useful.⁸ This approach is not concerned with the content of people's values but with the processes of valuing.

What are the processes by which we develop values and decide what we stand for, and what we wish to live for? To discover the answer to these questions, we need to explore the values in our ideas, feelings, choices, and behavior. Hirschenbaum identifies five major valuing processes to achieve this goal (Table 1.3).⁹

Feelings have traditionally been avoided in schools, since educators believe that solutions to human problems are best solved through rational processes. The denial of feelings, however, deprives us of important information in making decisions which affect us and others. Our thinking, communicating, choosing, and acting processes all suffer as a result, particularly since on any given issue, these may derive from a feeling of which we are unaware. Humans *think* at various

Box C

THE THREE WORLDS

Westerners divide the countries of the world into three parts: the First World, Second World, and Third World. The First World includes the countries of Western Europe, North America, Israel, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. Some would even include the Republic of South Africa and Argentina. The Second World is represented by the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The Third World consists of the remaining countries in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Through the eyes of "the free world," the Second and Third Worlds are associated with negative and undesirable traits (Communism and poverty, respectively), while the First World countries reflect positive and desirable characteristics.

Many Third World people disagree with this ethnocentric view. Mao Tse-tung's Three World theory categorizes the world's people in very different terms. The First World consists of the superpowers, i.e. the Soviet Union and United States, with their negative military and economic influence on the rest of the world. The Second World includes the allies of the two superpowers—the remaining industrialized countries. The Third World represents the underdeveloped countries and the hope for the *whole* world, not the despair that most Westerners see. In dialectical fashion, Mao saw Third World "problems" as assets to create a better future for the masses everywhere.

Table 1.3 The Valuing Process^a

- I. Feeling
 1. Being open to one's inner experience.
 - a. awareness of one's inner experience
 - b. acceptance of one's inner experience
- II. Thinking
 1. Thinking on all seven levels.
 - a. memory
 - b. translation
 - c. application
 - d. interpretation
 - e. analysis
 - f. synthesis
 - g. evaluation
 2. Critical thinking.
 - a. distinguishing fact from opinion
 - b. distinguishing supported from unsupported arguments
 - c. analyzing propaganda, stereotypes, etc.
 3. Logical thinking (logic).
 4. Creative thinking.
 5. Fundamental cognitive skills.
 - a. language use
 - b. mathematical skills
 - c. research skills
- III. Communicating—Verbally and Nonverbally
 1. Sending clear messages.
 2. Empathetic listening.
 3. Drawing out.
 4. Asking clarifying questions.
 5. Giving and receiving feedback.
 6. Conflict resolution.
- IV. Choosing
 1. Generating and considering alternatives.
 2. Thoughtfully considering consequences, pros and cons.
 3. Choosing strategically.
 - a. goal setting
 - b. data gathering
 - c. problem solving
 - d. planning
 4. Choosing freely.
- V. Acting
 1. Acting with repetition.
 2. Acting with a pattern and consistency.
 3. Acting skillfully, competently.

^aFor further information on materials available in the values education field, write the National Humanistic Education Center, 110 Spring Street, Saratoga Springs, New York 12866.

levels, from memorization to synthesis and evaluation, and they usually progress as Hirschenbaum says, "to higher, more flexible levels of thinking," given the right environment. Ultimately, the level of our thinking will determine the kinds of cognitive and emotive decisions we make.

Learning *communication* skills is critical in the valuing and understanding processes. Making clear statements, drawing people out, asking clarifying questions, and listening to arguments empathetically are the essence of basic communication skills. In the values clarification approach, choices are based on freely choosing from alternatives, after thoughtful consideration has been given to the possible consequences.¹⁰ Again, the kinds of choices made depend on the earlier processes of feeling, thinking, and communicating. Existentialists point out that we define ourselves through our *actions*. The more we act on what we feel and think, the more we value these particular emotions and thoughts.¹¹

Hirschenbaum's valuing processes can be applied to the articles in this book. When reading the selections, try to answer each of the following questions.

(1) *Feeling*. Try to recognize the feelings you are experiencing as you consider each author's arguments. Are they positive or negative feelings?

(2) *Thinking*. What values can you identify in the articles and how do they compare with your own values?

(3) *Communicating*. What clarifying questions would you like to ask the authors, before you could fully determine their values and your reactions to them?

(4) *Choosing*. After reading the alternative viewpoints in each topic section, which perspective most closely matches your values?

(5) *Acting*. Is the perspective you have chosen one you would be willing to

Some additional questions may help you to develop your own thinking process. Given what we have said earlier in this chapter on the three analytical frameworks, you should also be able to answer the following analytical questions for each selection.

(1) What overall questions are asked?

(2) What specific questions are asked?

(3) What concepts are used? (e.g. life-boat analogy)

(4) What evidence and/or data are used to answer the questions?

(5) What conclusions are drawn?

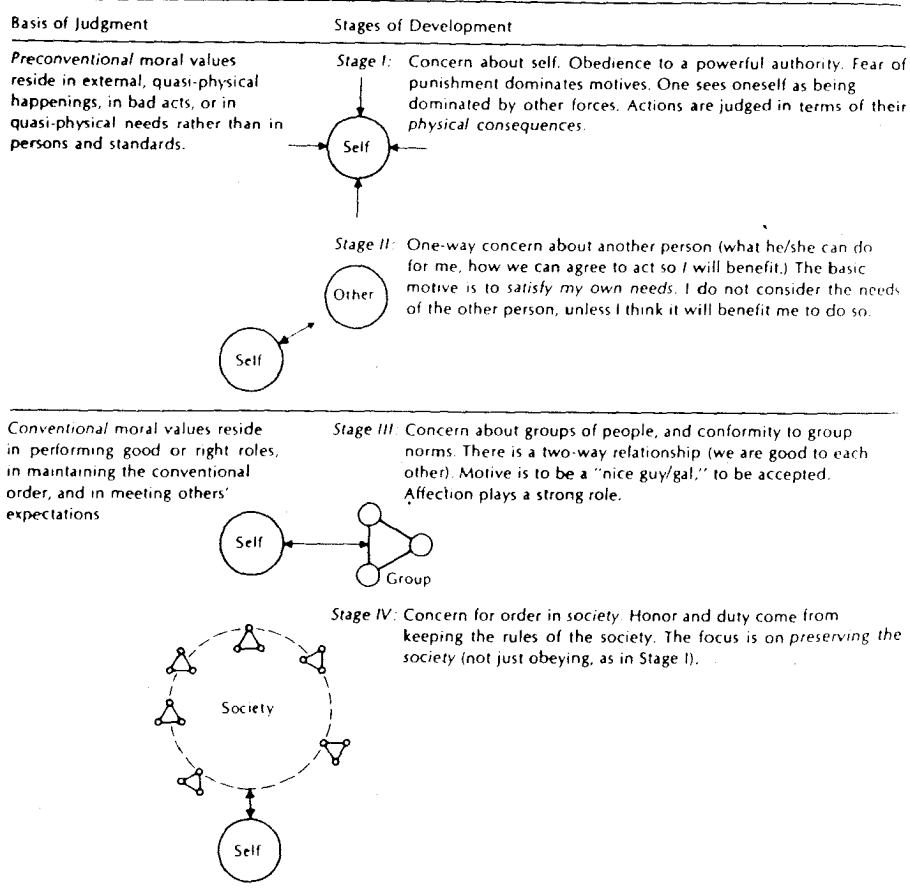
(6) Are you convinced by the data and arguments that the specific and general questions are answered?

(7) Which theoretical framework is employed?

Moral Development

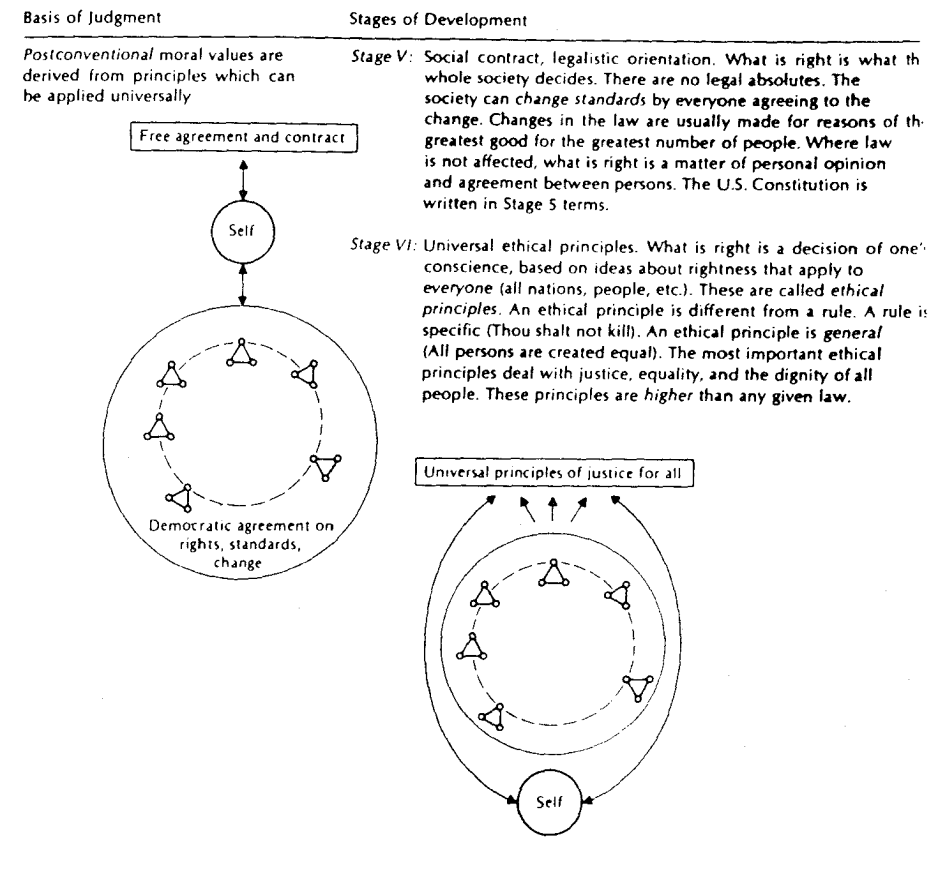
Another aspect of critical thinking is to assess the moral content of arguments. Kohlberg presents a developmental sequence of moral thinking which is based on a long series of studies with children and adults in the United States and was consequently tested in other countries (Mexico, Turkey, and Taiwan).¹² He has found that we develop through some or all of these stages in a generally linear manner as our reasoning matures, and that any moral argument can be assessed by

Figure 1.2 Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development



its stage of development. According to Kohlberg's research, the basic set of moral stages are not significantly affected by widely varying socioeconomic, cultural, or religious conditions. Only the rate at which individuals progress through the sequence is different.

For Kohlberg, a moral stage does not represent a type of person, but a way of thinking. People usually use more than one stage of moral thinking for any particular topic, and certainly employ different stages for different topics. In other words, people are rarely morally and intellectually consistent. Kohlberg points out that at each stage individuals see themselves as being "honest," "fair," and "descent," within their own terms of reference. Consequently, moral judgments are, first, judgments of value, not of fact. They are also social judgments about people. "Third, they are prescriptive or normative judgments, judgments of ought, of rights and duties, rather than value judgments of liking and preference."¹³



Kohlberg identifies three levels, each with two stages, of moral development (Figure 1.2).¹⁴

(1) At the preconventional level individual decisions are based on physical power and physical consequences (punishment and reward). Stage 1 moral thinking corresponds to "might makes right" and "survival of the fittest." Avoidance of *physical punishment* and unquestioning *obedience* of power are valued for their own sake. Morality does not play a large part in a person's life. Stage-2 behavior conforms to obtain rewards and have favors returned: "Look out for number one" and "You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours." Fairness and *reciprocity* are evaluated only in concrete and pragmatic ways.

(2) Within the conventional level of moral development, identification with and maintenance of the dominant social order prevails. At this level, two stages emerge. Stage 3 is the "good boy, good girl" or a limited conformity orientation. Morality is seen in terms of *helping* and *pleasing* a limited group of people whose

well-being and approval is valued. At this stage stereotypical images of conventional wisdom or "natural" behavior determine moral thinking. Stage 4 is a *law-and-order* orientation. Right behavior consists of conforming to fixed rules, respecting established authority, and maintaining the given social order for its own sake.

(3) Postconventional or autonomous moral thinking rests on moral values which are valid apart from the authority of the groups who hold them and apart from one's identification with these groups. In Stage 5 *social contracts* expressed in legal terms are the guiding principle. Laws are understood to be constitutionally and democratically agreed upon, yet individual opinions can differ with established laws and practices. Hence, emphasis is also placed on changing laws to serve greater social needs. This is the official morality of the United States government and the United States Constitution. Stage-6 persons behave according to "self-chosen ethical principles appealing to logical comprehensiveness, universality, and consistence." Abstract and *ethical principles*, such as the Golden Rule, are dominant, not concrete moral ones, like the Ten Commandments.¹⁵ For Stage-6 persons the sole purpose of morality is to serve fundamental life goals, such as freedom, justice, equality, happiness, and self-respect. Moral values are *means* to maximize ultimate life goals for one's self and for humanity. Gandhi, Socrates, Thoreau, and Martin Luther King are among the relatively few people to attain Stage-6 moral thinking.

Moral thinking and judgments are complex and diverse. To better understand and appreciate Kohlberg's stages of moral thinking, a concrete example might be helpful.¹⁶ Let us use our earlier example of world hunger. The possible responses given below might be those of middle class North Americans.

Since no coercive force exists to make people help the hungry of the world, Stage-1 people fail to be interested in the topic. However, if such people perceived an invasion from a hungry country as a possible retribution, they would be willing to send food aid. Stage-2 people do not consider the needs of others unless they benefit from such actions. If we want fuels and minerals from a particular Third World country, we will then provide food assistance. If, on the other hand, they have nothing that we want, there is no reason to help them.

In Stage 3, other people's points of view are usually taken, regardless of individual self-interest for the sake of social self-interest. Individuals recognize shared social interests and expectations with particular groups, such as religious organizations. Going along with the group facilitates social approval, and being called a "nice" person. By giving food aid, the United States will be seen as a "moral nation" or a "Christian country." Others might phrase it as "the White man's burden" to help the less fortunate nations. If the group that people identify with does not believe in food aid (such as the John Birch Society), they will gain social approval by not supporting assistance to the Third World.

Stage-4 people have a societal identification which is defined by and restricted to absolute rules which come either from government or God. Any proposals to expand current policies and practices to help the hungry are rejected because of the strong adherence to "law and order." In religious terms, God may command us to help starving people; in legal terms, the United States should provide food assistance if Congress mandates it. On the other hand, we may not help the hungry of a particular nation because we have a defense treaty with their political enemy.

Stage-5 people believe that the rules identified by Stage-4 people are not absolute and can be changed to reflect a particular universal issue. A Stage-5 person may believe that the world's hungry should be fed regardless of our current laws, and would support legislative change. But a Stage-5 person could also argue that we should not feed the hungry of a particular nation because their government is communist. Stage-6 people deal with a holistic range of universal ethical principles—justice, equality, and freedom, including freedom from hunger—which allows them to change current laws, and also obligates them, when necessary, to break the laws through civil disobedience. Stage-6 people would be willing to support private agencies who send food to a country with which the United States was at war.¹⁷

Each of the three analytical perspectives can operate at this highest stage of moral development. Conservatives would make voluntary, individual donations to local churches or to world organizations, such as CARE or UNESCO. Liberals would want the government to tax the population at large so that "giving" would become official policy and not dependent on the occasional good intentions of a few persons or organizations. Individually, then, liberals would do all the things conservatives do, plus help to mandate and subsequently, to expand, foreign aid, particularly food relief. At Stage 6 radicals would add yet another layer of activism; boycotting certain companies like Nestlé for selling formula milk to poor mothers in the Third World, and/or contributing resources and energy to organizations such as the World Council of Churches or national liberation groups in various Third World countries. At this stage radicals would work towards major global structural changes to eliminate the root causes of hunger for all times.

Research on the age and stage of moral development shows that under current conditions in the United States, moral maturity stabilizes by late adolescence and early adulthood, between the ages of 16 and 25. Indeed, very little moral growth occurs after age 25. In their research Kohlberg and Kramer found that 13 percent of the 25 year olds used preconventional levels (Stages 1 and 2) of thinking; 51 percent used conventional levels (Stages 3 and 4) of thinking; and 35 percent adhered to postconventional (Stages 5 and 6) moral thinking. Relating these findings to the three analytical frameworks presented earlier in this chapter, we would argue that although all three perspectives can be found in several of the six stages, each perspective by its very definition would tend to be concentrated more at some stages than at others. The moral content of the conservative framework corresponds largely to Stages 1, 2, 3, and 4; the liberal perspective is concentrated mostly in Stages 3, 4, and 5; and the radical framework tends to be located in Stages 5 and 6.

In a culturally universal sense, Kohlberg's stages lead toward an expanded conception of moral judgment. At each stage, the same basic moral issue is defined, but at each higher stage this definition becomes differentiated, more integrated, and more universal. This is illustrated by an experimental study.¹⁸ Undergraduate subjects were ordered by an experimenter to administer increasingly more severe electric shock punishment to a stooge victim in the guise of a learning experiment. In this case, the principles of justice involved in the Stage-5 social contract orientation do not clearly prescribe a decision. The victim had voluntarily agreed to participate in the experiment and the subjects had contractually committed themselves to perform the experiment. Only Stage-6 thinking

clearly defined the situation as one in which the experimenter did not have the moral right to ask them to inflict pain on another person. Accordingly, 75 per cent of the Stage-6 subjects quit or refused to shock the victim as compared to only 13 per cent of all the subjects at lower stages.

Kohlberg maintains that individuals comprehend all stages up to their own, but not more than one stage beyond their own. And significantly, they prefer this next stage. Moral development can be facilitated by identifying people's moral stage and through subsequent reinforcement and discussion expose them to the next highest stage.

Perry provides further evidence of personal intellectual and ethical development.¹⁹ He shows that college students develop from positions of "simple dualism" (e.g. good vs. bad) through various stages of "relativism" to final stages of "commitment in relativism." Perry found that students did not remain in the second stage, characterized by kaleidoscopic possibilities, for more than a year before proceeding to some kind of affirmation of values or escape from further growth, at least for awhile. The dialectic approach used in this book encourages students to take risks, to explore the meanings of explanations, and to dare to make commitments to clarified values. Simultaneously, teachers need to provide support and encouragement to students regardless of their stages of intellectual and moral development. Clearly, for educators to facilitate cognitive and affective learning processes, they need to realize that "it is no longer tenable for an educator to take the position that what a person does with his [or her] intellectual skills is a moral rather than intellectual problem and therefore none of the scholar's business."²⁰

You are therefore urged to determine your own stage of moral development in response to the selected readings and to analyze carefully your objections to the moral stage presented in the readings. In the introduction to each section, only the analytical differences will be outlined; the ideological and value statements are left for readers to determine. Hopefully, teachers will assist students in this task.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

In the next article, the Third World is defined and delineated. Through text and maps Buchanan shows that the countries of the Third World are distinctive from the industrialized countries. Although he uses data from the 1950s and 1960s, his statistics are merely illustrative and later data would make little difference to the dimensions of the problems discussed. The Third World still has the same characteristics Buchanan identified almost two decades ago: low rates of GNP per capita, calorie and protein intake; high rates of employment in the farm and tertiary sectors; and high rates of urbanization, illiteracy, infant mortality, population growth, and resource exports.

How can these conditions be explained? In which directions do the solutions lie? One way of answering the above questions is to consider a number of empirical topics. The remaining readings have been grouped under six possible causes of Third World underdevelopment. Each section has several articles which reflect alternative points of view. Although each perspective tends to stress certain causes and omit others, among the six topics the three analytical perspectives present a vast range of explanations (Table 1.4).

Table 1.4 Authors in the Reader Grouped by the Three Paradigms

Alternative Paradigms	Topic Sections in the Reader					
	Climate and Resources	Cultural Traditions	Plantation Agriculture	Population	Tourism	Imperialism
Conservative	Huntington	Heston	May and Plaza	Hardin	Bond and Ladman	
Liberal	Hodder	Harris Ryan	Beckford	Ritchie-Calder	Britton	
Radical	Szentes	Dorfman and Mattelart	Tobis	Commoner Harvey	Pérez	Galtung Chicote Harvey

Environmental factors are discussed in Section II. The emphasis on the environment to account for underdevelopment is a characteristically conservative approach. Although the older climatic determinism is now out of fashion, particularly among geographers, many liberal social scientists still consider the presence of tropical climates and the absence of certain natural resources in a country to be of major importance to its economic development. In the radical paradigm, environmental conditions are essentially irrelevant to explain the present level of development.

In Section III cultural traditions in the Third World are examined as possible causes of underdevelopment. Anthropologists, geographers, psychologists, and economists have written about the inferiority of "non-western" cultures to explain the lack of incentives and institutions that allow nations to prosper. The blatant racism of the past is now modified to blaming the victim, which is another important conservative concept in explaining Third World poverty. To cite one specific example: many of India's population and food problems are often linked to the Hindu practice of revering cattle. The conservative approach sees this non-western religion as a barrier to economic progress. The liberal perspective, on the other hand, argues that the Indian sacred cattle practice performs positive functions for small-scale farmers, but it fails to examine the national and international economic institutions (e.g. landlordism, money lenders, merchants, and international oil companies), which radicals argue can best explain India's underdevelopment. Disney comic books in South America still show evidence of racism and cultural imperialism, which facilitates the exploitation of these Third World people.

Developments in agriculture are of utmost importance to Third World people because so many work in this sector and so many are hungry. In Section IV one aspect of this vast topic is examined. Colonial rule provided the means for Europeans to establish plantation agriculture. The conservative viewpoint argues that plantations were and remain beneficial to tropical countries and foreign countries alike. The profits of foreign companies were and are more than offset by providing local employment, social services, taxes, and the transfer of technology. But the liberal perspective points out that while plantations enhance private

commercial interests, they distort, if not retard, the national development of Third World economies. From the radical perspective plantations have had and continue to have mostly negative consequences. Colonialism with its plantation crops underdeveloped these countries and this process explains Third World poverty.

For most Westerners the single most important cause of problems in the Third World is the high rate of population growth. In Section V the ideological basis for the scientific study of the relationship between population and resources is exposed. Three specific approaches to "overpopulation" can then be assessed: lifeboat ethics (conservative); family planning programs (liberal); and political and economic revolutions (radical). From the conservative perspective, the world already has too many people, all of whom cannot be fed. Some will have to perish. The liberal perspective agrees that the population/food supply relationship is unbalanced, but Third World and First World governments can temporarily alleviate these problems with food aid and permanently solve overpopulation through birth control programs. Within the radical paradigm several kinds of explanations exist, but they all agree that "overpopulation" is the result of exploitation. The poor have large families because this is *their* best way of safeguarding their survival. Furthermore, such large families are only perceived as overpopulation when they exist at the poor end of the economic distribution.

Social scientists have also considered Rostow's stages of economic growth, and the role of transnational corporations and foreign aid to explain underdevelopment. The capitalist analysis concludes that poor countries are only at a lower economic stage than rich countries at the present time, and that eventually the current poor countries will develop, if they follow the Western model of economic growth. While geocentric mining, manufacturing, and service corporations diffuse modern technology and provide revenue for national development, foreign aid may actually do more harm than good in the short-term and long-run.

The liberal perspective prefers to curb some of the more blatant abuses of multinationals, such as bribing and blackmailing foreign governments and avoiding their full share of taxes. This viewpoint sees foreign aid from industrial countries in conjunction with multinational corporations as the means of helping developing countries. The radical view is fundamentally different. Marxists maintain that underdevelopment is caused by the exploitative relations between capitalist and Third World countries in the past and in the present. Hence, transnational corporations take advantage of their monopoly position to extract more capital in the form of profits from underdeveloped countries than they invest. Indeed, foreign aid, like multinational and international trade in general, benefits the donor countries more than the recipient countries, thus perpetuating the economic and political power of privileged elites in the Third World. The length of the original manuscript precluded the inclusion of reading selections for these topics. Since Rostow's stages of economic growth, the debate about multinationals, and foreign aid are well known, we decided to exclude these topics in favor of a less recognized topic—tourism.

Tourism is another path towards economic development. Or is it? In Section VI the conservative perspective holds that tourism avoids many of the problems associated with mineral and luxury crop exports. Foreign capital and ideas provide the necessary engine and steam for development. The benefits of international tourism, from the liberal viewpoint, go to multinationals and Third World

elites. The indigeneous populations gain only seasonal and menial jobs and lose their culture and resources in return. From the radical perspective tourism is another form of exploitation and imperialism, which drains and concentrates Third World wealth primarily among the elites of the First World.

In Section VII the radical paradigm employs the concept of imperialism as a primary explanation for Third World material poverty. To account for global and national inequalities, the radical analysis, depending on its specific formulation, employs such concepts as center-periphery relations, dependency, and the theory of capitalist accumulation. Within both the conservative and liberal frameworks, the importance radicals place on the concept of imperialism is discounted. The conservative perspective dismisses the concept altogether and its value in explaining current Third World conditions. The liberal perspective sees no casual correlation between capitalism and imperialism, but it does recognize that governments use their political and military power to expand geographically.

Before reading the articles, we recommend that you turn to the awareness exercises in the Appendix. The first exercise allows you to compare your own view of the Third World with those of others. In Exercise 2 you can assess your knowledge about some of the attributes of underdeveloped countries. The remaining exercises help you to get in touch with the ideological nature of description and explanation with reference to Third World issues.

Table 1.5 Concepts and Terms Used by the Three Paradigms for the Six Topics

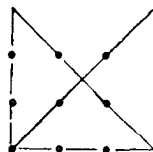
Alternative Paradigms	Topic Sections in the Reader					
	Climate and Resources	Cultural Traditions	Plantation Agriculture	Population	Tourism	Imperialism
Conservative						
Liberal						
Radical						

Starting with Section II, we suggest that you note the important concepts and terms presented by the three analytical perspectives under each of the six substantive topics. The completion of Table 1.5 will allow you to choose intelligently the analytical framework which provides the best explanation of Third World underdevelopment.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. For commonly asked questions about world hunger and for well-documented answers, see Frances Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins, *Food First: Beyond the Myth of Scarcity* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1977).

2. Based on theories of Gregory Bateson.



3.

4. Each perspective is given a generic term rather than labeled after a particular person. Many present and past scholars, besides Milton Friedman, John Kenneth Galbraith, and Michael Harrington, employ a conservative, liberal, or radical paradigm.

5. David Gordon in *Problems in Political Economy* (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1971) employs this trichotomy to examine U.S. urban problems, and Alison M. Jaggar and Paula Rothenberg Stuhl in *Feminist Frameworks* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1978) use a similar approach to explore feminist issues.

6. For various definitions of who is a conservative and who is a liberal, see *Commentary*, 62, no. 3 (September 1976): 31-113.

7. For substantiation, see Anthony R. de Souza and Philip W. Porter, *The Underdevelopment and Modernization of the Third World* (Washington, D.C.: Association of American Geographers, Commission on College Geography, Resource Paper No. 28, 1974), pp. 20-23 and 69-82.

8. For an overview of various approaches to values education, see Douglas P. Superka, Christine Ahrens, and Judith E. Hedstrom, *Values Education Sourcebook: Conceptual Approaches, Material Analyses, and an Annotated Bibliography* (Boulder, Col.: Social Science Education Consortium, 1976). For a discussion of some of the problems associated with values education, see Alan L. Lockwood, "Values Education and the Right to Privacy," *Journal of Moral Education*, 7, no. 1: pp. 9-26. For a standard treatment of values clarification, see Sidney B. Simon, Howe Leland, and Howard Hirschenbaum, *Value Clarification* (New York: Hart Publishing, 1972).

9. Howard Kirschenbaum, "Beyond Values Clarification," in Sidney B. Simon and Howard Kirschenbaum, eds., *Readings in Values Clarification* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1973), pp. 92-110. The approach in this book emphasizes broader and more generalized processes than traditional values clarification.

10. For a general critique of the traditional values clarification approach, see Alan L. Lockwood, "A Critical View of Values Clarification," *Teachers College Record*, 77, no. 1 (September 1975).

11. For a discussion of the limitations of the valuing processes, see Kirschenbaum, "Beyond Values Clarification," pp. 106-109.

12. Lawrence Kohlberg, "Development of Moral Character and Moral Ideology," in Martin L. Hoffman and Lois Wladis Hoffman, eds., *Review of Child Development Research*, Vol. 1 (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1964), pp. 383-431; and "Stage and Sequence: The Cognitive Developmental Approach to Socialization," in David Goslin, ed., *Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1969), pp. 347-480.

13. Some psychologists criticize Kohlberg's last two stages because of their rarity and the claim that they represent morally higher forms of reasoning. See John C. Gibbs, "Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Judgment: A Constructive Critique," *Harvard Educational Review*, 47, no. 1 (February 1977): 43-61.

14. This figure is from Richard C. Sprinthall and Norman A. Sprinthall, *Educational Psychology: A Development Approach*, second edition (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1977), Table 10.1, pp. 240-241. Reprinted by permission of publisher.

15. L. Kohlberg and R. Kramer, "Continuities and Discontinuities in Childhood and Adult Moral Development," *Human Development*, 12 (1969): 93-120.

16. For some theoretical background in moral education, including Kohlberg's developmental stages, and ideas for mini-courses and classroom discussions of values, see Clive Beck, *Moral Education in the Schools: Some Practical Suggestions*, Profiles in Practical Education No. 3 (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1971). Another useful book is by Miriam Wolf-Wasserman and Linda Hutchinson, *Teaching Human Dignity: Social Change Lessons for Everyteacher* (Minneapolis: Education Exploration Center, 1978).

17. We want to thank Doug Risberg, St. Cloud State University, for his assistance in applying Kohlberg's stages of moral development to the world hunger example.

18. Stanley Milgram, "Behavioral Study of Obedience," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 67, no. 4 (1963): 371-378; and "Some Conditions of Obedience and Disobedience to Authority," *Human Relations*, 8 (1965): 57-76.

19. William G. Perry, Jr., *Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970).

20. *Ibid.*, p. 212.

From Idries Shah, Tales of the Dervishes



The Story of Fire

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ONCE upon a time a man was contemplating the ways in which Nature operates, and he discovered, because of his concentration and application, how fire could be made.

This man was called Nour. He decided to travel from one community to another, showing people his discovery.

Nour passed the secret to many groups of people. Some took advantage of the knowledge. Others drove him away, thinking that he must be dangerous, before they had had time to understand how valuable this discovery could be to them. Finally, a tribe before which he demonstrated became so panic-stricken that they set about him and killed him, being convinced that he was a demon.

Centuries passed. The first tribe which had learned about fire reserved the secret for their priests, who remained in affluence and power while the people froze.

The second tribe forgot the art and worshipped instead the instruments. The third worshipped a likeness of Nour himself, because it was he who had taught them. The fourth retained the story of the making of fire in their legends: some believed them, some did not. The fifth community really did use fire, and this enabled them to be warmed, to cook their food, and to manufacture all kinds of useful articles.

After many, many years, a wise man and a small band of his disciples were travelling through the lands of these tribes. The disciples were amazed at the variety of rituals which they encountered; and one and all said to their teacher: 'But all these procedures are in fact related to the making of fire, nothing else. We should reform these people!'

The teacher said: 'Very well, then. We shall restart our journey.

## TALES OF THE DERVISHES

By the end of it, those who survive will know the real problems and how to approach them.'

When they reached the first tribe, the band was hospitably received. The priests invited the travellers to attend their religious ceremony, the making of fire. When it was over, and the tribe was in a state of excitement at the event which they had witnessed, the master said: 'Does anyone wish to speak?'

The first disciple said: 'In the cause of Truth I feel myself constrained to say something to these people.'

'If you will do so at your own risk, you may do so,' said the master.

Now the disciple stepped forward in the presence of the tribal chief and his priests and said: 'I can perform the miracle which you take to be a special manifestation of deity. If I do so, will you accept that you have been in error for so many years?'

But the priests cried: 'Seize him!' and the man was taken away, never to be seen again.

The travellers went to the next territory where the second tribe were worshipping the instruments of fire-making. Again a disciple volunteered to try to bring reason to the community.

With the permission of the master, he said: 'I beg permission to speak to you as reasonable people. You are worshipping the means whereby something may be done, not even the thing itself. Thus you are suspending the advent of its usefulness. I know the reality that lies at the basis of this ceremony.'

This tribe was composed of more reasonable people. But they said to the disciple: 'You are welcome as a traveller and stranger in our midst. But, as a stranger, foreign to our history and customs, you cannot understand what we are doing. You make a mistake. Perhaps, even, you are trying to take away or alter our religion. We therefore decline to listen to you.'

The travellers moved on.

When they arrived in the land of the third tribe, they found before every dwelling an idol representing Nour, the original fire-maker. The third disciple addressed the chiefs of the tribe:

'This idol represents a man, who represents a capacity, which can be used.'

## THE STORY OF FIRE

'This may be so,' answered the Nour-worshippers, 'but the penetration of the real secret is only for the few.'

'It is only for the few who will understand, not for those who refuse to face certain facts,' said the third disciple.

'This is rank heresy, and from a man who does not even speak our language correctly, and is not a priest ordained in our faith,' muttered the priests. And he could make no headway.

The band continued their journey, and arrived in the land of the fourth tribe. Now a fourth disciple stepped forward in the assembly of the people.

'The story of making fire is true, and I know how it may be done,' he said.

Confusion broke out within the tribe, which split into various factions. Some said: 'This may be true, and if it is, we want to find out how to make fire.' When these people were examined by the master and his followers, however, it was found that most of them were anxious to use firemaking for personal advantage, and did not realize that it was something for human progress. So deep had the distorted legends penetrated into the minds of most people that those who thought that they might in fact represent truth were often unbalanced ones, who could not have made fire even if they had been shown how.

There was another faction, who said: 'Of course the legends are not true. This man is just trying to fool us, to make a place for himself here.'

And a further faction said: 'We prefer the legends as they are, for they are the very mortar of our cohesion. If we abandon them, and we find that this new interpretation is useless, what will become of our community then?'

And there were other points of view, as well.

So the party travelled on, until they reached the lands of the fifth community, where firemaking was a commonplace, and where other preoccupations faced them.

The master said to his disciples:

'You have to learn how to teach, for man does not want to be taught. First of all, you will have to teach people how to learn. And

### TALES OF THE DERVISHES

before that you have to teach them that there is still something to be learned. They imagine that they are ready to learn. But they want to learn what they *imagine* is to be learned, not what they have first to learn. When you have learned all this, then you can devise the way to teach. Knowledge without special capacity to teach is not the same as knowledge and capacity.'

❧

Ahmed el-Bedavi (died 1276) is reputed to have said, in answer to the question: 'What is a barbarian?':

'A barbarian is one whose perceptions are so insensitive that he thinks that he can understand by thinking or feeling something which can be perceived only through development and constant application to the striving towards God.

'Men laugh at Moses and Jesus, either because they are utterly insensitive, or because they have concealed from themselves what these people really meant when they talked and acted.'

According to dervish lore, he was accused of preaching Christianity by Moslems, but repudiated by Christians because he refused to accept later Christian dogma literally. He was the founder of the Egyptian Bedavi Order.

## LESSON 3

### INTERVENING AND MOTIVATING WHO FOR WHAT?

#### Learning Objectives

The participants will:

1. Discuss issues surrounding the problems of intervening and motivating people.
2. Recognize factors that could be considered in an effective intervention that motivates people to participate in development.
3. Better understand the complexity of intervention of outsiders in the development process.

#### Activities

1. Discussion of homework assignments (30 min)
  - a) what aspects of human nature most affect people's inability to learn or change?
  - b) what are the ways in which people do change?
  - c) why should people in rural areas of the third world change at all?
  - d) how should the directions of change be determined?
2. Lecture - Carmen Deere (1 hour)  
Factors to Be Considered in Rural Development Intervention
3. Break (15 min)
4. Discussion with Carmen Deere (30 min)
5. Triads (20 min)  
Discussion of each participants problem/issue/topic and factors they should consider in solving/addressing it.
6. Process Consultation (20 min)
  - a) what dimensions did the learning environment have in today's class?
  - b) are there any problems that you feel need to be discussed? positive, negative aspects of class that you want changed now?
7. Handout Homework 3 - Affecting others

#### Materials Required

1. Water and cups.
2. Flip chart and newsprint.
3. Carmen Deere and any materials she may require.



## HOMework 3

### AFFECTING OTHERS EFFECTIVELY

#### 1. Read:

1. Korten, pp. 1-52.
2. Chambers, chapters 1 and 2, pp.1-46.
3. Heilbroner, Economics Explained.
4. Hewes, Rural Development: World Frontiers, pp.58-81.
5. Hyden, pp. 39-92.

#### 2. Write:

In 3 to 5 pages develop guidelines/considerations for effective intervention and motivation of rural communities. You may wish to discuss the structural pre-conditions that may be necessary to implement your guidelines.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT:  
WORLD FRONTIERS

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*Laurence Hewes*

VISITING FELLOW  
CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

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## IV

### POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Apparently Latin-Americans have never been able to solve the political dilemma posed by the conflict between democratic political forms and an extremely status-conscious, prestige-oriented social order. The problem of overcoming the political limitations imposed by a colonial past still persists among the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa. In the latter case the changing of the guard was negotiated primarily between elites on both sides. Then, faced with the staggering task of governing a newly independent country, the new leaders depended on an incumbent bureaucracy to keep the country going while they sought to consolidate and expand their leadership. But this effort did not create a broader political power base; it simply organized, more efficiently perhaps, those already in positions of power. In the rural areas these were larger landholders, religious leaders, and merchants who by one means or another maintained political and economic control of the rural masses. In any event the traditional hierarchical controls of caste and tribe went largely unchanged, and the bureaucracy went on functioning in the colonial tradition—the only way it knew.

There were occasional improvements. In some places and at some times some rural people in some LDCs enjoyed some material benefits from improved farming. But it is not apparent that rural people as a whole have participated more fully in policy decisions affecting them. It is questionable whether LDC rural development connoting continuous forward movement of the rural masses has made any significant gains.

In the LDC capitals the terminology of government and political affairs is speciously modern and the component parts of up-to-date government seem to be in place. In this congenial atmosphere it is quite easy for an observer to be lulled into believing that all is done that can be done. The verbiage and the terminology one hears are similar to what one has been trained to accept. Although perhaps only superficially, many of the LDCs are organized along proper democratic and parliamentary lines, and tables of organization have a familiar appearance. In some respects several of the LDCs seem even more politically progressive than their European or American prototypes. At least formally, these countries are committed to planning as a central tool of government, whereas the United States prefers the opaque profundity of annual Presidential messages on the state of the union and the national budget, and somehow Britons find solace in backward-looking reports of Chancellors of the Exchequer and Chairmen of the Board of Trade.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT SIGNIFIES A great deal more than increased farm output. Farming may be conceived as a series of activities carried on by individuals on a particular piece of land to achieve a material objective; rural development not only includes increased farm production but also connotes a continuous social and political process among rural people ceaselessly reaching out toward a better life. It is possible to increase farm production without improving rural society. Thus in the United States vast increases in farm output were achieved at the same time rural progress ceased because American rural society ceased to exist.

The situation in the LDCs is very different from that in America: there are large metropolitan regions, but none of these is presently able to engulf a large portion of rural society. Instead LDCs continue to confront the need to increase farm production and achieve rural development. However, for the most part these rural people have not been able to improve the quality of their own society nor to participate in the political life of the country.

In the Latin-American democracies the rural political power structure is largely a matter of status, and since most rural people have little or no status they are largely disenfranchised. In the newer countries of Africa and Asia numerically small political elites rule because there is no one else to do the job. Thus political life in the LDCs tends to evolve as an oligarchic process. Political action in some of these governments is limited to infighting among members of the elite, and resulting coups d'etat sometimes become a means for effecting meaningless changes in personnel.

Most of the LDCs accept the need to use the powers of government to direct, control, and guide national economic affairs. At least their intentions in this respect seem clear, and this is much to their credit despite substantial lags in performance. On the surface then, one might conceive that the LDCs are in pretty fair political shape if their adherence to democratic forms, their acceptance of the use of planning, and their adoption of an interventionist role of government in economic affairs are accepted at face value.

Unfortunately all this applies only in the capital at the center of government and not at all or only to a very limited extent in rural areas among rural people. It is not that these governments have not tried to reach rural people; they have. In India and Pakistan real effort was put into the systems of Panchayat Raj and Basic Democracy designed to achieve grass roots political expression. But neither of these has yet demonstrated ability to deal effectively with the traditional centers of rural power, and the same may be true of the Ujamaa Village program of Tanzania. Many LDCs find it nearly impossible to deploy an adequate field staff to carry out their policies. Moreover, in a number of these countries, despite lip service, many of the elite are hesitant to unleash the latent political power of rural people. The result has been few organs and routines for effectively mobilizing and expressing rural political judgments. A political chasm exists, with leaders and bureaucrats on one side and a vast voiceless rural population on the other.

This is particularly true of the planning process, accepted and endorsed by most LDCs as essential to the conduct of their affairs. Despite the trappings and apparatus of planning, LDC governments have not inherited or created the means for effectively involving rural people in the process. At best the plans of LDCs are prepared and reviewed by technicians (often expatriate technicians), so whatever satisfaction LDC elites may obtain from plan preparation and promulgation should be muted by realization that these documents are not plans in any real sense. Since they do not represent a political consensus, there is no certainty that they will or can be implemented. They remain simply recorded exercises in economic, statistical, and financial projections and extrapolations representing possibilities, not probabilities.

The architects of LDC government are in a predicament. They have opted for policies dependent on wide political involvement but have been unable to create the institutions linking the center to rural communities. To put it another way, LDC leaders have not yet found a way to decentralize political power. They have attempted to

find a substitute by sending large numbers of government people into the rural area to tell people of their good intentions. However, the task of training such cadres has proved time-consuming and costly, and it is doubtful that these government newcomers have been accepted by the people. More likely these agents are taken into camp by the existing power structure and never achieve significant liaison with the people. Although the LDC authorities genuinely desire rural political participation, they have not been able to reconcile themselves to use tactics of political agitation and organization somewhat along the lines used by trade unions and perhaps similar to methods used in China.

Those arrangements for working with rural people that have been attempted have not resulted in strengthening the governments of the Third World. Indeed the continuing turmoil testifies rather to basic political weakness. Since the bulk of those populations is rural, this weakness reflects a serious lack of solidarity among rural people and between them and the nation. While the weakness of fledgling nations is comprehensible, less reassuring is the persistence of attitudes and policies sustaining elites but reinforcing political weakness and inhibiting development. The time may have come for the LDCs to recognize the political strength accruing to the nation from forthrightly yielding to the rural constituency powers, enabling them to participate effectively in formation and execution of development programs.

This commentary is not original; 137 years have passed since Alexis de Tocqueville described what he conceived to be the political dynamics of rural New England. Whether he was correct in his interpretation of the New England scene is less important than his success in demonstrating how a vigorous political unit composed of free individuals could contribute to national strength and solidarity. In today's terms Tocqueville's description is a political model.

Examination of the mechanics of LDC government operations reveals the lack of availability of functions presented in Tocqueville's model. Instead, a small political leadership and an imperfectly functioning central bureaucracy seek to run the entire country, although they lack local support and cannot depend on responsible citizen performance in the rural hinterland. Unfortunately neither the history nor the traditions of many of these nations provided for free local political expression. Being unaware of this gap, the new leaders did not perceive the need to create these political precincts. Instead they tinkered with existing local power structures and the inherited administrative units in the hope that somehow these could be cobbled

into a semblance of valid political institutions. But these local power structures represented not equality and free association but the exact opposite. Too often they were instruments of petty despotism operating on the custom-sanctioned ethic that the weak existed for exploitation. Indeed the entire rural landscape in many regions came close to constituting a mosaic of political fiefdoms ruled by men strongly opposed to the very democratic principles promulgated by the elites and stated as the foundations of new national constitutions.

While Tocqueville's model may never have existed in real life (and, if it did, is nowhere significant in today's American political life), his concept or something close to it may be apropos of the transformation of LDC rural institutions to further the ends of rural development.

One of the aspects of the New England village emphasized by Tocqueville was the broad assignment of public duties among the citizens. These included almost the entire spectrum of local government—taxes, police, records, finance, public instruction, the poor, roads, weights and measures, and parish committees. Administrative authority, vested in elected selectmen, was strictly limited by the requirement for referral to village meetings of any changes or proposals for additional undertakings. Another aspect was the ease of making new proposals whenever small groups in the community wanted to make them. The system provided a broad distribution of power; the right of public participation in review and proposal was important, but more important was the wide opportunity to participate in managing community affairs. The result was to elicit maximum citizen interest and wide distribution of power, and at the heart of this structure was universal personal freedom and equality.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast, Myrdal and others indicate that in many LDC rural communities authority and the use of power are restricted to a small group attaining its prerogatives through birth, caste, tribal affiliation, or wealth. Central government tends to deal with this group; its representatives ally themselves with this leadership and so become a part of the traditional establishment. As a result, community undertakings are involuntary for most of the participants and have the features of forced and therefore unwilling contributions. Most of the community generate nothing of public significance on their own initiative. Instead each family draws into itself, seeking to avoid as much as possible any contact with authority.<sup>2</sup>

### ROLE OF POLITICAL LEADERS

So far, our discussion of the political and administrative impediments to rural development has emphasized relations between rural people and government. Other impediments flow from specific attitudes of LDC political leaders and government officials toward agriculture, natural resources, and the environment. These attitudes influence decisions in rural development; their effects are emphasized by Stefan Robock who, in his discussion of natural resource development in the northeastern Brazil SUDENE program, points to the political aspects of large natural resource undertakings, particularly among top echelon political leaders.<sup>3</sup> In order for major development to start at all, strong support must be provided by national leadership. However, this support evolves through political negotiation possibly calling for sacrifices of technical principles and even of some objectives. Thus the SUDENE program as finally implemented represented important compromises. Robock concedes that a later evaluation of the program may support its wisdom, but he suggests that the intervening political struggle was very costly. It seems likely that, in the political bargaining, hopes for rapid development were encouraged; in order to satisfy these, important longer-range benefits had to be subordinated.

Political leaders can be tough bargainers; they also seek at times to avoid issues involving direct confrontation. When the opposition is strong and well organized and proponents are not, political common sense dictates that issues be soft-pedaled even though basic principles of social equity are sacrificed. Politicians with records of supporting lost causes do not stay long in office. Probably such considerations are responsible for long delays in changing existing LDC land tenure arrangements and instituting broad agrarian reform. While these changes and reforms are generally recognized as essential to rural modernization and progress in many of the LDCs, exploitation is most extreme where landed interests are strongest and best organized and small farmers and tenants are poorly organized and led. The oppressed do not constitute a viable base for enlisting leadership support. So, short of revolution, the land tenure and agrarian reform issue is not likely to emerge as a major issue at the national level. If it does, it is very likely to be subjected to crippling compromise.

The urban-industrial populations in LDCs are probably confused or uninformed about agrarian reform and the associated rural political issues, so these issues have not become clear-cut national issues. There is no national climate for rural reform, and political leaders have not

displayed the statesmanship necessary to raise the issue to its real national significance. As Hiram Phillips sees it, the need is for a sense of national direction.<sup>4</sup> The least that conscientious political leadership could do is to evaluate the strength—overt and latent—of opposing interests and determine those aspects susceptible of remedy. Such leaders could support widespread study and debate of this pressing national issue, and from such activity more able leadership might arise. However, new LDC political leaders have not been willing to incur even the minimal risks of such encouragement.

When LDC political leadership is willing to sacrifice major long-term development goals for less important short-term advantage and is further unwilling to incur even minimal risks for important reforms, what can be said of its real objectives? One interpretation is that the entire universe of rural development, natural resource management, agriculture, and the environment has no priority in the panorama of the LDC political elite. The most generous interpretation of this perspective is that the foremost LDC political concern has to be immediate national survival. This paramount responsibility focuses attention on political management and enforces a short-term pragmatic view. The immediate demands of today and tomorrow must take precedence over potentials of next season, next year, or the next five or ten years. Unfortunately the time span of cyclical movements of natural events—seed time and harvest, plant and arboreal growth, farming, environmental transition, and rural development—correspond to "God's time," not to man's.

It can also be noted that politicians are seldom held accountable for natural disasters or environmental damage, even if these events could have been prevented or mitigated. No one seems to be answerable when schistosomiasis appears on Lake Nasser and in the canals below the Aswan Dam. No heads roll when lands in the Indus Basin and northern India are gradually lost to salinity because of bad irrigation practices. In the Soviet Union dissident writers may go to jail, but there are no reprisals when enormous areas of improperly used lands increasingly become "dust bowls." Soil damage causes abandonment of farmland in Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, and Central America because of inadequate safeguards; but the unhappy farmers seek no political sacrifices. Since there are no penalties, problems of population growth and food supply are reflected in vastly complex environmental consequences.<sup>5</sup>

Related to their pragmatic concern for immediate problems is the preoccupation of LDC leaders with nation building. This preoccupation is probably due to the recent arrival of these nations at in-

dependent statehood or because their administrations rest on very recent coups d'état. In the view of the new leadership, their challenge is not development but rapid accomplishment of vertical political integration. W. David Hopper, long a close student of the development aspects of newly emergent states, says:

The problem of creating a state out of a colony and molding its people into a nation is a problem which is uppermost and foremost. . . . The rationale of locating steel plants or the rationale of bringing in reforms or not bringing in reforms, as the case may be, is a rationale within the framework of a political structure. . . . The issue that faces the political elites as a paramount issue is not only the retention of their own power, but the retention of their own power is very much dependent upon creating a vertical integration of the nation, of breaking out the disassociated units, the villages, the rather independent separate groups, of breaking these and combining them into a nation.<sup>6</sup>

In Hopper's terms, politically important developments in the LDCs are those with fast payoff in national prestige and leadership credit. The Green Revolution might have been long delayed had not its promise coincided with the Indian drought of the mid-60s and the accompanying threat of starvation. Thus political motivation concentrates leadership attention on the trappings of power and partly accounts for the initial emphasis on large-scale industrial plants and monumental public works rather than on rural development.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

In the organizational structure of LDC government administration functions, rural development, farming, natural resources, and environmental matters are placed in junior-grade ministries. This administrative pattern is not unique with the LDCs; it is more or less universal. The ranking government services are those concerned with foreign affairs, national defense, fiscal affairs, economic policy, commerce, and industry. For example, in the United States farming, forestry, fisheries, and land and water use are responsibilities delegated to administrative echelons at least one step below cabinet level. This is also the case for rural development, rural social problems, and rural education.

Among the richer nations this governmental pecking order may not be immediately critical, but in the case of the LDCs the junior rank accorded services responsible for rural development reinforces their inferior political role. And this is not the end of the matter;

these less glamorous services, standing apart from the trappings of central power, may then develop their own separate power structures in combination with rural political and economic interests, and these interests will likely be selfish and very conservative. In time this semi-syndical relationship flourishing in semiobscurity develops its own objectives and priorities. It becomes exclusive, monopolistic, and difficult to penetrate or evaluate.

The professional staffs of these particularistic government structures are in a strategic position. They have been trained in narrow specialized fields; since the sole professional outlet for this training is in these governmental institutions, these officials come to have a dominant role in the conduct and content of the training institutions. Ultimately, professional recognition in these fields depends on service in and for the specialized structure. Since there are very few career opportunities outside these services, the institutions have a monopoly of skills in these fields. So it becomes increasingly difficult to establish any objective informed insight or oversight of the work performed by these bodies or for any informed criticism of their operations or policy to arise.

237  
Organizational discipline within these specialized services is made more severe because of the lack of outside employment opportunities. It is extremely difficult to transfer to higher-ranking ministries; the kind of people who become foresters, soil scientists, and agronomists very seldom aspire to become cabinet ministers or members of Parliament. What may be important to such individuals is security, followed by improved professional status and recognition within the institution. However, these rewards are determined not entirely by professional excellence but probably more by conformance to the conventions of the syndical power enclave. One of these conventions requires avoidance of conflict or controversy with syndical allies. Another requires that any differences that may arise be settled "within the family"; thus there may be a tendency to reveal very little of the inner workings of the enclave to the public and to closely guard and closely edit public utterances. Indeed this diffidence applies not only to the public and the communications media but also to other ministries and the Parliament.

An inevitable consequence of this organizational discipline is to defeat and frustrate independent professional judgment while encouraging a protective and conservative service morale. At the same time that these services become less capable of perceiving the general public interest they tend more and more to become the instruments of the special political and economic interests of the syndicate. In

these circumstances the objective of these services is not the welfare of the great mass of the rural people but the overriding desires of the syndical allies.

#### FUNCTIONAL DISPERSION OF GOVERNMENT SERVICES

Complicating the effects on rural development of low political and administrative rank are those arising from inappropriate separation of government functions. Here we encounter administrative patterns, in developed as well as developing nations, defying any system of logical arrangement but receiving almost universal acceptance. Everyone accepts the concept of an integrated environment, but everywhere the government services for environmental problems are so badly dispersed and fractionalized that a major effort has to be mounted to achieve coordinated action.

The LDCs had the opportunity of avoiding the illogical functional arrangements of developed nations with respect to development, use, and control of natural resources and the environment, but many of them repeated the schizoid pattern. Now very commonly one finds among the LDCs that irrigation is a responsibility of one ministry and agricultural development of another. In some countries not only are agriculture and irrigation administratively separated, but also rural development is divorced from agricultural cooperatives. In Panama an agricultural component at the National University performs some agricultural research functions quite separate and apart from similar research functions of the Ministry of Agriculture also administering agricultural training institutions. Ethiopia has a Ministry of Land Reform separate from the Ministry of Agriculture; a Ministry of Community Development conducts rural community development projects; irrigation is still another administrative entity. India and Pakistan place irrigation development in one ministry and agriculture in another. In a number of LDCs the functions of farm credit are separate from those of agricultural development.

Not only does this atomization of function make for administrative problems, it is also very expensive. Seemingly these administrative disfunctional arrangements would call out for reorganization in the name of efficiency, but this does not happen readily. However, very wisely India did merge its separate ministries of Cooperative and Community Development with its Ministry of Agriculture some years ago. One suspects that more of these reorganizations are not effected because of political considerations, particularly the resulting reduction in attractive patronage opportunities or the embarrassment of

forcing some incumbent politician out of a comfortable post. Then too, the alliances these specialized units may have formed represent forces able to cause considerable political disturbance. Certainly in the United States considerations such as these have set at naught for nearly half a century efforts to reorganize into more efficient patterns those administrative units of the federal government responsible for administration of natural resources.

Among the LDCs the situation is aggravated by bureaucratic jealousy and competition among UN affiliates such as between the Food and Agriculture Organization and the International Labour Organization. Thus in one country the ILO may attempt to promote its concepts of rural cooperatives under the aegis of Community Development in one ministry at the same time that FAO pushes a similar operation as a function of the Ministry of Agriculture. This is not fun and games for the target country, for the effect is to confuse the development effort and to intensify wasteful and inefficient deployment of scarce LDC resources.

#### QUALITY OF ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL

The quality of personnel in the government services of the LDCs and their attitude toward that service greatly affects the performance of government functions. In turn, the quality of personnel attracted to these services is affected by the career opportunities they afford. It is only natural then that the secondary rank of government ministries concerned with rural development and the administration of natural resources does not make these services attractive to abler people. More ambitious, brighter, and better-trained young people seek careers in the higher-ranking services. Moreover, placement in these services usually means that one will work in the capital city with all its comforts and amenities while enjoying the status conveyed by high-ranking service, and among the LDCs these are extraordinarily important considerations.

In a number of LDCs the process of career selection begins at an early age. In order to qualify for entrance to the higher-ranking services one must have attended the prestigious universities at Calcutta, Bombay, Manila, Montevideo, Addis Ababa, or their equivalents. But only the select can afford to attend these institutions. Thus to many young people the agricultural colleges and other institutions training for careers in rural areas represent second choices. Those who fail to meet the higher academic requirements of the prestige institutions or who cannot afford them turn to these less prestigious schools. These

candidates may not be as interested in farming, in rural people, or in the natural environment as in achieving a degree of status attached to higher education and ultimately the security of a government job—albeit one of secondary rank. Thus it frequently happens that individuals who begin this kind of career are not from rural areas and have no previous connection with farming or farm people. And so the system works as a selection process, automatically routing to professional work in the junior ministries many who accept such careers not out of preference or interest but out of necessity or lack of alternative.

Reinforcing this process is the general low esteem for the rural sector and its affairs by the elites of these countries. While land ownership—particularly absentee ownership of large estates—may convey prestige, farming itself is considered to be a distinctly inelegant occupation. Hence those who work with farm people may suffer humiliation; their social status suffers and so does their self-esteem. In these circumstances many individuals devote much energy to wrangling transfers from posts in rural areas to the seat of government.

In the end the government workers in rural development services are not highly motivated toward their work. Many of them are serving time waiting for retirement or a possible but unlikely transfer out of rural areas to a larger city and a desk job. Their own status preoccupation inhibits sympathy for their clients and the desire to understand rural people. These officials tend not to be innovative but rather to reduce the scope of their activities to routine tasks requiring neither initiative nor energy. In the field they receive little support or communication from upper echelons, so they lead an isolated existence. As newcomers to the village scene they find it difficult to achieve acceptance among their rural clientele and are frustrated in efforts to initiate meaningful relations enabling them to demonstrate new agricultural techniques or to make helpful suggestions for improvement of farming practices. Sometimes they are denied materials essential to performance of their duties, such as new tires for bicycles or replacement of worn-out batteries for radio receiving sets. Sometimes funds enabling them to travel to higher headquarters are lacking so they cannot even report their needs. Their own youth and inexperience put them at a disadvantage in rural societies where age is equated with wisdom. Eventually these representatives of the central government lapse into indifference and inertia.

This kind of arrangement lacks valid local institutions for the formulation and expression of local will. It was precisely this vital element of local expression plus the native genius for organization that



made the Japanese Land Reform Program of 1946-51 an outstanding success—a success due almost entirely to the vigor and enterprise of locally elected Village Land Commissions vested with full responsibility for decision and action. With this impetus their work and sense of responsibility succeeded in transforming in a few short years a centuries-old feudal land tenure system into a new egalitarian system dominated by small independent landowners. The role of the central government and its agents was advisory and informative. No one at the time thought much about it, but the commissions—both in the manner of their formation as freely elected bodies and in the distribution of their responsibilities—seem in retrospect to have followed very closely the Tocqueville pattern. What followed was a tremendous release of energy directed toward realization of local objectives. Of course this analogy is subject to the reservation that Japan was not an underdeveloped nation. Yet, given the circumstances prevailing nationwide at the end of the war involving dislocation, wide devastation, and disruption plus the universal acceptance of feudal principles and traditional organization, the situation was much closer to today's LDCs than to the developed countries.

The revolutionary change in Japanese rural society consisted in endowing local communities with an instrument for full self-expression with an equal opportunity for every individual, regardless of economic or social status, to have a hand in formulating community decisions. In this system government people appear in a new role. Their advice and assistance gain authority by endorsement of these local bodies. Thus officials do not appear as an arm of the central power. In the Japanese experience their work had meaningful content; what they had to contribute was something everyone wanted, and they became identified with the community.<sup>7</sup> Community motivation became their motivation; their progress and recognition was the result of their success in meeting self-determined village needs and in helping to solve village problems.

As the rural sector achieves success, political power accrues to it, with a corresponding accretion of prestige and rank. In this process the agricultural and rural institutions become politically powerful and influence national policy. As the rural sector gains power and prestige, the careers of rural civil servants become more attractive and abler people seek to enter the service. Moreover, these recruits increasingly come from a rural background and share the aspirations of rural people. This is the process to be set in motion by LDCs in their efforts toward rural development.

#### ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

Many LDCs have adopted central planning for achieving development and growth and for allocating national resources. Whether LDCs use central planning or more occult procedures, all of them in common with universal practice make some kind of estimate of the amount of central resources to be deployed for development purposes. In all these forward projections governments reveal their intentions toward the rural sector. At this point decisions are made about the extent of steps to redress the inadequacy of rural infrastructure and amounts of central resources intended for feeder roads, rural electrification, irrigation works, schools, storage facilities, regulated markets, extension services, manpower training, and research. It is also at this point that qualities of vision and imagination of the administration personnel are most important and the need to upgrade the quality of the administrative services is most keenly felt. At a recent joint OECD Development Center/World Bank seminar on rural development, several participants expressed the view that before improvement in rural development procedures could be effective the entire status of rural affairs would have to be improved.<sup>8</sup>

At the outset of the planning process the effect of lower rural rank-order would mean lower allocations to rural development items. This was the case in India, at least through its third Five-Year Plan (1960-65). I noted this trend in 1964 in a study for USAID outlining a strategy for long-range assistance for rural India. Observing that under the third Five-Year Plan the proportionate share of resources proposed for Agriculture and Rural Community Development was 14 percent compared to 24 percent for Industries and Minerals, 22 percent for Irrigation and Power, and 20 percent for Transport and Communications, I commented:

India's very substantial efforts to achieve planned and balanced economic development have probably been less effective in the agricultural sector. From First Plan to Third and looming over Fourth Plan formulation and perspective planning through 1976 is the largely unresolved problem of adequately quantifying agriculture's base, potentials, and proper role in the nation's sustained economic growth. Inability to organize an economical sound approach to sectoral development of agriculture inevitably weakens economic planning and perspective for all other sectors.<sup>9</sup>

Even if the overall amounts allocated for rural development among the LDCs were adequate, there would remain the equally important function of programming and scheduling the investment flow to rural development. It is in the performance of funding functions that heavy demands on skill and training are imposed. Even if these are present, they have to be organized properly in an effective administrative structure, and here too weakness is encountered. Thus neglect of the rural development role in government places a double handicap of less-qualified personnel and poorly articulated organization on the planning function. It was the latter handicap that attracted comments from participants in the 1972 OECD/IBRD seminar:

It seemed to many of the participants that the *existing organization* of the administration in many countries was a major obstacle to adopting an *integrated approach* and the evidence provided by Mr. Mule from Kenya on this point was of particular interest. A large measure of agreement was also reached on the need to devise organizational arrangements which would enable *decision-making* to be really *decentralized*. (Emphasis added)<sup>10</sup>

Those familiar with the planning function understand the heavy demand it imposes: it takes acute, detailed, and intensive effort sustained over long periods to fit together in proper sequence the components of a balanced scheme for rural development. When these burdens are placed on inadequately trained staff, the result may be sloppy planning and poor implementation. This performance is not so much the fault of those engaged in the task but rather in the bias resulting in establishing a second-rank standing for government work in rural development. As time passes and these workers gain experience, performance may progressively improve. Still the lag is expensive for the nations and for their rural constituencies.

In our concern with planning we should not lose sight of the need to link plans closely to implementation. Thus planning for rural development and the execution of these plans are a continuous process. Plans, to be effective, must comprehend an awareness of the capacity of the executing agencies to carry them out. Moreover, no plan is so good that it does not have to be modified continuously during implementation stages. On the other hand, if implementation is laggard or careless, no plan can succeed.

Past experience has shown that even the most well-conceived and well-designed schemes flop at the implementation level. Sev-

eral reasons are adduced for this: lack of enthusiasm on the part of top political and administrative leadership and/or its inability to transmit the same to middle and local level of leadership; red-tape, archaic administrative procedures and general ineptitude and inefficiency of the administrative machinery at lower levels; economic and political vested interests which are indifferent to the schemes which are of no direct benefit to them. Numerous cases have been noted in which funds allocated to such schemes are diverted to schemes which benefit the better-off.<sup>11</sup>

It was such a combination of sloppy planning and indifferent execution that resulted in a failure of Ethiopia's second Five-Year Plan (1963-68) to meet its agricultural objectives when government capital expenditures for agriculture were only 42 percent of planned objectives.<sup>12</sup> The explanation seems to be that planners overestimated the performance capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture and possibly also the availability of resources. One specific shortfall was a three-and-a-half-year delay in establishing the important Agricultural Research Institute with a subsequent failure to implement research programs. More generally those departments of the Ministry of Agriculture responsible for extension services, agronomy, education, training, statistics, river surveys, and the Cadastral land survey were unable to meet planned goals because of insufficient funds. Recurrent expenditures (used for the payment of salaries) for the ministry as a whole were only two-thirds of planned levels.

Several factors probably worked in combination to create this unhappy record. One is the likelihood that funds, originally allocated to the Ministry of Agriculture, were diverted to higher-ranking ministries. Another possibility is that personnel to staff the several programs were unavailable; some regular staff may have transferred to other ministries and recruits in the process of in-service training went to other jobs. The overall cause of the poor performance was the low ranking of the Ministry of Agriculture plus bad planning practices. In any event, the end result was a deplorable shortfall in the progress of rural development.

Sometimes conscientious planners may be misled by inaccurate or erroneous data. This in turn may be the result of neglect of rural statistical reporting services. Also the newer LDCs may not have been in business long enough to accumulate sufficient time series data to justify using them as a base for extrapolations. This deficiency may be aggravated by the bias inherent in syndical loyalties (referred to above) taking the form of overstating organization performance capacity in

the interest of making one department or bureau "look good." When these distortions get cranked into a plan there is bound to be a breakdown, because the plan simply cannot work.

Something like this happened in the case of Tanzania's first Five-Year Plan ending in 1969. Almost from the outset it became apparent that the departments concerned with rural development could not carry out their assignments.<sup>13</sup> A second cause of near failure was a substantial underestimate of national population and rate of population growth. This error led to further miscalculations of per capita income, saving, and capital formation. As if this were not enough, progress was further impeded by an acute shortage of trained manpower for the rural program and a major overestimate of foreign exchange flows. However, what distinguishes the Tanzania situation was the careful supervision enabling the government to detect these errors and the resiliency of the leadership in making the necessary difficult midstream adjustments to offset what otherwise could have been a real disaster.

A further critical element in planning for rural development is the degree of understanding of the process of rural development possessed by planners. This quality of perception is manifested in the overall development strategy and in the priorities and emphases of the accorded plan components. From this standpoint it is not so much whether rural planners are right or wrong in selecting components for rural development but rather how they conceive the total development process as evidenced by the choices they make in allocating resources. Do they see that process as systemic unity where all components are related? If they do not perceive this unity, it is likely that the flow of development investment will be atomized in such a fashion that there is no coherent integration of development. John P. Lewis, who was familiar with Indian planning procedures, called attention to the blithe disregard by planners of demographic concentrations in the Indian rural landscape in contrast to what he conceived to be the critical importance for development of planning of these clusterings because they provided a central focus for administrative, political, and economic activity.<sup>14</sup>

In more specific terms, neglect of the systemic aspects of rural development tends to permit uncoordinated programs for the location of processing plants, warehouses, supply depots, marketing points, fertilizer mixing plants, and feeder roads. If these components are located without respect to other components, the paramount advantage of maximizing development complementarities is lost, as is the opportunity to break through the isolation and stagnation of small

villages. According to E. A. J. Johnson, this lack of coordinated planning effort is due to poor training of planners aggravated by political incentives to dole out projects in a political pork-barrel fashion.<sup>15</sup>

If the central plan for rural development becomes a collection of separate undertakings, the corresponding investment flow will be irrational. Thus installations constructed "out of phase" with the development process or located inappropriately will be underutilized or completely unused. Whereas Lewis and Johnson view these planning miscues as a result of poor training, ignorance, indifference, or political expedience, our thesis inclines toward the view that these shortcomings have their origin in the low ranking of rural affairs among LDC governments.

#### POLITICAL SYSTEMS

**LATIN AMERICA.** Throughout Latin America, by one means or another, programs of land reform have frequently been initiated and usually stifled or sidetracked through the political maneuverings of large landowners and their allies. Yet it is generally agreed that the existing farm tenancy system is largely responsible for low productivity, rural misery, and a technically backward agriculture. There have been some exceptions to this in Bolivia's insurrectionist land seizures by tenants, and to some extent colonization in Venezuela has provided a partial answer to the problem of land reform. Chile's long-stalled land reform program might have stood a chance of resuscitation under the Allende regime. But Brazil's situation is characterized as limited to a few small-scale projects and half measures. The general outlook in Latin America is a frustration of the necessary reforms to provide dynamic change from the present rural stagnation.<sup>16</sup>

Backward agricultural development in Colombia affects the national economy and is related to the preponderance of rural people among the nation's poor.<sup>17</sup> One observer related this situation to deficient leadership not competent to support rural development planning and operations. While more than 100 separate agencies are engaged in rural development activities, rural stagnation and decline are universal. Also apparent is a completely inadequate system of rural education. Since only about 3 percent of those entering first grade in rural areas will later register for the fifth and final grade, there is an almost complete absence of rural students among those receiving professional agricultural training. This means that the staffs of agricultural agencies are made up mostly of people who have had no

personal familiarity with farming or rural life. Consequently an almost complete vacuum of interest and concern exists between those who farm and those who seek to improve farming technology and rural development. The technical and official group seems primarily to have been recruited among lawyers, economists, and engineers.<sup>18</sup> A further conclusion is that Colombian taxpayers are unwilling to support rural education, preferring to support urban public education. Because taxpayers are usually an elite group, it has been conjectured that those who financially support government are unwilling to support measures that would give poor people an opportunity to compete with the young of the powerful elites.<sup>19</sup>

**EAST AFRICA.** In Ethiopia agriculture and rural development suffer the consequences of an old feudal system. Grants of land to those serving the imperial establishment have preempted large areas. Many of the cultivators in the northern and central highland regions are tenants with insecure tenurial rights. In the late 1960s Emperor Haile Selassie undertook several measures designed to reform this system; he established a Ministry of Land Reform and appointed as Minister one of his abler administrators. Unfortunately, very little has been accomplished since these beginnings except for the creation of a sizable bureaucracy. It appears that while the Emperor lent his personal support and prestige to the reform, the vested power of both his hereditary nobility and the Amharic Christian Church had sufficient power to obfuscate and inhibit action. Parliamentary delays and maneuvers prevented passage of basic legislation, disregarding repeated imperial insistence on enactment. These powerful interests were also instrumental in securing the removal of an able Minister of Land Reform and the appointment of a more amenable replacement.

Among younger Ethiopians, particularly among university students, land reform has become one of a number of burning political issues which have aroused their opposition to the Establishment. Up to the present time this opposition has not achieved significant expression. On the other hand, there have been rumors of strong repressive police action serving to increase tensions and anti-Establishment sentiment. However, this unrest is probably an urban phenomenon confined largely to Addis Ababa and its environs. Little is known about farmer reaction, perhaps because of the substantial amount of unsettled land in the southern part of the country. There is some evidence of a gradual southward migration out of northerly regions, which may have been hastened by large tenant displacement as a result of increasing mechanization.

Agricultural development in Ethiopia is impeded by the primitive level of farming and lack of means to improve productivity. Technical assistance to farmers through the extension work of the Ministry of Agriculture is impeded by the low ranking of that ministry. Extension field workers are poorly paid and poorly trained. Moreover, the ministry is handicapped both by budgetary limitations and by the manner in which budgeted funds are disbursed and is also plagued by competition from and conflicts with more powerful units of government having peripheral and tangential responsibility for both rural development and farming.

In contrast to other countries of the Third World, Ethiopia seems to neither fear nor distrust foreign assistance or investment. Under the prompting of overseas assistance agencies several promising and forward-looking agricultural projects are under way. Large-scale and successful foreign-owned agricultural enterprises have been developed; and Ethiopia has not been unresponsive to suggestions for improvement in agricultural administration, organization, training, and research. The major uncertainty relating to the widespread implementation of these initial steps is with respect to the highly conservative and very powerful elite group whose basic entrenchment in control of land resources will sooner or later have to be challenged. To what extent, if any, this confrontation would involve the development role of foreign entrepreneurs is a matter of speculation.

Socialist Tanzania, under the leadership of Julius Nyerere, has adopted a unique administrative and political approach to agricultural and rural development based on the principle of rural villages conceived as communal organizations. Nyerere, as leader of the TANU party,<sup>20</sup> visualizes rural development primarily along political lines. In rural areas agricultural technicians work to assist the political arm of government, the Ministry of Rural Development, in its efforts to create Ujamaa villages—a form of communal social organization based on the concept of the indigenous extended family. One might conjecture that this concept is not unrelated to the rural communes of the Peoples Republic of China and the philosophy of Mao Tse-tung.

These concepts are in the process of implementation within a process of nation building and rapid transition from previous colonial status. Thus the Ujamaa principle is making its way among Tanzanian farmers who are mostly small holders. These farmers will receive government assistance encouraging them toward collectivism in farming operations.

Land reform in its distributive aspect is absent because the Tanzanian land tenure system is apparently not characterized by land-

lordism or typical tenancy patterns. Thus the political and administrative aspects of rural development seem to take the form of indoctrination and persuasion. To the extent possible, government exercises its power by helping rural people in such a fashion that they find themselves better off within a Ujamaa context.

Within the bureaucracy this means that everyone conforms to TANU party discipline: TANU sets the major principles for national planning, and ministerial conferences on planning are subject to party dictates. In the field TANU policy is continually manifested to farm advisors and all other government functionaries. Just what effect this may have on technical and professional personnel in the several ministries is difficult to judge, and just how well the Ujamaa principle conforms to the imperatives of agricultural technology is still a matter of conjecture. But what Nyerere does is to instill a sense of nationhood among a population historically tribal in outlook. He also seeks to socialize farming while stimulating it to achieve higher levels of output.

In contrast to other LDCs, although most of the rural people of Tanzania are very poor and ignorant, they are at least not oppressed or exploited. On the other hand, evidence that the Ujamaa principle has or will result in raising levels of production is not apparent. Tanzania has also undertaken several ventures in large-scale state farms. Opinion on the likelihood of success of these ventures is divided. Another aspect of agricultural policy with a doubtful outlook is that of producing food grains at costs above world market prices. Finally, the continued discouragement of small traders of agricultural commodities in some areas without providing alternate marketing outlets was not wise. Thus one is forced to the conclusion that short-run political actions may have doubtful effects, but that in the longer run Ujamaa policy may be dynamic in raising farm production levels and improving rural life-styles. The contrast may be between production as a short-run goal and ultimate integrated rural development.

INDIA. The dominant political party in India since independence is the Congress Party, and all Indian governments since independence have been Congress Party governments; it was the party of Gandhi, Nehru, Shastri, and Indira Gandhi. Whoever controlled the Congress Party ruled India. Consequently Indian agricultural and rural policy has been set by the Congress Party. This party has included a great variety of economic interests; one very important component in terms

of establishing rural policy was the farm group, particularly landowners.

The Constitution of India places much power in the hands of the several Indian states, including administrative responsibility for agriculture. Because many of the states are predominantly rural and agricultural, it is natural that dominant landowner interests should strongly color state politics. This deployment of political power was decisive in offsetting the original land reform objectives of the central government which visualized as a fundamental political tenet redistribution of agricultural lands to tenants along with rights to secure tenure on lands they might rent.

Initial efforts of reform began and largely ended with abolition of a particular layer of rent receivers, the Zamindari. The Zamindar system was established by the British in the latter part of the eighteenth century.<sup>21</sup> It was conceived that these functionaries would receive rent in perpetuity and forward a stipulated amount as taxes. In time the Zamindari parceled out these rent allocations to others; in some cases there were as many as 15 or 20 layers of rent receivers between the cultivator and the last receiver.<sup>22</sup> Apparently this system did not uniformly cover all Indian states; the relations between Zamindar right and land ownership varied in different localities.

It was relatively easy in the period after independence to abolish the inexcusably exploitive Zamindar system as an example of the malfunctions of the British raj. And that, to all intents and purposes, was the extent of Indian land reform. Some states passed legislation setting ceilings on the amount of land in a single ownership, but from that point on the record is replete with a tangle of land litigation and proceedings of commissions of various kinds. Today both landlordism and tenancy are almost universal throughout India. It is in this setting that the Green Revolution in India has taken place.

It has been difficult for the central government to exert sufficient influence over state policy and administration to achieve a national consistency in implementing its rural objectives because agriculture is a "state matter." Nearly twenty years ago Paul Appleby reported to the government of India on this situation:

The Centre is without any real powers in almost the entire field of development; its function is the "staff" function rather than the "line" or "action" function, and its method slows greatly, and expedites hardly at all. Land policy is related to development of agriculture, but land policy is exclusively within the field of state responsibilities. Even farm credit, about which the states

can never hope to do anything of consequence, is in their field. And farm credit is important to agricultural development. The influence that is associated with Central financial assistance is so cumbered by an intricate system of multiple reviews both in the states and in the Centre that the Centre often may be said to rescue the states from trouble rather than stimulating the states to bold, big, new action. And responsibility for all this is so diffused that almost no one knows who can be held accountable for what.<sup>23</sup>

In this context the charisma of Indian leaders becomes the principal unifying force in pushing a progressive rural policy. The formal structure, the division of administrative power, and the limited colonial procedures act as impediments to the design and extension of powers. For this reason the maintenance of personal qualities of prestige and elitism become extremely important aspects of leadership. But this also means that the reservoir of leadership power can be drawn upon only for critical issues. This consideration may explain the past unwillingness of leadership to forthrightly challenge entrenched rural land interests. The price for a greatly expanded food production so vital to national well-being apparently has been to permit these landed interests to reap major benefits from the Green Revolution and to risk widespread exploitation of small and weaker cultivators and landless laborers.

The political paradox between an enlightened leadership and a backward electorate was due to the political power of conservative economic interests in local and state politics. Since these interests constituted the dominant power centers, they controlled political machinery up to the state level. Their followers, who gave these local power centers control of political majorities, were the same small farmers, tenants, and landless laborers who needed relief. These oppressed rural people provided the clientele for the wielding of local power, and this political structure was reinforced by the caste system. Exploited rural people provided the numerical support to keep their exploiters in power. Since national and state elections coincided, conservative control of national politics continued, but so did the frustration of the progressive leadership. This political process was also causing erosion of the prestige of the Congress Party and growing social discontent with a mounting threat of violence and revolt. Efforts by the Prime Minister to implement land reform were threatened or brought no response; the response to the government's efforts to enforce a new wealth tax on agricultural property was challenged by

several of the ministers and overturned by the Punjab and Haryana high court.<sup>24</sup>

Perhaps no one in India perceived what was going on as well as Mrs. Gandhi or saw better the threats an uncorrected future might imply. She took a calculated risk, first separating state and national elections and then setting the latter in 1971—a full year in advance of the regularly scheduled date. This enabled her wing of the party—now called for purposes of the election the New Congress Party—to go to the rural areas with a specific call for support of liberal and progressive parliamentary candidates while emphasizing the need to correct social injustices, including unemployment and land reform. She won an overwhelming victory.

This important political victory opens the prospect of orderly change in the Indian countryside, but it will still be difficult to achieve in practice the measures advocated by the Prime Minister. The complex state-central administration arrangement will have to be surmounted, and there may be need for amendment of the Constitution—a step hitherto found infeasible. If the central government can win and hold the loyalty of the rural masses, the opposition interests may be forced to a workable compromise.

# *Economics Explained*

245  
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## *Five*

## *The GNP*

One of the reasons for the mystification that obscures economics is the vocabulary it employs. Not only does it use common, ordinary words, such as *saving* or *investing*, in ways that are not exactly the way we use them in everyday talk, but it leans on barbarous and intimidating terms like *macroeconomics* or *gross national product*.

It would be nice if we could purge economics of its jargon, but that would be like asking doctors to tell us about our troubles in plain English. Instead, we must learn to speak a certain amount of economics—that is, to become familiar with, and easy about, some of the basic terms in which economists tell about our economic condition.

One of these is that odd word “macroeconomics.” It comes from the Greek *macro*, meaning big, and the implication is that macroeconomics therefore grapples with very big problems. It does, including such problems as inflation and recession and unemployment and economic growth. But that is not what distinguishes macro from its brother, microeconomics, whom we will meet later. Rather, macroeconomics refers to a perspective, a vantage point, that throws into high relief certain aspects of the economic system.

What does the economy look like from the macro perspective? The view is not unlike that which we have gained in the chapters just past. We look down on the economy, as from a plane, to see it as a vast landscape populated by business firms, households, government agencies. Later, when we take up the micro perspective, we will examine the selfsame landscape from a worm’s-eye, rather than a bird’s-eye view, with surprising changes in the features of the landscape that spring into sharp focus.

The purpose of looking down on the economy from the macro vantage point is that it allows us to see, more clearly than from ground level, a process of crucial and central importance. This is the ceaseless activity of production on a national scale, the never-ending creation and re-creation of the wealth by which the country replenishes and renews and expands its material life. This great central flow, on which we all depend, is called the *gross*

*national product*, often abbreviated as GNP. When TV newscasters say that GNP has gone up or down, what they mean is that the river of output has gotten larger or smaller, that we are producing more or less. Learning about *why* production varies is the first task of macroeconomics.

### WHAT GNP IS MADE UP OF

We start to unravel the question by looking more closely at the river itself. One thing is immediately clear. The flow of output arises from the cooperation of the factors of production—from the efforts of the labor force mustered from the nation's households, working with capital and land mainly owned by the nation's businesses, under the rules and laws established by the government. We can literally see the flow of production originating in ten million farms and factories, offices and agencies, over which we fly. It is from these wellsprings that the river of national output is formed.

As we look down on it, the river seems at first to be made up of an unclassifiable collection of outputs. There are hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of kinds of goods and services in the stream of production—foods of every conceivable kind, spectrums of clothing, catalogs of machinery, jumbles of junk. But at second look, we can see that this vast and variegated output can be divided into two basic sorts of production. One of them consists of goods and services that will be bought by households for their personal use: cars, haircuts, jewelry, meat. We call this branch of the river of production *consumption*, and the various goods and services in it *consumers' goods*.

The consumption branch of our production process is familiar to us. But looking again from our macro vantage point, we can see that there are goods and services that never end up in any consumer's possession. Here is a stream of outputs such as machines, roads, office buildings, bridges, not to mention smaller objects such as office furniture and office typewriters. These goods are also obviously part of our gross national product, but they are not consumers goods. We give them a special name—*investment goods* or *capital goods*—and we will soon see that they play a vital role in determining our economic well-being.

The macro view also enables us to see a rather surprising thing about the two branches of output. It is that each stream supports a different part of the economy. The flow of consumers'

goods obviously goes to restore the working strength and well-being of the nation's households. Without it, we would perish in a few weeks. But the investment flow of output also plays a restorative function. Investment output replenishes and renews the capital wealth of the nation, mainly owned by its firms and, to a smaller extent, by the government. The flow of investment output terminates in repairs to and extensions of our system of dams and roads, assembly lines and warehouses, lathes and drill presses, farm equipment and apartment houses. If that stream of output dried up, we would not perish as quickly as if consumer output disappeared, but our productive strength would soon wither, and by degrees we would be forced back to the level of an underdeveloped, then of a primitive, society.

GNP, then, consists of two main kinds of output—consumption goods and investment goods. The nearly \$3 trillions that gross national product amounted to in 1981, for instance, is nothing but the total sales value of these two basic kinds of output. It may help to think of the river of production as passing through the checkout counters of an immense supermarket. The sales ticket on each item is run up on a cash register. After a year of ringing up the checkouts, a total is taken of the tapes. That's GNP for the year.

A few things ought to be noticed about this GNP. One of them is that the flow of output through the checkout counter is comprised of both public and private goods and services. Take the flow of consumption, for example. Consumption goods or services, as the words indicate, are goods that we consume or use up, usually in a fairly short period. Most consumption goods are bought by private households for their personal use—food or clothing, for instance, or services such as movie admissions or legal advice. But some consumption outputs are bought by local or state or federal governments. Teachers' or firemen's services, for example, resemble the professional services of lawyers or oil-well fire fighters, but they are part of public consumption, not private. This is true even though households in the end get the benefit of teachers' or firemen's performances: the "person" who pays the bill for their services is the state.

The same division into private and public can be observed if we look at investment. Investment goods typically last a long time and are replaced when they wear out, as in the case with a factory.



But this is also true of a road or a dam or a city-owned incinerator plant. These are investment goods, too, but they are public, not private ones.

It's important to remember that there is an investment component in the GNP bought by government, because we will see that investment plays a very important role in determining our level of productivity. Many people speak of the public sector as if it consisted only of consumption goods that were used up, rather than of investment goods that contribute to future output. That's a misconception, and a serious one.

While we are concerning ourselves about public output, one further thing should be noted. It is that very large and important flow of government spending, mainly federal, called *transfer payments*. As we know, this is a stream of payments mainly for "safety net" purposes: Social Security payments, unemployment compensation, help for the disabled or disadvantaged, plus subsidies of various kinds. Federal transfers came to about \$280 billions in 1981, equal in size to a little less than 10 percent of GNP.

Yet when we add up GNP, we do not include any transfer payments in it! This is because transfers, as the name indicates, are payments made for social purposes, not because the recipients perform a useful service. Here is the difference: when we pay our cleaning bills, we transfer money to someone who has done work for us. So too, when we pay taxes to help finance schools or fire departments or even armies, we also pay individuals who perform services on our behalf. But the portion of the taxes we pay that is used to provide income to individuals who cannot find work, or are too infirm to support themselves, or who have reached the age of retirement, is not a reward for effort. It is a pure transfer payment—a form of institutionalized social responsibility that has become part of every advanced nation. It is, in fact, the public equivalent of private charity. But because no production takes place in exchange for a transfer payment, such as a Social Security check, transfers are simply left out when we calculate GNP. The same is true for gambling outlays, or the buying of stocks and bonds, or disaster relief. These are all large and important flows of spending, but they do not reflect the activity of production that GNP sets out to measure.

When GNP is actually calculated by Commerce Department statisticians, the river of output is imagined to pass through not one,

but four checkout lines. One of them rings up the total of personal consumption expenditures, all of them made by private households. A second register totals up all the private domestic investment output of the country, mainly business plant and equipment and new homes for families. A third checkout line keeps track of all public output, whether for consumption or investment purposes. There is really no reason why we do not separate public output into a consumption and an investment stream, as we do with private output, and it might help us better understand the government's place in the economy if we did. But we don't, so school lunch programs and new subway trackage are put together in one government output figure.

Finally, there is a fourth counter, where we ring up all the U.S. production that is sold abroad and where we subtract all the foreign production that is bought here. Usually we sell more abroad than we buy, so there is an "export balance" as part of GNP, a rivulet that arises within our shores and wends its way across the borders.

Thus the GNP figure we read about is the sum of four separate tallies (involving hundreds and hundreds of detailed reports and estimates) of our national output. In 1980, for example, the four tallies were:

| <i>GNP, 1980</i>                    | <i>\$ billions</i> |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Personal consumption expenditure    | 1,673              |
| Private domestic investment outlays | 395                |
| Government purchases                | 535                |
| Export balance                      | 23                 |
| <i>Total Gross National Product</i> | <i>2,626</i>       |

There is one last matter. In adding up our GNP, government statisticians do not record the value of every good that is produced, each time it is sold. If they did, they would have to add up the value of a bushel of wheat sold to a grain elevator, the grain sold to a miller, the flour sold to a baker, the bread sold to a supermarket, and, finally, the loaf sold to a consumer. This would be a much bigger figure than the value of the final loaf, and yet the value of the loaf clearly contains the payments that have been previously made to the baker, the miller, the grain elevator, and the farmer.

Following along this line, statisticians only keep track of *final* goods, not of intermediate ones. As we would imagine, each of the checkout counters tots up one category of these final goods: consumer goods, investment goods, government output, and net exports.

### WHAT DOES GNP TELL US?

It should be pretty clear by now what GNP consists of. What is not yet so clear is how important it is. Does the size of GNP tell us accurately if we are better off or not? Is it good if GNP goes up, and bad if it goes down?

The answer is yes and no. The yes part is easy to understand. When the value of production rises, more people are likely to be employed. When the value of total output increases, more incomes are sure to be received. So there is an evident connection between the size of GNP and the level of employment and of national incomes. The size of GNP also serves as a general measure of the amount of goods and services that we can buy, individually and collectively. That is why, all things considered, a rising GNP is always welcome, and a falling one unwelcome.

Yet GNP is also a flawed and deceiving measure of our well-being, and we should understand the weaknesses as well as the strengths of this most important single economic indicator.

To begin with, GNP deals in dollar values, not in physical units. Therefore we have to correct it for inflation. As we know from our last chapter, trouble arises when we compare the GNP of one year with that of another to determine whether or not the nation is better off. If prices in the second year are higher, GNP will appear higher even though the actual volume of output is unchanged or even lower. Thus, GNP is an accurate indicator of well-being only if we can accurately take out the inflation factor in comparing one year with another. Can we? Well, partly, but not perfectly. There is always a margin of uncertainty in comparing the "real" GNP of today with that of yesterday.

A second weakness of GNP also involves its inaccuracy as an indicator of "real" trends over time. The difficulty revolves around changes in the quality of goods and services. In a technologically advancing society, goods are usually improved over time, and new goods are constantly being introduced. At the same time, in an increasingly high-density society, the quality of other goods may be lessened: an airplane trip today is certainly preferable to one of

thirty years ago, but a subway ride is not. Government statisticians try to adjust GNP statistics for such changes in quality, but obviously there is a margin of uncertainty here too.

A third difficulty with GNP lies in its blindness to the ultimate use of production. If in one year GNP rises by a billion dollars, owing to an increase in expenditure on education, and in another year it rises by the same amount because of a rise in cigarette production, the figures in each case show the same amount of growth. Even output that turns out to be wide of the mark or totally wasteful—such as the famous Edsel car that no one wanted or military weapons that are obsolete from the moment they appear—all are counted as part of GNP.

The problem of environmental deterioration adds another difficulty. Some types of GNP growth directly contribute to pollution—cars, paper or steel production, for example. Other types of GNP growth are necessary to stop pollution—sewage disposal plants or the production of a clean internal-combustion engine.

Our conventional measure of GNP makes no distinction among such outputs. For instance, the cleaning bills we pay to undo damage caused by smoke from the neighborhood factory become part of GNP, although cleaning our clothes does not increase our well-being, but only brings it back to what it was in the first place. These problems also cloud the meaning of GNP.

Finally, GNP does not indicate anything about the distribution of goods and services among the population. Societies differ widely in how they allocate goods and services among their populations: compare Sweden and Mexico, whose total GNP's are roughly the same; or Sweden and the U.S., whose per capita GNP's are much alike. Thus to know the size of GNP or the level of GNP per capita is to know nothing about the social consequences of that GNP. A rich country may have lots of poverty which it is indifferent to, or perhaps impotent to correct. A poor country can produce a few millionaire families: some Indian princes used to receive their weight in gold from their peoples each year.

All these doubts and reservations (and some others we've left unmentioned) should instill in us a caution against using GNP as if it were a clear-cut measure of social contentment or happiness. Economist Edward Denison once remarked that perhaps nothing affects national economic welfare so much as the weather, which certainly does not get into the GNP accounts! Hence, because the U.S. may have a GNP per capita that is higher than that of, say, Japan, it does not mean that life is better here. It may be worse. In

fact, by the indices of health care or incidence of crime, it probably is worse.

Yet, with all its shortcomings, GNP is still the simplest way we possess of summarizing the overall level of activity of the economy. If we want to examine its welfare, we had better turn to specific social indicators of how long we live, how healthy we are, how cheaply we provide good medical care, how varied and abundant is our diet, and so forth—none of which we can tell from GNP figures alone. But we are not always interested in welfare, partly because it is too complex to be summed up in a single measure. For instance, the indices of health care or crime are better in Japan than in the United States, but not the index of living space per person. There are lots of other data that could be consulted. GNP has the great value of being at everyone's fingertips, and of being, for better or worse, the yardstick that has become accepted by most nations in the world. It will remain a central term in the economic lexicon for a long time to come.

## Six

# Saving and Investing

Why does GNP fluctuate? Accidents of weather or natural disasters aside, why does the river of production run fast one year and slow the next? The question begins to take us into the real purpose of macroeconomic inquiry. Now that we know what GNP is, we want to know why it behaves the way it does.

A good way to begin is to look once again at the flow of output—this time paying heed not to the actual production of goods and services that get tallied by the Commerce Department statisticians, but at the buyers standing at those checkout counters to take delivery of the nation's production. As we would expect, the nation's households are gathered at the consumption counter, its business firms cluster around the investment counter, government agencies make up the buyers at the government counter, and foreign firms and individuals and governments wait at the last counter.

Looking at GNP from this perspective, we see it not so much as a stream of goods, but as a flow of buying, of expenditure, of demand. Each and every good that moves along the river of output is drawn by someone's expenditure for it. Money makes goods move. As Adam Smith said, "Money is the great wheel of circulation."

Switching our attention from production to buying brings us much closer to an answer for why the level of GNP fluctuates. Output fluctuates because the demand for it rises and falls. This is not the *only* reason why production varies—droughts and earthquakes, strikes and technical hang-ups, government regulations may also alter the level of production. Later in this chapter we will take a first look at "supply side" economics, which emphasizes the adverse effects of taxation on the incentive to produce. But even the most determined supply sider will agree that demand—the willingness and ability to buy goods—is essential for the river of produc-

tion to flow. Thus the way to begin our investigation is by examining where demand comes from and what makes it rise or fall.

### HOUSEHOLD SAVING, BUSINESS SPENDING

We turn to the first checkout counter, where the nation's households are queuing up to buy the national output of consumers' goods and services. Where does the flow of household spending come from?

The answer is that it comes in the main from household earnings—from the wages, salaries, rents, dividends, profits, or whatever other payments householders have received from the work they have performed. It also comes from transfer payments, such as Social Security checks. The flow of spending can be augmented, at least for a while, if households actually draw down their savings accounts or liquidate stocks or bonds, but people rarely do that to buy ordinary consumers' goods. Finally, the flow can be also augmented by borrowing, so that in any one year some households will spend more than their current incomes—often the case when there is an expensive purchase such as a car.

Just the same, when we look at the sum total of all household incomes and compare it with the total of all household expenditures for consumers' goods, we discover that households as a whole (as a "sector," economists say) regularly save some portion of their incomes.\* Year in and year out, the fraction is about 5 percent. That is, even *after* households have borrowed, used their credit cards and charge accounts and all the rest, they still take in more money than they lay out.

Hence there is no difficulty in understanding where the demand comes for the part of GNP that is made up of consumers' goods. All of it comes directly out of the earnings and transfer incomes of households, supplemented by their borrowings. In fact, looking at GNP from the macro viewpoint, the question that occurs to us is not where consumer demand comes from, but what happens to the 5 percent of household earnings that do *not* get returned to the economy, but are instead saved.

That question turns our attention to the next checkout

counter, where investment goods are bought by private business. Just as the household sector buys its everyday consumption goods mainly out of its earnings, so the business sector buys its ordinary day-to-day requirements from the money it regularly takes in from its sales. We can picture the nation's business as a gigantic household, buying its needed services of labor and its inputs of raw materials or semifinished goods from the receipts it takes in by selling its finished output.

There is, however, a critical difference between the household sector and the business sector. It is that the business sector does not normally save some portion of its receipts. *On the contrary, it spends more than it takes in through its sales.* That idea is so important that it warrants saying a second time. The normal, regular, healthy, and even necessary behavior of the business community as a whole is to lay out more money for wages, salaries, raw materials, semifinished goods, land, and capital than the total amount it takes in by selling its own output.

When we put it this way, business behavior sounds very unsafe. How can even the largest corporation afford to lay out more, year after year, than it takes in from its sales? The answer is that business does not spend all its *earnings*. Part of these it too "saves" as profits, although it may disburse these profits in whole or part as dividends or as expenditures for capital goods. But over and above its normal revenues, business takes in additional financial revenues by borrowing from banks or by selling its stocks and bonds. These additional resources—the new capital funds it raises—are also spent, not to pay the regular running expenses of firms, but to pay for their capital improvements. AT&T does not use the proceeds of its bond issues to pay the wages of its phone operators, but to pay for the additions to its phone lines, its new buildings, its satellites.

Thus the process of saving and investing goes directly to the central issue of macroeconomics. Household savings are "acquired" by the business sector to finance the building of new capital goods. In turn, this becomes a primary means by which we increase our productivity and thereby cause GNP to increase. Here is the first explanation of how GNP grows and why it fluctuates. The explanation is important enough to set apart:

1. Gross national product grows because savings are converted into capital equipment.

\*This includes household spending for autos, but not for houses. They are counted as investment goods, not as consumer goods.

2. The savings that originate in the household sector are invested by the business sector.\*
3. GNP fluctuates because the process of transforming savings into investment is not always smooth or steady.

### HOW THE SECTORS INTERLOCK

These critical relationships may come as something of an anticlimax, because everyone knows that saving and investing lie at the heart of economic growth, even if the process is not often described so precisely. But there are aspects of the saving and investing process that everyone does not know, and it is these to which we should now turn.

Let's begin with saving. We think of saving as putting money in a bank or in a financial institution of some other kind. What we do not often realize is that saving has two quite distinct meanings. The first of these is indeed putting money aside—not spending it. The second is letting go of resources. As we shall see, the two aspects have quite different consequences: the first bad, the second good.

Putting money in a bank or in a new insurance policy or a new issue of stock has the *immediate* effect of creating a gap or a shortfall in demand. The gap arises because some of the earnings that householders have received from firms or government will not be returned to circulation as part of the consumption flow. In a word, saving means not consuming. As we have just seen, this doesn't mean that those savings remain permanently removed from circulation. We can picture householders on the consumption queue, lending or otherwise transferring their savings to the businessmen standing at the investment queue. But until the transfer is actually made, through the banking system or the stock market or the purchase of life insurance, saving means only that householders have taken some of their earnings and decided not to use it for buying consumption goods.

We'll return in a moment to the question of getting the money into the hands of the business queue. Meanwhile, however,

\*The degree to which the business sector depends on the savings of the household sector varies a good deal from one nation to another. In Germany and Japan, the dependence is high. In the United States it is not, and business finances itself through its own earnings to a very considerable extent.

we must also understand that saving is more than just a financial matter. It is also an action that frees labor and resources from the production of consumers goods and thereby makes them available for producing other goods.

An illustration may help us see this. Suppose, for example, that businessmen decided to double their investment spending, in anticipation of a boom. Or suppose that the government wanted to double its military spending, in anticipation of a war. It is obvious that such an increase in the spending of the business or government sectors would send the price of labor and of other materials shooting upward, as business and government struggled to get their hands on the labor force and the materials they needed. That would result in higher costs, and could start an inflationary scramble.

In fact, there is only one way in which a large increase in investment or government spending can possibly be undertaken without such a scramble: the resources and labor they need must be made available to them. One way in which this can be done is by taxing—simply taking away spending power from households and giving it to government. But industry has no taxing power. For business, the *only* way that resources can be made available on a large scale is for them to be voluntarily relinquished by the household sector. We call that process of voluntary relinquishment *saving*. (Of course householders may be tempted to give up their spending by all sorts of inducements from banks or other institutions, but it is a voluntary, not a forced act nonetheless).

Thus the really constructive aspect of saving is not so much its financial side, which merely creates a gap in spending, but its "real" side—giving up a claim on land and labor and capital for the immediate enjoyments they could produce.

This leads to the last vital link in the chain. The released resources must now be taken up and put to use by the business sector. If they are not put to use, the shortfall in demand created by the financial act of saving will simply hurt consumer sales without any compensation in the sales of other goods, and the labor and other resources released by households will stand idle. Thus the last, most active and creative part of the whole process lies in the decisions of the business sector to undertake the act of capital formation. As we will see in our next chapter, this is inherently a risky and uneven process.

So saving and investment have implications and meanings less familiar to us than the general recognition that there is a saving-and-investing process at work. Indeed, there is one unfam-

miliar aspect that we can now see is the key to how the macro system works. It is that *economic growth takes place through the coordination and cooperation of the sectors.*

As ordinary participants in the economy, we never think of coordinating our activity with that of anyone else, much less that of a sector. Nor does any businessman think of cooperating with the household or any other sector when he undertakes plans for an addition to his establishment. Nevertheless, it is by such a continuous coordination and cooperation that the system grows—and it is by imperfections in the interplay of the sectors that it falters.

The interplay can be very simply stated:

1. A gap in demand, in any sector, must be offset by additional demand in another sector. If this act of coordination does not take place, there will be a fall in demand, a decline in GNP, unemployment, and trouble.

2. An increase in investment or in government spending, assuming there is reasonably full employment, requires that resources be made available to the expanding sector. This can only be accomplished by taxing or by voluntary saving.

3. If expanding sectors spend more than the savings made available to them, there will be an upward pressure on the system, and the possibility of inflation. If the active sectors spend less than the flow of savings, there will be a downward pressure on the system, and the possibility of a recession.

Of course this is not the whole story of boom and bust, inflation and recession. We have not touched on such crucial matters as money, productivity, or the role of government. But a first *structural* understanding of the economy has begun to emerge. We can see that growth does not just happen, but comes about from a mutually supportive interaction of the sectors of the system. How that interaction is brought about and how it can be corrected when it fails to achieve the right result are the problems that will occupy us over many pages to come.

### THE GOVERNMENT ENTERS

But we are not yet done with the checkout counter. We have seen how demand for GNP arises because households spend most of their earnings and businesses spend most of their own revenues plus the savings they have acquired from the household sector. But we have not yet observed what happens at the government checkout station or at the counter where foreigners line up.

Government first. At first glimpse there is an immediate resemblance between the government sector and the sector of business or of private households. Considering government as a collection of local, state, and federal purchasing agencies, we can see that the sector buys its goods and services with its everyday receipts—its tax revenues—just as businesses and families spend their normal receipts. In an important way, however, the receipts of government are different from those of households and businesses. With rare exceptions, government does not sell its outputs, however useful they may be. Toll roads or the fees for landing at an airport are exceptions to the general rule that government distributes its services without charge. Therefore it has to assure its income by some other means, and so the government simply commandeers a portion of household or business income. The word *commandeer* may seem extreme, but we must recognize that taxes are not like ordinary charges. A household or a business may refuse to purchase the output of another household or business, but they cannot refuse to purchase the output of government. Taxes are a compulsory payment.

On the other hand, it is well to bear in mind that taxes are also the expression of the will of the electorate, however clumsily that will may be expressed. Moreover, we should bear in mind that government provides one absolutely essential service in exchange for its taxes—a service without which no household or business could earn a cent. That is the service of the maintenance of law and order and the protection of property rights. “It is only under the shelter of the civil magistrate,” wrote Adam Smith, “that the owner of . . . valuable property . . . can sleep a single night in security.”

Thus there is a profound difference between the political roles of the public and private sectors. But we must also recognize that there is a striking resemblance between the sectors with regard to their economic cooperation and coordination. Suppose, for example, that the household sector creates a demand gap by making its normal savings, and that the business sector, for whatever reason, fails to offset that gap by borrowing or gathering the savings through new stock issues and the like. *Could not the government borrow these unused savings and close the demand gap by spending them for public purposes, such as public investment?*

The answer, of course, is that it can. If there is a demand gap that must be “closed” by investment spending, what difference does it make if the investment is for a communications satellite owned by AT&T or one owned by the government, or a rail line owned by

Santa Fe or owned by Amtrak, or a private utility plant or a public one, a private factory or a public dam? There is no difference. What is essential is that the saving of one sector be spent by another, or that the investment spending of one sector be saved by another.

Of course this is not an end to the matter. There is room for a great deal of controversy as to which activities the government should pursue and which it should not. There is room for debate as to whether the government can safely spend its borrowings for consumption purposes—Social Security, for instance. There is a great deal of controversy as to whether the government may inadvertently “crowd out” private enterprise when it expands its activities.

So the question of the role of government is not easily settled. What is easily settled, however, is that the government sector *can* play exactly the same investing role as the business sector. Government *can* use its borrowing powers just like business to offset a shortfall in spending elsewhere. Whether it *should* do these things is a question we will have to consider further. But it is important to see that the government, as a sector, can—indeed must—coordinate its activities with other sectors. No economist, conservative or radical, would deny that.

One last source of demand should be looked at quickly. This is the foreign checkout counter, where overseas buyers provide demand for U.S. output by taking delivery of grain and computers and jet planes and machinery, and where foreign sellers deliver coffee and ores and oil and Toyotas to waiting American buyers. The workings of the foreign-demand part of GNP are more complicated than those of the other sectors. We will come back to this aspect later, in Chapter Nineteen. For the time being, we can simply note its presence, while we concentrate our attention on the three domestic counters—households, business, and government.

So we have come to see that saving-and-investing—we hyphenate the process to emphasize its essential linkage—is the key to economic growth and economic fluctuation. It is the key to growth because investment is the activity by which we lay down the equipment that makes us more productive. It is by investment that Adam Smith's pin factories are built, multiplying by factors of ten and a hundred and a thousand the material goods that can be fashioned in an hour of work. Saving-and-investing is also the key to fluctuation in GNP because the process does not go on at a steady

unvarying rate, but faster or slower as various factors alter the flow of saving—or more usually, as they alter the prospects for investment. That is a matter we will examine next.

Last, we can see one vitally important point. *Demand is the immediate driving force of the economy.* It is the volume of total spending—the spending of households on consumption goods, of business firms on capital goods, of government on its consumption and investment purchases, and of foreigners on net exports—that supplies the day-by-day stimulus for our gross national production. Even supply-side economists, who stress the importance of the incentive to produce and the dampening effects of taxes, would willingly concede this point. When demand falters for any reason, GNP falters, and with it, employment and incomes. Supply-side and demand-side economists differ, however, as to whether the demand generated by the normal investment activities of the private sector, once onerous taxes and regulations are removed, will suffice to generate sufficient growth. Supply siders say yes; demand siders believe that government will probably have to play a supportive role.

That's obviously an important question for later. But it's no use getting into discussions about supply-side economics until we understand still more deeply how the household and business and government sectors operate. That's the agenda to which we now turn.

## Twenty

# The Multinational Corporation

The problem of big business is one of old standing, dating back to the period just after the Civil War. But recently that problem has been given a new twist by the appearance of enormous corporations whose business empires literally straddle the globe—the multinational corporations. Take PepsiCo, for example. PepsiCo does not ship its famous product around the world from bottling plants in the United States. It produces Pepsi Cola in more than five hundred plants in over one hundred countries. When you buy a Pepsi in Mexico or the Philippines, Israel, or Denmark, you are buying an American product that was manufactured in that country.

PepsiCo is a far-flung, but not a particularly large multinational: In 1979 it was the fifty-seventh largest U.S. company. Compare it with the Ford Motor Company in 1979, a multinational that consists of a network of 60 subsidiary corporations, 40 of them foreign-based. Of the corporation's total assets of \$23 billion, over one third was invested in 27 foreign nations; and of its 494,000 employees (as of 1979), more than 175,000 were employed outside the U.S. And if we studied the corporate structures of GM or IBM or the great oil companies, we would find that they, too, are multinational companies with substantial portions of their total wealth invested in productive facilities outside the United States.

If we broaden our view to include the top one hundred American firms, we find that two thirds have such production facilities in at least six nations. Moreover, the value of output that is produced overseas by the largest corporations by far exceeds the value of the goods they still export from the United States. In 1974 sales of foreign affiliates of U.S. multinational firms (which means their wholly or partially owned overseas branches) came to over \$115 billion. In the same year our total exports of manufactures amounted to \$47 billion, only 41 percent as much as American firms produced abroad.

Another way of establishing the spectacular rise of interna-

tional production is to trace the increase in the value of U.S. foreign direct investment; that is, the value of foreign-located, U.S.-owned plant and equipment (not U.S.-owned foreign bonds and stocks). In 1950 the value of U.S. foreign direct investment was \$11 billion. In 1980 it was over \$213 billion. Moreover, this figure, too, needs an upward adjustment, because it includes only the value of American dollars invested abroad and not the additional value of foreign capital that may be controlled by those dollars. For example, if a U.S. company has invested \$10 million in a foreign enterprise whose total net worth is \$20 million, the U.S. official figures for our foreign investment take note only of the \$10 million of American equity and not of the \$20 million wealth that our equity actually controls. If we include the capital controlled by our foreign direct investment as a whole, the value of American overseas productive assets may be as large as \$300 billion. In general, something between a quarter and a half of the real assets of our biggest corporations are abroad. Effectively, American big business is today world big business.

The movement toward the internationalization of production is not, however, a strictly American phenomenon. If the American multinationals are today the most imposing (of the world's biggest five hundred corporations, over three hundred are American), they are closely challenged by non-American multinationals, as the table below shows. Phillips Lamp Works, for example, is a huge Dutch multinational company with operations in sixty-eight countries. Of its 225,000 employees, 167,000 work in nations other than the Netherlands. Royal Dutch/Shell is another vast multinational, whose home is somewhere between the Netherlands and the United Kingdom (it is jointly owned by nationals of both countries): Shell in the United States ranks among "our" top twenty biggest companies. Another is Nestlé Chocolate, a Swiss firm, 97 percent of whose \$2 billion revenues originate outside Switzerland. Measured by the size of the Swedish capital invested there, São Paulo is Sweden's second biggest industrial city!

Indeed, if we take the ten leading capital-exporting nations together (including the United States), we find that in 1967 their combined exports came to over \$130 billion, but their combined overseas production amounted to well over \$240 billion. In 1970 an economist for the International Chamber of Commerce estimated that total international production—U.S. production abroad, foreign production here, and foreign production in other foreign



countries—accounted for as much as one sixth of the total value of all world output, and a much higher fraction of the world output of industrial commodities. It is greater than that today, although we do not know exactly how large international production is.

What drives a firm to produce overseas rather than just sell overseas? One possible answer is straightforward. A firm is successful at home. Its technology and organizational skills give it an edge on foreign competition. It begins to export its product. The foreign market grows. At some point, the firm begins to calculate whether it would be more profitable to organize an overseas production operation. By doing so, it would save transportation costs. It may be able to evade a tariff by producing goods behind a tariff wall. A very important consideration is that it may be able to take advantage of lower wage rates. And so, gradually, it ceases shipping goods abroad and instead exports capital, technology, and management—and becomes a multinational.

Calculations may be more complex. By degrees, a successful company may change its point of view. First it thinks of itself as a domestic company, perhaps with a small export market. Then it builds up its exports and thinks of itself as an international company with a substantial interest in exports. Finally its perspective changes to that of a multinational, considering the world (or substantial portions of it) to be its market. In that case, it may locate plants abroad before the market is fully developed, in order to be firmly established abroad ahead of its competition.

More and more of the great corporations of the world have come to consider their "natural" markets to be the globe, not just their home countries. The struggle in automobiles, in computers, in telecommunications, in steel, is for shares of a world market. That is why we find companies such as IBM or General Motors considering the entire globe as their oyster, not only with regard to the "sourcing" of raw materials, but to the location of plants, and finally the direction of sales effort. With modern rapid jet transportation, instant global data retrieval, and highly organized systems of production and distribution, the manufacture of commodities is more and more easily moved to whatever country produces them most cheaply, whereas their sale is focused on the countries that represent the richest markets. Thus we have a transistor radio whose parts have been made in Hong Kong or South Korea or Singapore, assembled in Mexico, and sold in the United States—by a Japanese manufacturer! In early 1972—a figure already ten years out of date, but the best we have—such multinational production

### THE TOP 15 MULTINATIONALS, 1971\*

| Company                           | Total sales<br>(billions of<br>dollars) | Foreign sales<br>as percent-<br>age of total | Number of<br>countries<br>in which<br>subsidiaries<br>are located |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| General Motors                    | \$28.3                                  | 19%                                          | 21                                                                |
| Exxon                             | 18.7                                    | 50                                           | 25                                                                |
| Ford                              | 16.4                                    | 26                                           | 30                                                                |
| Royal Dutch/Shell**               | 12.7                                    | 79                                           | 43                                                                |
| General Electric                  | 9.4                                     | 16                                           | 32                                                                |
| IBM                               | 8.3                                     | 39                                           | 80                                                                |
| Mobil Oil                         | 8.2                                     | 45                                           | 62                                                                |
| Chrysler                          | 8.0                                     | 24                                           | 26                                                                |
| Texaco                            | 7.5                                     | 40                                           | 30                                                                |
| Unilever**                        | 7.5                                     | 80                                           | 31                                                                |
| ITT                               | 7.3                                     | 42                                           | 40                                                                |
| Gulf Oil                          | 5.9                                     | 45                                           | 61                                                                |
| British Petroleum**               | 5.2                                     | 88                                           | 52                                                                |
| Philips<br>Gloeilampenfabrieken** | 5.2                                     | NA                                           | 29                                                                |
| Standard Oil of California        | 5.1                                     | 45                                           | 26                                                                |

\*Latest available data  
\*\*Not a U.S. firm

was estimated to account for between 15 to 20 percent of the gross output of the capitalist world.

### ECONOMICS OF MULTINATIONAL PRODUCTION

Whether or not the multinational boom continues at its past rate, the startling rise of multinationals has already changed the face of international economic relationships. One major effect has been a dramatic shift in the geographic location and the technological character of international economic activity.

The shift away from exports to international production has introduced two changes into the international economic scene. One

change is a movement of foreign investment away from its original concentration in the underdeveloped areas of the world toward the richer markets of the developed areas. Fifty years ago, in the era of high imperialism, most of the capital leaving one country for another flowed from rich to poor lands. Thus foreign investment in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was largely associated with the creation of vast plantations, the building of railways through jungles, and the development of mineral resources.

But the growth of the multinational enterprise has coincided with a decisive shift away from investment in the underdeveloped world to investment in the industrial world. In 1897, 59 percent of American foreign direct investment was in agriculture, mining, or railways, mainly in the underdeveloped world. By the end of the 1970s our investment in agriculture, mining, and railways, as a proportion of our total overseas assets, had fallen to about 20 percent; and its geographical location in the backward world came to only 36 percent of all our overseas direct investments. More striking, almost three quarters of our huge rise in direct investment during the decades of the 1960s and 1970s were in the developed world; and the vast bulk of it was in manufacturing (and oil) rather than in plantations, railroads, or ores. Thus the multinational companies have been investing in each others' territories rather than invading the territories of the underdeveloped world. In recent years there has been a highly visible thrust of multinational investment in manufacturing facilities in a few poorer nations—big factory investments in Mexico, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Korea. Nonetheless, these investments are still much smaller than the multinationals' investments in the developed countries.

The second economic change is really implicit in the first. It is a shift away from heavy technology to high technology industries—away from enterprises in which vast sums of capital were associated with large, unskilled labor forces as in the building of railways or plantations—toward industries in which capital is perhaps less strategic than research and development, skilled technical manpower, and sophisticated management techniques typical of the computer, petrochemical, and other new industries. Our table sums up the overall shift.

Note the dramatic shift away from Latin America into Europe and away from transport, mining, and agriculture into manufacturing, a shift that would be even more accentuated if it were not still dependent on oil as a major source of the world's energy. If nuclear power or the fuel cell displace oil within the next

#### SIZE AND DISTRIBUTION OF U.S. FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

|                                              | 1929    | 1950     | 1980      |
|----------------------------------------------|---------|----------|-----------|
| Total (millions)                             | \$7,528 | \$11,788 | \$213,468 |
| <i>Distribution by market (%)</i>            |         |          |           |
| Canada                                       | 27      | 30       | 21        |
| Europe                                       | 18      | 14       | 45        |
| Latin America                                | 47      | 41       | 18        |
| Asia, Africa, Near East                      | 8       | 15       | 16        |
| <i>Distribution by industrial sector (%)</i> |         |          |           |
| Manufacturing                                | 24      | 31       | 42        |
| Petroleum                                    | 15      | 29       | 22        |
| Transport and utilities                      | 21      | 12       | n.a.      |
| Mining                                       | 15      | 9        | 3         |
| Trade                                        | 5       | 7        | 12        |
| Agriculture                                  | 12      | 5        | n.a.      |
| Other                                        | 8       | 6        | 11        |

two decades, we can expect a still more rapid decline in investment in the backward areas (especially in the Near East), and a proportionately still-larger concentration of foreign direct investment in manufacturing.

#### MULTINATIONAL PROBLEMS

Multinationals have not only changed the face of international economic activity, but also have added considerably to the problem of controlling domestic economies. Assume that a country wants to slow down its economy through monetary policies designed to reduce plant and equipment spending. A restrictive monetary policy at home may be vitiated by the ability of a multinational to borrow abroad in order to finance investment at home. Conversely, a monetary policy designed to stimulate the home economy may end up in loans that increase production in someone else's economy. Thus the effectiveness of national economic policymaking is weakened. Moreover, it is not easy to

suggest that monetary policies should be coordinated among countries, since the economic needs of different countries may not be the same: what is right for one country at a given time may be wrong for another.

More important, the jealous claims of nation-states who seek to retain national control over productive activity within their own borders and the powerful thrust of pan-national corporations for new markets in foreign territories introduce profound tensions into the international world. On the one hand, the multinational is in a position to win hard bargains from the host country into which it seeks to enter because the corporation is the main bearer of new technologies and management techniques that every nation seeks. Therefore, if one country—say, India—refused to give a would-be entrant the right to come in (and possibly cause financial losses to its established firms), the multinational may well place its plants, with their precious economic cargo of productivity, in another country, leaving the recalcitrant nation the loser in the race for international growth.

On the other hand, the power is by no means entirely one-sided, for once a multinational *has* entered a foreign nation, it becomes a *hostage* of the host country. It is now bound by the laws of that country and may find itself forced to undertake activities that are “foreign.” In Japan, for example, it is an unwritten law that workers engaged by giant corporations are never fired, but become permanent employees. Japan has been extremely reluctant to allow foreign capital to establish manufacturing operations on Japanese soil, to the great annoyance of foreign companies. But if, as now seems likely, Japan is opened to American and European capital, we can be sure that American or European corporations will be expected to behave in the Japanese way with their employees. This will not be an easy course to follow, since these corporations are not likely to receive the special support that the Japanese government gives to its own big firms.

Or take the problem of a multinational that is forced by a fall in demand to cut back the volume of its output. A decision made along strictly economic lines would lead it to close its least profitable plant. But this may bring very serious economic repercussions in the particular nation in which that plant is located—so serious that the government will threaten to take action if the plant is closed. What dictates shall the multinational then follow—those of standard business accounting or those of political accounting?

### THE UNDERDEVELOPED WORLD

All these problems take on a special significance in the relation between the multinationals and the underdeveloped world. For the multinationals are now the main conduit between the dynamic expansive thrust of Western capitalism and the restive, but still passive, periphery of Asia and Africa and Latin America. This raises problems of great difficulty. As former Under Secretary of State George Ball has candidly asked: “How can a national government make an economic plan with any confidence if a board of directors meeting five thousand miles away can, in altering its pattern of purchasing and production, affect in a major way the country’s economic life?”

For these and other reasons there is a great deal of suspicion and unease surrounding the attitude toward the multinationals on the part of the less-developed countries. And for good reason. There is something profoundly disturbing in the spectacle of breakfast foods and Coca-Cola displacing native diets, often to the detriment of people living at the edge of nutritional safety; of transistor radios and plastic ornaments pushing aside native entertainments and adornments; of Hilton hotels towering over squalid tenements; of ugly and monotonous factory labor driving out peasant and artisan skills and crafts. Anyone who has traveled in the underdeveloped world cannot help but be struck by the careless violence with which the multinationals have uprooted established ways, exposing untrained and unready people to the hurricane winds of modern technology and modern values—and all in the name of profit, certainly not in that of human development.

And yet it is too easy to wax indignant before we have thought the matter over. The societies that are being torn apart by the multinationals have indeed great traditions of solidarity and stability—if they did not, they would have perished long ago—but they have achieved their endurance by harsh and exploitative ways of their own, keeping their lower castes and classes, and their women, in conditions of severe oppression and ignorance. From this perspective, the multinationals, for all their ruthless exploitation of naive appetites and docile labor, are also carriers of social relationships and technical abilities without which the underdeveloped world would remain hopelessly subordinate to the invincible material and organizational capabilities of the West.

But are there not alternatives to the hegemony of the

multinationals—more effective ways of transferring technologies and social skills to the peoples of Africa and Southeast Asia, China and Latin America? The question really raises for examination the complex relationship between the core of capitalist nations and the periphery of the regions into which capitalism has partly penetrated. This relationship, historically of great importance for capitalism, is now in a period of stress and strain as the underdeveloped world seeks to loosen its dependency on the West. To explore the problem in depth would take us far beyond the scope of our book. Moreover, whatever that relationship has been, over the near-term future there seems to be no workable alternative to the present tension-ridden mutual dependence of core and periphery. Socialist governments in all the underdeveloped regions have tried to institute the process of economic and social development without recourse to the conduits of capitalist enterprise, but the results have been disappointing at best and catastrophic at worst. However inadequate or lopsided the development process may be when it occurs through the channels of the multinationals, so far it has been superior to the development that can be conjured up from scratch, or to the technology and organization that pour in from regimes such as the Soviet Union. The disrupting effects and the social deformations that result from connections with IBM or Exxon may be easier to deal with, in the end, than those of Ministries of Computer Technology or of Energy.

To make this assertion is not to denigrate the efforts of the developing countries to create independent socialist governments. But the practical reach of these governments, for a considerable period, is more likely to be effective when applied as a corrective to the abuses inseparable from a dependence on multinationals than as a wholly independent alternative to them.

The multinationals will therefore occupy a strategic position in world economic affairs for a long time. Yet in the end, it seems doubtful that the world will be made in their image of hierarchical efficiency. There are many things that the multinationals can do which the emerging nations cannot, but there is one central thing an emerging nation can do that the multinationals cannot. This is to command the devotion of huge masses of people. Men and women will die for the image of their nation, but they will not die for the profits of a company.

Thus, perhaps what we must say in conclusion is that at this stage of history, both nation-states and huge corporations are

necessary. They seem to be the only ways in which we can organize mankind to perform the arduous and sustained labor without which humanity itself would rapidly perish. Perhaps after the long age of capital accumulation has finally come to an end and sufficient capital is available to all peoples, we may be able to think seriously about dismantling the giant enterprise and the nation-state, both of which overpower the individual with their massive organized strength. However desirable that ultimate goal may be, in our time both state and corporation promise to be with us, and the tension between them will be part of the evolutionary drama of our period of history.

## LESSON 4

### DIFFERENTIATING HELP AND HINDRANCE

#### Learning Objectives

The participants will:

1. Discover the dynamics of the helping relationship from the point of view of the "helper" and the "helpee."
2. Explore the affects of colonialism on rural development progress in Tanzania.
3. Develop factors that outsiders should consider when initially becoming involved in a rural development situation.

#### Activities

1. Simulation - The Nature of the Helping Relationship (40 min)  
Participants will divide into partners. The class will walk over to the Newman Center for a drink. One partner will be blindfolded and assisted by the other partner from the moment the class leaves until they return. They will go to the Newman Center and spend 20 minutes there, talking about any thing they like. After 20 minutes at the Newman Center the class returns to the classroom.
2. Discussion of simulation (20 min)
  - a) How did each partner feel? How did the helper actually help and how did the helpee convey when there was enough help or not?
  - b) list considerations on newsprint.
3. Break (10 min)
4. Discussion of Hyden's view of peasantry. (30 min)
  - a) How does he view the nature of the helping relationship between government, colonist and peasant?
  - b) How does this relationship contribute to the underdevelopment of the peasantry?
5. Triads (30 min)  
Task - generate list of factors that outsiders should consider when becoming involved in a rural development situation, regardless of the sector or task.
6. Process Consultation (20 min)
  - a) Observations about this session
  - b) likes and dislikes of class assignments.
7. Handout Homework #4 - Designing an Approach to Rural Development. (10 min)

### Materials

1. Water and cups.
2. Newsprint.
3. Blindfolds.

## HOMEWORK 4

### DESIGNING A RURAL DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

#### 1. Read:

1. Hyden, chapters 4 and 5, pp.96-155.
2. Gurley, pp.5-25.
3. Korten, pp.162-180.
4. Chambers, pp. 47-101.
5. Moris, pp. 47-65.
6. Gudeman article.

#### 2. Write:

In 3-5 pages develop a design strategy that you would employ to address your rural development case and justify why you think your strategy would be effective.

#### 3. Compare and contrast Hyden and Gurley for debate at next class.

## *Rural Development in China 1949-75, and the Lessons to be Learned from it*

JOHN G. GURLEY

The precarious position of the Chinese peasants down through the ages and the oppressive conditions under which they laboured are too well known to require much comment from me. One can read at length about their diseases, their illiteracy, their superstitions and fatalistic attitudes, the natural disasters and periodic famines that all but wiped them out, in Han (206 B.C.-A.D. 220), T'ang (A.D. 618-906), or Sung (A.D. 906-1279) records, and indeed right down to yesterday.

Nevertheless, the records also reveal, if one examines them closely, an ingenious peasantry producing a substantial surplus during most of this long period, not of course for itself, but mostly for the sustenance and pleasures of a few people who made up the ruling classes—the Emperor and his family and retainers, bureaucrats, landlords, money-lenders, and military officers. This small but powerful ruling group pumped the surplus out of the countryside through taxes, rents, interest, corvée labour, enslavement, extortion, and by other means fair and foul. It may well be that, on the average over these many centuries, one third of what this peasantry produced was taken away from it for the enjoyment and support of less than two per cent of the population. What was left to the peasants was usually just enough for their survival, but from time to time not enough even for that. Undernourishment was common, starvation not unusual.

Let R. H. Tawney, who with much acumen observed the Chinese peasants in the early 1930s, have the last word:

Exaggeration is easy. Privation is one thing, poverty to the point of wretchedness—*la misère*—another. A sturdy and self-reliant stock may grow in a stony soil. But, when due allowance has been made for the inevitable misconceptions, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that a large proportion of Chinese peasants are constantly on the brink of actual destitution. They are, so to say, a propertied proletariat, which is saved—when it is saved—partly by its own admirable ingenuity and fortitude, partly by the communism of the Chinese family, partly by reducing its consumption of necessities and thus using up its physical capital ...

It is true, however, that, over a large area of China, the rural population suffers horribly through the insecurity of life and property. It is taxed by one ruffian who calls himself a general, by another, by a third, and, when it has bought them off, still owes taxes to the government; in some places actually more than twenty years' taxation has been paid in advance. It is squeezed by dishonest officials. It must cut its crops at the point of the bayonet, and hand them over without payment to the local garrison, though it will starve without them. It is forced to grow opium in defiance of the law, because its military tyrants can squeeze heavier taxation from



## 6 CHINA'S ROAD TO DEVELOPMENT

opium than from rice or wheat, and make money, in addition, out of the dens where it is smoked. It pays blackmail to the professional bandits in its neighbourhood; or it resists, and, a year later, when the bandits have assumed uniform, sees its villages burned to the ground ...

There are districts in which the position of the rural population is that of a man standing permanently up to the neck in water, so that even a ripple is sufficient to drown him. The loss of life caused by the major disasters is less significant than the light which they throw on the conditions prevailing even in normal times over considerable regions.<sup>1</sup>

### I. EXPLANATIONS OF PERSISTENT POVERTY BEFORE 1949

There were of course reasons for the persistence of this deprivation and misery. The conventional explanation is that, even with the highest efficiency in carrying out the best-intentioned policies to alleviate rural poverty, the job would have been a most difficult one for any government. During the past century, for example, successive governments had to contend with several rebellions, civil wars, the Japanese invasions, and the continued encroachment of other foreign imperialist powers on the economy. The argument continues that, when one considers all of this turmoil within the context of how widespread and deeply embedded poverty was in the society, it is no wonder that very little was accomplished.

While this argument has some validity, it represents a very narrow view of the social forces at work in this period. For the disruptive events themselves emanated partly from the failure of the Chinese authorities to alleviate the poverty. It was a two-way street. The battles that went on were fed by the rural misery, but these struggles in turn contributed to further political disintegration and so to a growing inability of governments to shore up the crumbling base.

However, even with this reformulation, the foregoing is only a part of the total story. Most of the rest of it has to do with the "best intentions" assumed above. Social scientists these days usually suppose that all governments really want economic development, and, if they do not achieve it, then it must be because the problems are unusually difficult to solve, or that solutions take a rather long time to work themselves out. Persistence and technical knowledge are what is required for success. This supposition, however, does not adequately take account of the class structures of societies, the often conflicting aims that exist among the various classes, and the class nature of "success" and "failure". When poverty is looked at from the standpoint of the ruling classes, it may not be a failure of the system at all but rather a prerequisite for the continuation of their accumulation of wealth, their privileges, and their social, political, and economic domination of the society.

This is partly because poverty is often the carcass left from wealth acquisition; or, at best, it is the stagnant backwaters of society, not yet touched by a development process that stresses private profit-making and hence efficiency and "building on the best". But poverty persists also because it is closely associated with peasant characteristics which are highly supportive of the existing class structures and hence of the privileges and wealth of the dominant classes. I refer to the peasants' illiteracy, passivity, obedience, fatalism; to their lack of awareness of the world around them and therefore to their propensity for mythical and spiritual explanations of personal hardships and disasters;

to their lack of organization, their willingness to work hard for very little; to their being easy set-ups for all sorts of manipulation by their "superiors".

A thorough-going programme of economic development, which is spread widely and reaches deeply into the structure of society, is a dangerous thing to ruling classes, for it tends to undermine the very attributes of the masses of people that nourish the wealthy and powerful. Such a programme awakens people, and it is often best that they doze; it mobilizes people for gigantic economic efforts, and such organization can be turned into political subversion; it sweeps away illusions, but may open their eyes to the causes of their own oppression.

Furthermore, any serious economic development programme that involves industrialization within an agrarian and commercial society threatens existing class structures by creating new economic bases from which arise new social classes, and weakens the economic foundations which support the present dominant classes. Economic development stirs up the society, establishing new classes that compete with the old order, socially, politically, and economically.

These considerations were applicable to China prior to 1949. The peasant misery of that country during the century preceding the Communist victory was due not only to the inherent difficulty, during a century of violence, of raising millions of people out of abject poverty, but, more important, to the almost complete lack of interest by the Chinese governments and foreign investors in doing any such thing. The peasants remained poor in large part because poverty served a purpose; or, at best, because it did not interfere with the wealthier classes extracting the economic surplus from the countryside.

## II. CHANGES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE SINCE 1949

That degrading and humiliating sort of peasant misery is now gone from China, which is not to say, of course, that a rural paradise has miraculously arisen. Chinese peasants are still very poor, especially by the standards of industrial countries; the struggle against nature goes on, and some Chinese peasants every now and then find themselves on the losing end; and there are still plenty of problems to overcome and small areas of severe poverty to eliminate.

However, the overriding economic fact about people in China today is that for over twenty years, for the first time in their lives, almost all have had a decent standard of living in the basic necessities—food, clothing, housing, health care, education, culture, and recreation. There is no longer starvation; no longer infanticide, cannibalism, selling children into virtual slavery; no longer blank ignorance. The Chinese now have what is in effect an insurance policy against pestilence, famine, and other disasters. They have all risen together; it is difficult to see that anyone has been left far behind. And the rural areas are alive with water-control projects, small industries, transportation and communication networks, and plans for everything else that promise fuller lives for the peasants, who, while not prosperous, are prospering, awake, and optimistic. Some of the gains of the Chinese economy since 1952 are shown in Table 1.

How did this happen? I shall first present some social and political, as well as economic, reasons for this rural transformation, reasons which I believe to be basic to any understanding of what has happened in China. After that, I shall turn to a closer look at the economic policies that have changed the countryside.

## 8 CHINA'S ROAD TO DEVELOPMENT

TABLE 1. Some output data of the People's Republic of China:  
selected years, 1952-75  
(in million metric tons unless otherwise specified)

|      | Grain | Steel | Crude oil | Chemical fertilizer | Cotton | Industrial production index<br>1957=100 | Cement | Coal | Electric power<br>(in kwh) |
|------|-------|-------|-----------|---------------------|--------|-----------------------------------------|--------|------|----------------------------|
| 1952 | 154   | 1.4   | 0.4       | 0.2                 | 1.3    | 48                                      | 2.9    | 66   | 7.3                        |
| 1957 | 185   | 5.4   | 1.5       | 0.8                 | 1.6    | 100                                     | 6.9    | 131  | 19.3                       |
| 1959 | 165   | 13.4  | 3.7       | 1.9                 | 1.2    | 173                                     | 12.3   | 300  | 42.0                       |
| 1965 | 210   | 12.5  | 11.0      | 7.6                 | 1.9    | 199                                     | 15.3   | 220  | 42.0                       |
| 1969 | 220   | 16.0  | 20.4      | 11.3                | 1.8    | 266                                     | 18.9   | 258  | 60.0                       |
| 1975 | 270   | 26.0  | 74.5      | 27.9                | 2.3    | 502                                     | 40.0   | 427  | 121.0                      |

Sources: CIA, *People's Republic of China: Handbook of Economic Indicators*, August 1976. The grain figure for 1975 is from US Department of Agriculture, *People's Republic of China Agricultural Situation*, May 1977, p.3.

### III. PREREQUISITES FOR THE TRANSITION

The Chinese peasants have been able to improve their lives over the past two decades because they carried out a revolution of blood and fire, the only way which enabled them to break the bonds that retarded their economic progress. This violent revolution was necessary but not sufficient to transform an agrarian society into an industrial one. The following five developments, however, established a political-social-economic framework for such a transition.

1. After 1949 the Chinese Communist Party fashioned itself and a government into organs that represented the masses and *wanted* thorough-going and penetrating economic development for the purpose of improving the lives of almost everyone. This, perhaps, is the most important thing that one can say in this regard. The Communist Party did not represent and work on behalf of a small group of merchants and traders, or a class of landed proprietors and money-lenders, or foreign interests allied with domestic entrepreneurs; instead it gained victory through a nation-wide revolution of peasants against domestic oppression and foreign imperialism, and it continued to be a party representing the interests of these masses of poor people. That may not be exactly an *economic* determinant of peasant prosperity, but there is nothing more important.

2. The government and party proved to be efficient, honest, and well organized in carrying out its development programmes. Some inefficiencies occurred, some bribes were taken, and some confusion sown, but on the whole the party and its cadres performed remarkably well in translating plans into actions.

3. The party demonstrated its ability to mobilize the enthusiasm and energy of the masses with worthy and inspiring goals; to educate and give good health and improved nutrition to the people, enabling them to pursue these goals. It liberated women and youth from their previous oppression, and liberated most people from debilitating beliefs in "ghosts and monsters".

4. Through land reform, nationalization of industry, and cooperativization in the countryside, along with good use of monetary and fiscal powers, the government and

party generated a high savings rate, and with a fair amount of efficiency used the savings for investment across the board, in heavy industry, light industry, and agriculture.

5. The USSR aided China substantially during the 1950s. The bulk of this "aid" was Soviet exports for Chinese goods (rather than Chinese securities), but the Soviet goods consisted of over 150 complete industrial plants accompanied by thousands of Soviet technicians. Soviet aid was designed to establish, in a short period of time, the industrial base for a full-scale economic development effort. It remains, despite the subsequent rancour between the two countries, as an outstanding example of how one country can help another, if it really wants to.

#### IV. SPECIFIC POLICIES IN RURAL AREAS: 1949-75

The developments just described established the general environment in which specific economic policies were fashioned and carried out for rural improvement. These economic policies, however, were not neatly laid out in the early 1950s, all ready for sequential implementation later on. Instead, they have had at times an *ad hoc* nature; they have been fought over at the leadership level; and some have not worked well and have had to be replaced. But, even allowing for this, the policies in general have achieved a remarkable transformation in the rural areas.

These policies can be grouped into four categories: land reform (1949-52), collectivization-communization (1955-9), capital formation for agriculture (1960-75), and the alteration of terms of trade between agriculture and industry in favour of agriculture and the peasants (1953-75). The first set of policies redistributed wealth and income from the rich to the poor, eliminated the former ruling classes and, by so doing, raised both peasant consumption and rural savings. The second set of policies raised output in the rural areas mainly by encouraging better utilization of the labour supply. The third set further boosted agricultural output by increasing capital goods and other inputs available to this sector and by establishing small industries almost everywhere in the countryside. Finally, throughout most of the period, the terms of trade were steadily turned in favour of the peasants by the raising of prices paid by the state for agricultural products and the lowering of prices of many goods purchased by the peasants. In addition, the tax burden on the peasants was steadily reduced. Thus, the masses of peasants initially gained control; their labour was then better utilized; increasing agricultural inputs were next acquired by them; and they gradually gained throughout the period by more favourable terms of trade.

The following four sections consider, without much detail, these four sets of agricultural policies. Section IX illustrates, as an example of some of the above policies, the transformation of one rural county in China, Tsunhua, located about 100 miles from Peking. Finally, the possible relevance of all this for other poor countries is taken up in the last section.

#### V. THE NATURE AND IMPACT OF LAND REFORM: 1949-52

The primary objectives of the Agrarian Reform Law of 1950 were to eliminate the feudal landlord system in the countryside, improve the lives of the poor, and develop agricultural production as a precondition for the country's industrialization. Land

reform took not only land from landlords and some rich peasants, but also their draft animals, farm implements, houses, and grain—and redistributed them all to middle and poor peasants. Altogether, 300 million peasants received 700 million *mou* of land<sup>2</sup> (about 45 per cent of total arable land) formerly owned by perhaps 10–12 million persons; of all land redistributed, two-thirds was taken from landlords and one-third from rich peasants; two-thirds of this land was given to poor peasants and one-third to middle peasants. Many rich peasants retained much of their land and other assets (but not their hired labourers) and so, even after the reform, were on the whole still better off than the middle and poor peasants. Further, since the land reform regulations did not forbid the resale or the renting of land afterwards, some of the redistributed land gravitated back to the rich peasants. Landlords, on the other hand, as a class, were wiped out by mass peasant struggles against them, confiscation, and sometimes execution.

It is important to stress that land reform was not simply legislation passed and carried out from above, for it was much more than that. It was a revolutionary movement involving millions of peasants struggling against their former oppressors, gaining confidence and understanding in the process, and taking actions themselves against the landlords which committed them to new lives and new ways, and which made the entire movement quite irreversible. Keith Buchanan quotes Liu Shao-ch'i on this as follows:

In carrying out the land reform our Party did not take the simple and easy way of merely relying on administrative decrees and of "bestowing" land on the peasants. For three solid years after the establishment of the People's Republic of China, we applied ourselves to awakening the class consciousness of the peasants ... We consider the time spent was absolutely necessary. Because we had used such a method the peasant masses stood up on their own feet, got themselves organized, closely followed the lead of the Communist Party and the People's Government, and took the reins of government and the armed forces in the villages firmly into their hands. ... The broad masses of the awakened peasants held that exploitation, whether by landlords or by rich peasants, was a shameful thing. Conditions were thus created which were favourable to the subsequent socialist transformation of agriculture and helped shorten to a great extent the time needed to bring about agricultural cooperation.<sup>3</sup>

A few results of the land reform are shown in Table 2, which also contains definitions of terms used above.

The land reform, through its redistribution of rural assets, not only broke the domination of the landlord-gentry class and transferred power for the first time to poor and middle peasants, but it also immediately raised the consumption level of most peasants and at the same time increased rural savings available for investment. These were results principally of wealth redistribution and not of gains in total output flowing from land reform, for such gains were not substantial, though there were output gains that came from the cessation of civil strife and the reconstruction and repair of dikes, irrigation canals, and equipment. Much of the increase in rural savings was captured by the state for investment purposes. Thus, land reform contributed in a major way to the higher investment ratios of these earlier years.

The ratio of net investment to national income rose rapidly from perhaps 1–2 per cent in 1949 to around 20 per cent in 1953. After that, despite the cooperativization

TABLE 2. Some results of land reform in China: 1949-52

|                                  | Percentage of households | Share of crop area owned |                | Average crop area owned |                  |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|------------------|
|                                  |                          | Before reform %          | After reform % | Before reform mou       | After reform mou |
| Landlords                        | 2.6                      | 28.7                     | 2.1            | 116.10                  | 11.98            |
| Rich peasants                    | 3.6                      | 17.7                     | 6.4            | 35.75                   | 26.30            |
| Middle peasants                  | 35.8                     | 30.2                     | 44.8           | 15.81                   | 18.53            |
| Poor peasants and farm labourers | 57.1                     | 23.5                     | 46.8           | 6.25                    | 12.14            |
| Other                            | 0.9                      | 0.0                      | 0.0            |                         |                  |

Source. Peter Schran, *The Development of Chinese Agriculture, 1950-1959* (University of Illinois Press, 1969) pp. 21, 22, and 25.

Households were classified by amounts of income and wealth, sources of income, and size of household.

Landlords: Owners of land not engaged in labour, who depend on exploitation for their livelihood—that is, land rent, money-lending, hiring of labour, etc.

Rich peasants: Similar to landlords, except that exploitation chiefly took the form of hiring long-term labourers and it constituted somewhat lesser shares of their total incomes.

Middle peasants: Owned all or a portion of the land they worked, or perhaps none at all. They depended for a living wholly or mainly on their own labour.

Poor peasants: Rented land for cultivation and were exploited by others through rent and interest.

Farm labourers: Owned neither land nor farm implements; depended wholly or mainly on the sale of their labour for their living.

1 mou of land = one-sixth of an acre or one-fifteenth of a hectare.

drive in the countryside during 1955-6, the ratio rose very little more until 1958-9, when communes were introduced. Thus, the initial rapid increase in saving and investment came in the very early years of the period 1949-57.

Land reform had much to do with this, for it redistributed wealth and hence income from the rich to the poor, and much of what was redistributed was captured by the state in savings, through taxation, profits of state enterprises, differential pricing, and private savings. The land reform eliminated the luxury consumption of the rich, raised by lesser amounts the basic consumption of the poor, and made much of the rest available to the state for investment.

Victor Lippit has computed that the income flow to the rural propertied classes, in rent, interest, and farm business profits, plus net taxes to the state, were as much as 19 per cent of national income, just a decade before land reform.<sup>4</sup> This income flow, which was almost entirely consumed, was redirected downward, after land reform, by rural-asset redistribution to middle and poor peasants. From there it found its way into investment via several channels: self-financed investment in agriculture; increased tax payments to the state; increased profits of government and private enterprises, which wholly or partly reverted to the state budget; increased profits of state purchasing agencies (mostly grain purchases); and increased financial asset holdings of peasants, which released real resources for investment, financed by borrowed funds from the banking system. Land reform probably contributed over one-third of the total savings in 1952 (and, presumably, in later years, too) to the investment programme.

It bears repeating: the Chinese land reform did not give land to the poor peasants. It encouraged them to organize themselves to take it, and in the process to crush their former oppressors. This was the prerequisite for later socialist development in the



countryside, for, without it, the old class structures and wealth ownership patterns would have been regenerated by the persistence of old attitudes and of institutions favourable to the rich.<sup>3</sup>

#### VI. RURAL COLLECTIVIZATION AND LABOUR MOBILIZATION: 1952-9

After land reform, the Chinese leaders, in four stages, transformed small private holdings into large-scale communes. The first step was the encouragement of mutual aid teams, which were units of several households, the function of which was to pool privately-owned resources in order to compensate for shortages of labour and other inputs during the rush seasons of planting and harvesting. This was at first done on a temporary, seasonal basis, the teams being dissolved at the end of the planting or harvesting period, but later some of the teams were organized on a permanent, year-round basis. These permanent teams were somewhat larger than the others and often held some capital goods and animals as common property. By 1954 almost 10 million mutual aid teams, about half of them seasonal and half permanent, were in operation, and they comprised 58 per cent of all peasant households.

The second stage was the formation of elementary agricultural producers' cooperatives (APCs), some of which were organized as early as 1950 but most of which were formed in the second half of 1955. They comprised several mutual aid teams of around 30 to 40 households, that is, a village. Land and other capital goods continued to be privately owned, but these assets were now pooled in the APCs for use according to annual plans prepared by central management. Peasants were compensated according to their labour and their contributions of land, implements, animals, etc., labour however, usually claiming most of the output. By early 1956, almost all peasant families were in these APCs.

The third stage, in 1956-7, saw the consolidation of elementary APCs into advanced APCs, each comprising several small villages or perhaps one large village, varying in size from 100 to 300 households. In the advanced APCs, peasants held title to a share in the collective equity, and they no longer had any private claim on their former holdings of land and other capital goods. Accordingly, net earnings were distributed to the peasants only on the basis of work done, and the earnings withheld, including those contributed by capital goods, were collectively owned. The advanced APCs, owing to their large size, were able to withhold larger percentages of income for collective purposes. Similarly, the payment of the agricultural tax became a collective obligation, whereas it had been an individual responsibility in the elementary APCs.

In the final step, during 1958-9, people's communes were established. The commune, as the Chinese have stated, "is the basic unit of the social structure of our country, combining industry, agriculture, trade, education and the military. At the same time, it is the basic organization of social power". Filling this out somewhat more, the communes were organized to provide larger, more efficient units for carrying out large-scale water-control projects and the building of native-type factories and workshops throughout the countryside. They were organized, moreover, to provide additional labour through the establishment of communal mess halls and other communal services which released many women from household tasks. The communes also became the basic governmental unit; they ran factories, schools, banks, controlled their

own militia; and they served to weaken the patriarchal family unit and, in general, peasants' identification only with very small groups. Further, a half-wage, half-supply system was set up, which provided free supplies of many of the necessities to peasants quite aside from whether they worked or not, the remainder of income being distributed according to work done.

The communes were quickly organized during the Great Leap Forward, which was an all-out effort by the Chinese to industrialize rural areas, to build a large iron and steel industry, to grow record agricultural crops, to raise the education, health, and cultural levels of the peasants, and to catch up within 15 years to the leading industrial nations of the world.

The objective is to build China in the shortest possible time into a great socialist country with modern industry, modern agriculture, and modern science and culture. ... To carry out our socialist construction at a high speed naturally requires constant readjustment to the relations of production and constant adaptation of the superstructure to the developing economic base. The fundamental thing, however, is to develop the productive forces rapidly. ... The objectives are to abolish exploitation of man by man, and to build a classless society in which the difference between city and countryside, between mental and manual work will disappear and the ideal of "from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs," will become the order of the day.<sup>6</sup>

Within a short time, over 26,000 communes were organized, each containing around 5,000 households on the average, but the range was from 1,500 to 10,000. The former advanced APCs became 500,000 production brigades within the communes, and the former elementary APCs became 3 million production teams.

To summarize, during the 1950s the basic organizational unit in the countryside was enlarged from individual peasant households, to mutual aid teams (at first temporary and later permanent), to production teams (former elementary APCs), to production brigades (former advanced APCs), and finally to communes. The basis for the distribution of income also changed from distribution according to work and asset ownership, to distribution according to work only, to distribution according to work and needs; and, at the same time, the value of a peasant's work points was based on the work done by increasingly larger groups.

Some of these advances, however, were reversed in the early 1960s, during the downturn of economic activity, when Maoist ideology waned. Communes were greatly increased in number and so reduced in size of population; decision-making authority was moved down to lower units; income distribution by need was de-emphasized; communal services were greatly reduced; and private incentives in several forms were restored.

The enlargement of rural units and the collectivization which accompanied it during the 1950s no doubt, on balance, raised the standard of living of the masses of peasants, but the policies probably did not increase by much the economic surplus from agriculture until the Great Leap Forward in 1958-9. There were both positive and negative features of this series of rural programmes, but I shall concentrate only on the principal advantage gained by the economy from the rural policies just described, namely the fuller and more efficient use of the rural labour force.

Throughout the 1950s, the percentage of the rural population comprising the labour force tended to decline sharply owing to the rapid absorption of children of



school age by the school system. However, since children did not work the long hours of adults or as effectively, this downward tendency was less in actual output than it was in sheer numbers of workers. In any case, it remained simply a tendency, for it was more than offset by the rapid growth of women in the labour force during the 1950s as rural collectivization and communization proceeded.

These rural policies also induced increases in the total number of days worked each year by greatly raising the number of labour-days for each employed peasant in general and for each female in particular. The total expansion effect, coming from the increased employment of women and the greater number of days worked for each employed person, was extremely large, as can be seen in Table 3. In fact, under normal circumstances, total annual labour-days would have risen by no more than 2-3 billion from 1950 to 1959. Instead, the rise was 29 billion. Furthermore, Peter Schran believes that even this might well understate the full impact of communization in this regard.

TABLE 3. *Rural population, employment, and labour-days:*  
1950, 1955, 1957 and 1959

|                             | (1)<br>Peasant<br>population | (2)<br>Total<br>employed<br>peasants | (3)<br>Average<br>annual<br>labour-days | (4)<br>Total<br>annual<br>labour-days | (5)<br>Index of<br>col. (4)<br>1952 = 100 |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 1950                        | 479.7m                       | 22.6m                                | 119.0                                   | 26.5b                                 | 97.5                                      |
| 1955                        | 523.8                        | 243.3                                | 121.0                                   | 29.4                                  | 108.4                                     |
| 1957                        | 541.3                        | 260.3                                | 159.5                                   | 41.5                                  | 152.8                                     |
| 1959                        | 539.6                        | 309.1                                | 189.0                                   | 58.4                                  | 215.0                                     |
| Collectivization,<br>1955-7 | +17.5                        | +17.0                                | +38.5                                   | +12.1                                 | +44.4                                     |
| Communization,<br>1957-9    | -1.7                         | +48.8*                               | +29.5                                   | +16.9                                 | +62.2                                     |

Source. Peter Schran, *The Development of Chinese Agriculture, 1950-1959*, Chapter 3

\*Increase owing largely to increased mobilization of women and the part-time employment of school children.

TABLE 4. *Indices of the structure of rural employment by labour-days:*  
1950, 1955, 1957 and 1959  
(Total labour-days in 1952 = 100)

|      | Total<br>labour-days | Farm<br>work | Subsidiary<br>work* | Corvée,<br>basic<br>construction | Other† |
|------|----------------------|--------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|--------|
| 1950 | 97.5                 | 75.2         | 19.2                | 3.1                              | 0      |
| 1955 | 108.4                | 83.0         | 21.0                | 3.9                              | 0.4    |
| 1957 | 152.8                | 113.4        | 25.8                | 9.7                              | 3.8    |
| 1959 | 215.0                | 151.7        | 29.5                | 12.3                             | 21.4   |

Source. Peter Schran, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

\*Includes gathering activities, domestic handicrafts, administration, professional services, care of private plots and livestock.

†Includes collective affairs, communal services, and communal industry.

The increased labour was employed not only in basic farm work and in subsidiary occupations, but increasing amounts of it were set to work on large-scale water-control projects, basic construction, and rural industrial efforts; and much labour was increasingly used for communal services—administration, cultural activities, medical care, education, etc. These data are in Table 4. Consequently, this mobilization of additional labour-days served to raise not only agricultural input but also capital formation in the countryside, and it also increased the communal services offered to the peasants. Instead of fiddling away their time individually during off-seasons, the peasants were mobilized into large units for community and area projects.

The gains in total labour-days worked, however, did not result in commensurate increases in total output, for other inputs did not keep pace with labour inputs, and so resulted in diminishing marginal returns to labour, the additional labour was sometimes employed inefficiently and at tasks with quite low returns, and there was some loss of incentives to work hard during 1958–9. Nevertheless, total production in the rural areas did increase considerably throughout most of the 1950s, and capital formation made some impressive gains toward the end of the period. A few indicators of rural activity during the 1950s are recorded in Table 5.

TABLE 5. *Some indicators of rural activity: 1952–9*

|      | Grain output<br>(millions of<br>metric tons) | Area of irrigation<br>(millions of <i>mou</i> ) | Gross value of<br>agricultural output<br>(billions of yuan) |
|------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1952 | 154                                          | 320                                             | 48.3†                                                       |
| 1953 | 157                                          | 330                                             | 49.9                                                        |
| 1954 | 161                                          | 350                                             | 51.6                                                        |
| 1955 | 175                                          | 370                                             | 55.5                                                        |
| 1956 | 183                                          | 480                                             | 58.3                                                        |
| 1957 | 186                                          | 520                                             | 60.4                                                        |
| 1958 | 250(200)*                                    | 1,000                                           | 67.1‡                                                       |
| 1959 | 270(170)*                                    | 1,070                                           | 78.3‡                                                       |

Source. Nai-Ruenn Chen, *Chinese Economic Statistics* (Aldine, 1967), pp. 338–9, 289, 364.

\*These are Western estimates, which are probably fairly accurate.

†Figures in this column are in 1952 prices.

‡Figures in 1957 prices.

## VII. INDUSTRIALIZATION OF THE RURAL AREAS: 1960–75

Adverse weather conditions which lasted for three years ("the worst in a century"), the pull-out of the Soviet advisers, and disincentives of peasants arising out of the extremes to which some Great Leap policies were pushed—all of these combined in 1959–60, first to reduce agricultural output, including the commercial crops which fed light industry, then to hit heavy industry as the Soviet advisers withdrew with their blueprints and expertise. By late 1960 and early 1961, the economy had been damaged so severely that the Chinese leadership (probably no longer dominated by Mao), in the face of a decline of national output of around 20–5 per cent, altered its economic priorities to place agriculture first, light industry second, and heavy industry last. This

officially changed the priorities that had been established under Soviet-type planning during the 1950s, in which heavy industry was the centrepiece and agriculture was relatively neglected so far as state investment funds were concerned.<sup>7</sup>

These new rankings, however, did not reflect any diminished interest in industrialization. Rather they served notice that the top priority would go to those industrial pursuits that directly served agriculture, either by producing modern inputs for that sector or by processing output coming from it. Industries farther out would be emphasized to the extent that they directly served these inner firms, and so on. Increasingly, as the 1960s proceeded, the countryside was expected to establish not only the small industries that directly served agriculture but also, whenever possible small basic industries such as iron and steel making, cement making, coal-mining, etc. By the end of the decade, the economy was better able than it had been to support agriculture both with the output of large-scale industry in the urban areas and with tens of thousands of small, indigenous industries throughout the countryside. Thus, the effort was redirected from the mobilization of traditional inputs (labour, natural fertilizers, draft animals, traditional tools) to the production of modern inputs such as chemical fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides, small hydroelectric plants, electric motors, rice transplanters, tractors, trucks, other machinery, and seed-improvement stations. The agricultural task of the 1960s and 1970s was, in short, to industrialize and modernize the rural areas.

Some of the results of these policies are recorded in Table 6, where it may be seen that chemical fertilizers, tractors, and powered irrigation equipment all rose very rapidly in the 1960s and 1970s. The table also shows fairly good growth for a few of the output series that are available.

TABLE 6. *Some agricultural inputs and outputs: Selected years, 1952, 1965, 1975*

|      | Chinese production of inputs                  |                                       |                                                           | Chinese production of outputs  |                                          |                                   |                                  |
|------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
|      | Chemical fertilizers<br>(million metric tons) | Tractors<br>(thousand standard units) | Inventory of powered irrigation equipment<br>(million HP) | Grain<br>(million metric tons) | Processed sugar<br>(million metric tons) | Soybeans<br>(million metric tons) | Cotton yield<br>(kg per hectare) |
| 1952 | 0.2                                           | 2.0                                   | 0.1                                                       | 154                            | 0.5                                      | 9.5                               | 234                              |
| 1965 | 7.6                                           | 23.9                                  | 8.5                                                       | 210                            | 1.5                                      | NA                                | 346                              |
| 1975 | 27.9                                          | 180.0                                 | 43.0                                                      | 270                            | 2.3                                      | 17.0                              | 495                              |

Sources: Same publications as for Table 1.

However, we do not have enough information to make a confident assessment regarding the impact of these increasing dosages of modern inputs on agricultural output. We do not have, for example, data on some kinds of inputs, such as threshers,

harvesters, and trucks. Further, we do not know the distribution of the various inputs among the several crops (wheat, rice, cotton, etc.), nor the changes in land area devoted to each type of crop during the period. Moreover, the grain output estimates at the beginning of this period are uncertain. Consequently, the most that can be said on a general level is that grain output rose fairly rapidly during the 1960s, apparently responding to modern inputs in this decade to about the same degree as it responded to traditional inputs in the previous decade.<sup>8</sup> It is probably true that, if further institutional changes and dosages of traditional inputs had been heavily relied upon throughout the 1960s as they were in the previous decade, agricultural output would have fared much less well than it actually did.

Somewhat more detail, however, can be supplied for chemical fertilizers, which seem to have been the most important of the modern inputs during the 1960s. The Chinese leadership did not neglect chemical fertilizers during the 1950s, though after the downturn of 1959-61 they placed much more emphasis on them. The USSR constructed several complete plants for China in the initial decade, and China imported machinery to modernize two plants inherited from the pre-1949 period. There was an increase in the production of these fertilizers from 1952 to 1959. In the next decade, China purchased four complete nitrogenous fertilizer plants from the Netherlands, Britain, and Italy, which were installed in 1966. She began building her own plants in 1964, and around this time set a goal of one large-scale plant for each of the 180-190 special districts and one smaller plant for each of the 2,200-odd counties in the country. In fact, as things turned out, much of the increase of chemical fertilizers during the 1960s came from the medium- and small-scale plants that were constructed throughout the countryside during this decade. Moreover, China began to import chemical fertilizers in increasingly larger volume, mostly from Japan and Western Europe. By 1970 available chemical fertilizers from both domestic and foreign sources totalled more than 18 million metric tons, which was six times the level of 1959.

It is possible to relate only in an approximate way the 15 million ton increase in the supply of chemical fertilizers to the 70 million ton increase in grain output during the period 1959-70. Considering the information available on this relationship, it may be roughly accurate to say that, during this period, chemical fertilizers contributed between 40 per cent and 55 per cent of the increase in grain output.<sup>9</sup> While this is not very exact, it probably does suggest accurately that chemical fertilizers had a substantial marginal impact on grain output in the 1960s, probably more than that of any other input. This impact, however, was most likely centred on rice output which is grown in areas where water is generally available. The impact on wheat and cotton output, grown mostly in the north where water supplies are unreliable, was undoubtedly less strong.

As I noted previously, the countryside had been industrialized to some extent during the past decade by the establishment of thousands of small industries under local authority.<sup>10</sup> These industries produce and repair farm implements and machinery; they produce fertilizers, consumer goods, insecticides, building materials, rural transportation equipment; they process agricultural products and develop power sources. Such industries have been encouraged by the central government to be as self-reliant as possible by developing new sources of raw materials from their own areas, utilizing waste materials and older machinery from the larger central industries, and using relatively labour-intensive, indigenous methods of production. These rural endeavours have been fashioned into more or less integrated industrial structures in each locality for

the prime purpose of serving that area's agricultural needs.

The advantages claimed for these local industries are: (1) they have the ability to utilize dispersed deposits of material resources; (2) they lower average capital-output ratios and shorten the gestation periods; (3) they have the ability to undertake repairing, maintenance, and processing activities, freeing large-scale capacity for jobs which the modern sector alone could do; (4) they lower the costs of urbanization and social overhead capital in general; (5) they have a capacity to create industrial consciousness among the peasantry; (6) they contribute to national defence; and (7) they ameliorate the contradictions between cities and countryside.

More generally, this rural industrialization effort has certainly had some measure of success in expanding employment opportunities in the countryside, in balancing production geographically, and in raising agricultural productivity generally.

### VIII. IMPROVEMENT IN AGRICULTURE'S TERMS OF TRADE

The fourth and final programme that has raised living standards in the rural areas is the change in terms of trade between agricultural and industrial products in favour of the former. This improvement for agriculture has apparently been fairly constant throughout the period, as shown in Table 7. By 1957, a given amount of agricultural produce was purchasing about a third more industrial goods than at the beginning of the decade. By the early 1970s, this had risen to over a half.

Over the past two decades, the government has several times raised the price at which it purchases grain from the peasants. At the present time, this purchase price is above the level at which grain is sold by the state in urban areas and in rural areas devoted mostly to industrial crops. The difference in the prices is a subsidy from the state to the cultivators of grain. Other agricultural goods have also been purchased at higher prices. On the other hand, prices of industrial products bought by the peasants rose very little for a decade after 1952, and the increases in more recent years have been relatively modest. Indeed, the prices of many industrial products, some of which are not in this index, have declined markedly. For example, the general price level of medicines is 80 per cent lower now than in 1950, and most of this drop occurred in the last few years. "For the same amount of wheat, a peasant can get 70 per cent more salt than at

TABLE 7. *Indicators of agricultural welfare gains, 1950-74*

|      | (1)<br>Agricultural<br>purchase price<br>index<br>(1952=100) | (2)<br>Industrial retail<br>prices in rural<br>areas index<br>(1952=100) | (3)<br>Ratio of<br>(1) to (2) | (4)<br>Agricultural tax<br>as percent of<br>agricultural<br>crop output |
|------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1950 | 82.2                                                         | 91.2                                                                     | 90.1                          | NA                                                                      |
| 1952 | 100.0                                                        | 100.0                                                                    | 100.0                         | 13.2                                                                    |
| 1957 | 122.4                                                        | 101.6                                                                    | 120.5                         | 11.5                                                                    |
| 1963 | 154.7                                                        | 114.3                                                                    | 135.3                         | NA                                                                      |
| 1971 | 156.2                                                        | 114.0                                                                    | 137.0                         | 6.0                                                                     |
| 1973 | 160.0+                                                       | NA                                                                       | NA                            | 5.0+ <sup>a</sup>                                                       |

Sources: Dwight H. Perkins, *Constraints Influencing China's Agricultural Performance*, in Joint Economic Committee, *China: A Reassessment of the Economy*, July 10, 1975, pp. 362-3.

<sup>a</sup> Figure is for 1974.

the time of the birth of the People's Republic, and for the same amount of cotton, he receives 2.4 times as much kerosene."<sup>11</sup> Prices of fertilizers, fuel, livestock feed, electricity, and various types of equipment have been lowered.

The last column of Table 7 shows a sharp reduction over the full period of the tax burden on peasants, which is another indicator of shifting terms of trade in favor of agriculture.

#### IX. RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN TSUNHUA COUNTY

Some of the agricultural policies which I have discussed up to this point will perhaps have more meaning if they are shown in actual operation in one rural locality. I attempt this as follows.

Tsunhua county is one of six counties within the special district of Tangshan, which is located in the north-eastern part of Hopei Province, about 100 miles east and a bit north of Peking. The county, the size of which is about 1,640 square kilometres, has a population of over half a million, though it has only one town, Tsunhua, the county seat. The land is mostly hilly, with three mountain ranges and two valleys or plains. The economic activities of the population are largely agricultural—that is, growing wheat, kaoliang, millet, other grains, fruit orchards, chestnut trees, vegetables—but there are increasing numbers of small industries in the county, and of course some people engage in various sideline occupations. Table 8 records some of the basic economic facts about the county.

The heart of the county's economy is agriculture, mostly food-grains. Since 1949, the output of food-grains per hectare has risen more than threefold, or at an average annual rate of 6 per cent. However, since 1958 the rate has been only 2 per cent; it was rather stagnant between 1958 and 1969, but recorded substantial increases during 1970 and 1971. The Revolutionary Committee of the county attributed the stagnant period

TABLE 8. *Some economic statistics of Tsunhua county: 1970-1*

|                                  |                                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Total area                       | 164,000 hectares (or 1,640 sq km) |
| Cultivated area                  | 64,000 hectares                   |
| Irrigated area                   | 18,700 hectares                   |
| Population                       | 550,000                           |
| Households                       | 116,000                           |
| Labour force                     | about 200,000                     |
| Communes                         | 43 (av. of 12,800 per commune)    |
| Production brigades              | 691 (av. of 800 per brigade)      |
| Production teams                 | 2,664 (av. of 200 per team)       |
| Grain production                 | 3.8 tons per hectare              |
| Value of grain production        | about 50 million yuan             |
| Value of industrial production   | 18 million yuan                   |
| Income from sideline occupations | 22.7 million yuan                 |

*Sources.* Jon Sigurdson, Rural industry—a traveller's view, *The China Quarterly* (July–September 1972); *Collective Notes* of visiting economists to China during August 1972, mimeographed by Thomas Weisskopf, Department of Economics, University of Michigan.



to the revisionist policies of Liu Shao-ch'i and his followers, who discouraged self-reliant policies in the county, the building of small industries, and the full use of local resources. Since 1968 or 1969, however, the leaders of the county have "organized mass activities to change the backwardness of agriculture, make substantial use of local resources and rapidly develop local industry".<sup>12</sup>

The county has attempted to promote agricultural development by producing its own cement, chemical fertilizers, and iron and steel for the manufacture of agricultural machinery and implements, and it has supported these heavy industries, especially iron and steel, with profits from light industry and sideline activities. That is, the county has attempted to industrialize mainly on its own initiative and using its own resources for the purpose of raising agricultural productivity and the living standards of the people.

In order to produce chemical fertilizers, cement, and iron and steel, the people of the county first had to locate the necessary ores and minerals. "Initially, we were aware only of the presence of gold and iron in the hills, but now local people have discovered 23 kinds of ore, helped by the geological team."<sup>13</sup> They then set up the iron and steel plant—first the small blast furnace, then a converter, after that a rolling mill. The iron and steel aided in establishing the cement factory, and the latter was used largely to expand water conservancy projects.

The iron and steel plant, however, ran at a loss. So light industry and sideline activities were developed which made more than enough profits to subsidize iron and steel. The county planted tens of thousands of fruit trees, for example, then constructed a small fruit bottling factory with an annual capacity of 250 tons of bottled fruit—apples, apricots, pears, grapes, peaches, etc. This factory required sugar, so some peasants began growing sugar beets, and turned out 10 tons of sugar per year. The factory also needed glass for the bottles and so a small glass manufacturing plant was set up. The glass, of course, required pure soda, hence, this called for the establishment of a 32-ton per year soda factory. And so on and on. The result is that the county is now able to produce a complete set of machinery, such as crushers, threshers, oil presses, and machinery for digging drainage and irrigation systems, for the development of agricultural and sideline activities.

Local industries are run not only by the county but also by the communes and production brigades. At the county level, the aim of national policy is for every county to have the "Five Small Industries": iron and steel, cement, chemical fertilizer, energy (coal, electricity), and machinery. Such complete sets were established in one-half of the 2,200 counties by 1971. Tsunhua was engaged in all of these activities, except that its electricity was produced outside of the county. In addition, the county runs a sulphuric acid plant, an electromechanic factory, a plastics factory, a paper-making plant, engages in mining operations, has a textile mill, does major repairs on agricultural machinery, processes agricultural and sideline products—e.g., flour-milling and cotton-ginning.

The communes and the production brigades are also involved in small industries. For example, there is a three-level agricultural machinery repair and manufacturing network, which 90 per cent of the counties, including Tsunhua, had established by 1971, in which the county does the manufacturing and major repairs in seven plants, the communes in 37 plants do lesser repairs and assembly, and production brigades do minor repairs in their 407 shops. The three-levels also engage in processing agricultural and sideline products. Further "Three-level county, commune, and brigade agricultural

scientific networks have been rapidly expanded all over the country [including Tsunhua] in recent years. One important objective of this is to achieve a rapid seed-selection process which together with modern inputs to agriculture may quickly increase the yield per unit."<sup>14</sup> Sideline occupations are engaged in by households, brigades, and communes, and they include such things as raising silkworms and bees, quarrying stones and mining ores, making mat bags, growing fruit.

In all of these enterprises, there were 12,000–15,000 of the 200,000 labour force employed. In the 39 county-run industries, employment was 5,500 in 1971; it was 2,500 in the 71 plants managed by communes; and 5,000 in the industrial units of the production brigades.<sup>15</sup> These are not large figures relative to the total labour force, but there are many other workers who are in the industrial sector indirectly. In any case, employment creation is probably not the main purpose of rural industrialization. For given the increased school enrolment of children, the fact that it is unnecessary any longer for older people to remain in the labour force and work, the continuation of large-scale labour projects in water control and reforestation, the increasing numbers of people engaged in sideline occupations (in cultural activities, medical services, education, and party work), the movement of millions of people to the north-west and west and to other relatively virgin areas of the country, and the continued rising demands for just about every kind of agricultural product—given all these things, there would seem to be no significant surplus of labour in the rural areas. This, of course, is especially true during the seasonal peaks of planting and harvesting. Instead, rural industrialization is for the principal purpose of achieving mechanization in agriculture and hence greater agricultural productivity. It is also meant to narrow the differences between town and country, workers and peasants, and to widen the horizons and the abilities of the peasants.

#### X. MAOIST DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND ITS RELEVANCE FOR OTHER COUNTRIES

What possible relevance has China's attempts at rural development for other underdeveloped countries? To begin to answer this, it is first necessary to specify exactly what the Maoist strategy for economic development is, within which rural development is contained. Since this strategy is an evolving one and has already taken several twists and turns, one cannot be certain of getting it right. But as of now the over-all development strategy appears to consist of the following steps.

1. Destroy the feudal-landlord-bureaucrat class structure, and redistribute land, other assets, income, and power to the peasants and workers.
2. Establish socialist relations of production as soon as possible, and use the party to educate peasants and workers in socialist values and ideals. That is, nationalize industry as soon as feasible and bring about cooperativization in the countryside without waiting for agricultural mechanization; begin transforming the superstructure into a socialist one.<sup>16</sup>
3. Establish a full planning mechanism to take the place of market-price-determined allocation of resources and distribution of incomes, and go all out for industrialization, but emphasize those industries having direct links to agriculture.
4. Achieve high rates of capital formation by encouraging savings at all levels and the use of the savings at each level for self-financed investment. Encourage rural areas,



in particular, to produce whatever can be produced by small-scale, indigenous methods, to finance these investments from their own savings, and to manage these industries themselves. Capital goods that can be produced only by large-scale, modern methods should be financed and managed at higher political levels.

5. Develop and release human energy and creativity by promoting socialist values ("serve the people", selflessness, collective incentives) over bourgeois values (individualism, selfishness, materialism), by providing health-care facilities everywhere, educating as many people as possible, providing worthy goals that inspire people to work hard, and encouraging basic decision-making at the lowest possible level.

6. Carry out a continuing revolution at all levels of society, and maintain the dictatorship of the proletariat.

It seems to me that the Maoist strategy, *considered as a whole*, probably has very little relevance to governments of most underdeveloped countries today, for it involves breaking the power of ruling classes and their foreign supporters, opting for socialism and eventually communism over capitalism, for full-scale industrialization over trade, commerce, and agrarianism, for continuing revolutionary activity over orderly procedures. Since most Third World countries today play more or less subordinate and dependent roles in the international capitalist system, serving the wealthier countries of that system with raw materials, oil, cheap labour, or additional markets, for them to follow China's path would mean first breaking out of this global system and then taking their chances on an all-out development effort with their own resources plus whatever aid can be obtained from socialist countries.<sup>17</sup> This may be a programme favoured by some classes in these poor countries, but it is hardly a prescription that would be appealing to their governments and propertied classes. Furthermore, such thoughts are anathema to the United States, as the leader of global capitalism, the duty of which is to try to prevent such break-aways through some combination of economic aid, military aid, counterinsurgency, cultivation of domestic elites, or force. The alliance between the US, on the one hand, and the propertied classes and elites in the poor countries, on the other, is a powerful one.

That is the over-all picture. It stresses that one thing *does* depend on another in Maoist strategy, and indeed this is so in any development strategy. To make any substantial headway, the problem of underdevelopment often has to be tackled as a whole, not piecemeal. For example, in the Chinese experience, rural industrialization depended on the general acceptance of goals other than profits and efficiency. This general acceptance in turn was based on the prior inculcation of socialist values throughout the society, which were reinforced daily by the prior establishment of socialist institutions, including a full planning mechanism. These socialist relations of production could be developed only by the prior break-up of the old class structures of society. And so on.

I have emphasized the holistic view, the Maoist way. I now wish to ask whether other underdeveloped countries can benefit, to some extent at least, from separate parts of China's total experience. Some socialist policies should be adaptable to capitalist developmental programmes.

It is well to recognize at the beginning that many Chinese policies for development are universally known and in fact have been acquired by China from the theoretical and practical work of bourgeois economists and other development experts, as well as from the experience of the Soviet Union. To this extent, China has learned from others, and

there are, of course, no reasons why other countries cannot take advantage of the same information. I refer to policies of raising capital formation relative to consumption to attain higher growth rates, of encouraging saving for this purpose through taxation, financial institutions, and in other ways, of using relative factor supplies to good advantage, of aiming for developmental government budgets and moderate growth rates of the money supply, of utilizing aid and trade efficiently, and so on. Much of China's over-all performance can be explained "simply" in terms of the very high investment and saving ratios that were attained by 1953-4 and were more or less maintained thereafter. (Recall, however, that to attain *these* the old class structures were overthrown by revolution. That is what lies behind "simply".) And larger shares of this total capital formation were applied to agriculture in the 1960s and 1970s, which goes a long way in explaining China's recent gains in rural development. Thus, much of the story is standard fare, known to everyone.

But, while China has learned much from others, she may also be able to teach a few things. First, China has demonstrated the importance of industrialization to economic development; that the large resources initially devoted to iron and steel, machine-building, non-ferrous metals, oil, electric power, and chemicals were indispensable in establishing a base for later advances in agriculture, transportation, consumer goods, and military weapons, and in freeing the economy from its dependency on foreign direction and influence. The initial stress on heavy industry, rather than on infrastructure and consumer goods, was made possible only by socialist aid and trade. Despite the growing bitterness between the USSR and China, no other country has ever received so much help toward full-scale industrialization as China did during the 1950s. This is something of a lesson in itself.

Second, China has shown, especially during the 1960s, *how* to industrialize without generating social problems that threaten eventually to blow the society sky high. China has involved increasing numbers of people, especially in the rural areas, in industrial activities in order to break down the potentially antagonistic relations between city and country and between workers and peasants; to spread knowledge of industrial processes as widely as possible so as to promote talent, ingenuity, confidence, and the scientific attitude among masses of workers and peasants; and to transform rural areas into self-reliant agrarian-industrial-cultural local economies, which are attractive places to live in and which can, at least partly, break their dependent relationships with higher political units, including the state. This is relevant for other poor countries because it demonstrates a pattern of industrialization that does not generate severe imbalances between urban and rural areas, between rich and poor, between employed and unemployed or between one region and another. The lesson that many developing countries are learning from their own experience is that high output growth rates are often the "good face" on an increasingly diseased body. Thus, a recent annual report of the World Bank, after noting the respectable growth rates of many underdeveloped countries, went on to say: "Statistics conceal the gravity of the underlying economic and social problems, which are typified by severely skewed income distribution, excessive levels of unemployment, high rates of infant mortality, low rates of literacy, serious malnutrition, and widespread ill-health." The statistics also conceal the growing urban problems, foreign debt difficulties, social unrest, and much else in many of these countries. Perhaps the most important message that China can send to other poor people is that not one item in the above list applies to her.

The third lesson is the importance of raising work motivation and how to do it. Capitalist economists have concentrated far too much on how to reallocate economic resources to attain higher levels of national output and far too little on how to get people really interested in their work and so willing to exert great efforts to achieve their goals. I think that China has shown that the latter is much more important than the former; that people who really want to work completely eclipse the effects of nice adjustments toward more competitive markets and fine calculations regarding factor inputs.

The Maoists believe that they have inspired and enabled people to work hard by altering their work environments, changing their incentives, and providing them with education, good health, and technical training. The first point is that, in capitalist development, to raise growth rates of national output, it is necessary to do it in such a way as to reinforce the existing class structures of society and the values which support such structures. The pursuit of higher growth rates, therefore, has generally reduced many human beings to unthinking, specialized, manipulated inputs in the production process, in which hierarchical structures of capitalists and workers, bosses and "hands", mental experts and manual workers, face each other in more or less antagonistic relationships. Such alienated work environments lower the general intelligence, initiative, and willingness to work hard of broad masses of workers, which are the obvious costs of pursuing growth in the context of such sharp class alignments. The Maoists feel that the development of people as full human beings, working in a warm, egalitarian, and cooperative atmosphere, leads to the rapid development of material output; that the former is possible only in the absence of capitalist or feudal class structures; and that the latter is desirable only within the context of the former.

Thus, the Chinese lesson, in this regard, is that it is possible to increase greatly the over-all productivity of peasants and workers by establishing less alienated work environments. In the absence of full-scale revolution, underdeveloped countries might benefit from China's experience by questioning their own organizations of work both in the countryside and in the cities, and by experimenting with other forms. Are existing organizations efficient from a factor productivity point of view, or are they mainly efficient in channelling part of the economic surplus to a landed aristocracy or to a capitalist class? Do work organizations exist to maintain discipline and order or do they promote energy and initiative? And, if the former, why? Are they designed to set off one group of workers against another to the benefit of the dominant class and to the detriment of factor productivity? China may have much to teach us in this regard.

Work motivation in China has also risen, according to the Maoists, because of an increase in socialist consciousness among the masses of workers and peasants, which means that collective incentives—the willingness to work hard for increasingly larger groups of people without expectation of personal gain—have gained over individual ones. Maoists believe that people are inspired and can see real meaning in their lives only if they are working for goals worthy of human beings and not merely for their own selfish, material welfare. Indeed, people throughout China *do* seem inspired in this way, for whatever reason, and seem not only completely involved in their present accomplishments but in achieving the plans for the future: "In two years, we'll have this and have a good start on that, and then ...." Just about everyone talks this way.

Further, with regard to work motivation, it is necessary to repeat that increasing numbers of people are able to work hard and more effectively by being more literate, having better health and improved nutrition, and having more technical training.

Finally, the Chinese Communist Party has developed high motivation among its own cadres to "serve the people" in honest and incorruptible ways. The work motivation and collective incentives engendered within this large group have been of vital importance in getting policies translated into proper actions at all levels, in ways that do not dissipate the intentions of policy-makers. The CPC has for several decades now demonstrated the importance of having such cadres for the actual realization, as contrasted to the verbalization, of national goals.

China offers other lessons, too, which there is space only to mention: how to adapt education to the needs of an industrializing society; that it is not necessary for economic development to invite foreign capital into the country; the desirability of maintaining rather stable prices of important commodities over long periods of time; and so on.

The principal lesson, however, is the necessity of breaking out of all dependency relationships with advanced industrial countries and pursuing the course of self-reliance, both at the national and the local levels.

#### NOTES.

- 1 R. H. Tawney, *Land and Labor in China*, Beacon Press, 1966 (originally published, 1932), pp. 72-3, 76-7.
- 2 1 mou equals one-sixth of an acre or one-fifteenth of a hectare.
- 3 Keith Buchanan, *The Transformation of the Chinese Earth*, Praeger, 1970, p. 123.
- 4 Victor Lippit, *Land Reform in China: The Contribution of Institutional Change to Financing Economic Development* (unpublished manuscript, 1972). [See bibliography, entry 20, Ed.]
- 5 See, for example, William Hinton, *Fanshen: A Documentary of Revolution in a Chinese Village* (Monthly Review Press, 1966).
- 6 *Peking Review*, 9 September 1958.
- 7 However, the agricultural sector generated a substantial amount of internal saving that was used for investment.
- 8 The average annual percentage growth rates of grain output for several periods are as follows:
 

|        |     |         |     |
|--------|-----|---------|-----|
| 1952-7 | 3.7 | 1959-75 | 3.1 |
| 1952-8 | 4.5 | 1961-75 | 3.8 |
| 1952-9 | 1.0 | 1965-75 | 2.5 |
- 9 This is based on Jung-Chao Liu, *China's Fertilizer Economy*, Aldine, 1970, pp. 96, 106, 110-12; Kang Chao, *Agricultural Production in Communist China*, op. cit., pp. 150-1, 236; Leslie T. C. Kuo, *The Transformation of Agriculture in Communist China*, Praeger, 1972, p. 102; and JEC. op. cit., pp. 140, 348.
- 10 See Carl Riskin, Small industry and the Chinese model of development, *The China Quarterly*, April-June 1971, pp. 245-73.
- 11 *China Reconstructs*, November 1970, p. 4. See also the issue for January 1973, p. 40.
- 12 *Collective Notes*, op. cit., p. 63.
- 13 *ibid.*
- 14 Sigurdson, op. cit., p. 320.
- 15 In these plants, there are three types of workers: permanent, temporary, and contract. The permanent workers are employed within the regular 8-grade wage system, ranging from Y28 to about Y100 per month. Temporary workers are part peasants and part workers, who rotate regularly between agriculture and industry, and who turn over half their wages to their production teams, and then at the end of the year receive income from the teams based on their agricultural work. Contract workers are hired on a 1-, 2-, or 3-year basis, and are in general treated the same way as permanent workers; they are mostly from the city, not from production teams.
- 16 This is because, if mechanization is introduced in an essentially individualistic, private-enterprise framework, the fruits of the new technology will be captured by only a few, leaving the majority of peasants resentful and ready to "break the machines". Also, capitalist development creates capitalist people. Under certain circumstances, according to Mao, it is necessary to change the superstructure in order to release the productive forces of society. See point 5.
- 17 This is also true for the ruling classes of the major oil-producing countries, who may gain some advantages over the industrial capitalist countries but who are so greatly dependent on international-monopoly capital that they (or most of them) would not dream of breaking out of this global system.

from. Guterman, Stephen. The Demise of  
a Rural Economy: From Subsistence to Capitalism  
in A Latin American Village. London: Routledge  
and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1978

Throughout the book we have referred tangentially to the implications of the findings for development strategy. In this concluding chapter, we shall try to deal with them directly, grouped under three topics. The first topic is the rationality of villager behavior and its implications for designing local interventions. The next topic deals with the selection and assessment of rural development programs—if economic growth is a priority goal of rural development, what kinds of programs are most likely to succeed? Or should economic growth even be the first order of business in rural development? The final topic deals with an even broader issue: What role can be assigned to the village in the modernization process?

### RATIONAL DECISION MAKING AS AN EXPLANATION OF VILLAGER BEHAVIOR

The development administrator typically comes to his task needing two sets of tools. One set involves the content of a development sector, whether it be agribusiness, preventive medicine, industrial economics, or road engineering. He needs expertise in some specific activity that is to be conducted. The second set of tools involves the people who are the intended beneficiaries of this development; for to be successful, it is almost invariably true that a development input must elicit a behavioral response. People must *use* the new road—or grow the new crop, water their fields from the new irrigation canal, or plow with the new tractor. Good planning and efficient implementation of rural efforts require therefore that the development administrator understand the mainsprings of villager behavior. Along with substantive expertise, he must have the tools to

incorporate features into the development project that will make it work in the context of the rural population he is trying to help.

In the process of making these plans, however, the development administrator runs into a major barrier—the visible, tangible differences that separate him from the villager. The anthropological legacy on this subject is especially rich and intricate—it provides detailed accounts of the often radically variant belief systems, economies, social conventions, ceremonies, and eccentricities of major and minor ethnic groups around the world. But the very “other-ness” of villagers that feeds the anthropologist’s interest in village life can be an impediment to the development administrator who designs interventions in the village during modernization. The peculiarities and the points of difference tend to deflect simple thinking about why villagers behave as they do.

The deflection is entirely understandable. Villagers *are* different from “us”—meaning modern urban folk—on a variety of dimensions. The development administrator and the villager do in fact live in different material and cultural worlds. The modes of communication across those worlds are not as simple or as efficient as the ones the development administrator can use with his urban neighbor. Communication breaks down, and misunderstandings are frequent—often for no cause that the modern visitor to the village can reasonably ascribe to his own behavior. The “we-they” characterization of the relationship between modernizer and villager that is so often evident in the literature and in the field not only is understandable, but is also in many ways an accurate way to look at the relationship.

Nonetheless, the differences appear to get in the way of the development administrator’s perceptions of his job. More specifically, the we-they split in which the “we” stands in such an obviously superior position technologically tends to create in turn a certain condescension when the development administrator tries to assess the reality behind the villager’s viewpoint.

The most thoroughgoing form of condescension is the assumption that villagers—peasants—are so different from you and me in their world view, motives, desires, and fears that they are a species apart. They are seen as “benighted,” to use the old-fashioned word for it. In this context, the purpose of development is conceived as being to pull them out of their ignorance and squalor to the level of modern folk. It is a twentieth-century version of the “white man’s burden.” It is also perhaps not as scarce a viewpoint as we would like to believe, even if it is not always put so baldly. Foreign-educated elites in the developing countries often find this view congenial; so do some Americans. The result is a development strategy that does things “for” a rural population. The content of the package and how it is to be delivered are decided through the wisdom in the capital city. The mode of implementation is management by the modernizer with the villagers either wholly uninvolved, or serving as a passive source of labor.

A second, less virulent form of condescension is what might be called misdirected cultural relativism. The customs and the ethnic peculiarities of the villagers are "accepted," but with a kind of tolerance more characteristic of a parent's relationship toward a child than the relationship that exists among adults who happen to do things differently. The result is a manipulative approach. The classic example of this occurs when planners attempt to tie the design or implementation of a development project to some local custom. At its best, when applied to basic factors like planting cycles, or traditional organization of labor, this is a sensible way to approach local implementation. Too often, however, it is applied to religious or purely social customs as a way to circumvent village resistance. It is tacitly assumed that a cosmetic change will solve the problem. The possibility that the villager's resistance is a function of sound objections that call for a basic redesign (or cancellation) of the project tends to get short shrift.

Perhaps the most common form of condescension is the tendency to pay lip service to the villagers' good qualities. Westerners and often the local government elites in developing countries delight in rediscovering the "shrewdness" and "common sense" of the villager. In Thailand—other countries undoubtedly have analogous situations—they enjoy the forays upcountry and the evenings spent sipping rice wine with the village elders. They have their favorite headmen, the ones who helped them pull off a successful project, of whom they speak with admiration. But this amiable approach, like the more detached ones, can get in the way of clear thinking about what to do and how to do it in rural development. For along with the good headmen are the bad headmen who did *not* help pull off the development official's pet project. Along with the pat on the back for the good villager go the lectures and admonitions to the villagers who do not come up to expectations. At the higher administrative levels, these occasional experiences in the field can lead to stereotypes that have no relationship to reality. More insidious, the development administrator in the ministry and the organizer on the ground tend to take on in their own minds the roles of sponsor, protector, and adviser to "their" villagers. It is a paternal relationship. It has the virtues of paternalism, but also the major defect of encouraging a false sense of role and importance by the people on top. A development official can always find evidence that he is needed, that these charming, simple people still are not ready to get along on their own.

Overall, then, an argument can be made that it is easy for development planners, implementors, or evaluators to become excessively conscious of the differences between villagers and themselves. The exotica of the village setting are too distracting from a much simpler proposition, and the one that is advanced here: Villagers generally behave rationally. They are no more rational than the rest of the world—they, like their urbanized counterparts, do strange things on occasion. But it is proposed that typically villagers count costs and risks and benefits as thoroughly as they can with the information at hand, and

that their decisions generally make sense. The aspects of village life which are alien to the outsider's way of behaving may obscure the outsider's perception of the calculations at work, but they do not mean that the calculations are non-rational ones.

We have touched on this theme at a number of points in the book. We have suggested that the basic social behavioral patterns of villagers in premodern cultures can be explained as a rational response to reality. When a villager living on the ragged edge of survival in an environment of great scarcity, he is justifiably suspicious of anything that upsets a familiar balance—the more precarious the balance, the more suspicious he is likely to be. When survival is not at issue, in an environment like Thailand's, the villager is more open, and social behavior is more trusting because he has some margin for error, for loss. Despite the wide gap between the social behaviors of a Thai villager and (for example) an Indian one, their behaviors can be seen as sharing a common origin: the reaction of reasonable people to the objective conditions of their environments.

The readiness to adopt innovation draws on the same distinction between scarcity and "sufficiency" village environments. In the scarcity case, we borrow from George Foster's image of limited good to understand the rationality of work:<sup>1</sup>

Peasant societies are . . . conservative and backward, brakes on national economic progress, [not] because of economic irrationality nor because of the absence of psychological characteristics in adequate quantities. They are conservative because individual progress is seen as—and in the context of the traditional society in fact is—the supreme threat to community stability, and all cultural forms *must* conspire to discourage changes in the status quo. . . . Show the peasant that initiative is profitable, and that it will not be met by negative sanction, and he acquires it in short order.

Decisions to innovate in the sufficiency environment of Thailand were argued to have a parallel rationale. When the extra work involved in taking advantage of free or low-cost resources were not "worth it" in terms of things to do and goods to buy, then aspirations remained delimited. When the incentive started to appear, aspirations started to expand, and so also did behaviors to realize them.

Conspicuous rationality was also described as being evident in the chain of events that make personal investment competitive with civic investment. Villagers who find their contributions to civic goods becoming more expensive will tend to decrease those contributions. Leaders given a choice between opportunities for tangible gains in life quality will pursue them; and as things stand those opportunities are more salient in the personal setting than in the civic setting.



When it comes to decisions about what to do and how as a community, Thai villagers in the sample villages are argued to have made plans and carried them out with greater efficiency and effectiveness than the government development officials attempting the same kinds of projects. The reason was not that the government officials were lazy or corrupt or stupid, but that the villagers had access to knowledge that the government officials did not have, and took advantage of it in simple but very sensible ways.

Finally, when we addressed the question of why government development and training inputs appear to be effective in sustaining or raising functional capacity, it was again suggested that rational decision-making is at work: Raise the job rewards of being a leader, and villagers are more willing to take on the job.

None of these arguments is intended to convey that villagers are especially virtuous. On the contrary, we contend that they are very ordinary ways for people and communities of people to respond to stimuli. And that is precisely the point: There is less to the we-they distinction in rural development than meets the eye.

The first implication of this view for rural development strategy is simple: The administrator should put himself in the villager's place and ask whether he as a reasonable man would want to grow that new crop or join the cooperative or take that injection given the costs, risks, and benefits involved. The trick, of course, is to make sure that the costs, risks, and benefits are calculated using information and experience available to the villager, not to the administrator.

This points to a second and more important implication: In trying to elicit behavioral response from the village there are sharp limits on what should be done to change the villager's *perceptions* of reality without changing the reality itself. It was common among the development projects in the 41 villages of the sample that villagers chose not to participate in a project because of a lack of trust that the promised benefit would actually occur—that by joining the farmers' group the villager really would be able to buy fertilizer at cut-rate prices, or that the new rice strain would really work in the local soil. It is true that one way to deal with this problem is by changing perceptions. The persuasiveness of the right publicity is undeniable. The difficulty with this solution is that the villager's perceptions are often right to begin with. Governments often do not have a good track record of delivering on promises. Implementation even of the best programs often breaks down at the local level. In this regard, the villager's perception of the odds is likely to be more unflinching than the development administrator's; among the villages of the sample, very few respondents had missed out on a good thing by taking a wait-and-see attitude toward programs that relied on government assurances about the future. Perspective can also be a factor. If an administrator can claim success on 80 percent of a certain kind of project, he may have reason for satisfaction. But it may also be that the individual villager cannot tolerate a 20 percent chance of failure.

In short, we are suggesting that when villager resistance to a program exists, do not redouble the publicity and persuasion efforts, but instead take another look at the real risks and the real costs that the program poses from the villager's perspective. Ask whether the answer is to take another whack at typical peasant obstinacy or to change the substance of the opportunity that is being offered to him.

The assumption that villagers behave rationally is bound to be wrong on some topics in some cultures, as it is sometimes wrong about all populations. It is also true that the rationality is grounded in the specifics of the local situation and the lessons to be learned from the anthropological and sociological literature can be essential for any given country. Here, we simply argue that explaining villager behavior is easy—or at least easier—once anomalies in villager behavior are assumed to be a reflection of the observer's ignorance of the reality of the village, not a reflection of strange peasant outlooks on reality. For the villagers of this study, "rational decision-making" explained the great bulk of the anomalies, very parsimoniously.

## PROGRAMS AND PRIORITIES

### Village Economic Development

Increasing villager income is a priority goal, often *the* priority goal, of rural development programs throughout the world. The discussion of "personal investment"—in effect, attempts to increase income—and its apparent causes has an immediate relevance to this objective.

If the villager does indeed react in a fashion that is consistent with the historical scarcity or sufficiency of his environment, then the obvious first step in developing an income-increasing strategy is to ask what kind of environmental model applies to the local situation.

In the real world, of course, very few nations fall into the extremes of scarcity or sufficiency. Most countries fall somewhere in between the poles. Often, the environment varies dramatically in different areas within a country. But even if these gradations make it unrealistic to seek for a few "pure" development strategies, planners can at least be warned against taking seriously global generalizations about how the peasant mentality constrains their options. The relevant experiences for a Thai official are those of peasants in parts of Indonesia or Malaysia, or other places with a tradition of independent peasants farming productive land. He can easily be led astray if he tries to learn from the experiences among peasants who have been coping with a hostile natural environment or a feudal tenure system. It is just as dangerous to take the lessons learned from modernizing nations at face value as it is to treat each culture as a unique case. And because "scarcity" nations dominate the picture, it is likely to be the few

(though more fortunate) sufficiency nations that draw the wrong conclusions from others' development experiences.

Exactly what the differences in strategy ought to be is a question that we can address only partly. The scarcity case is not informed by the data in this study. One may speculate that a patient, tutorial approach to income-raising opportunities is likely to be necessary in the scarcity case. For that villager, penalties for being wrong are so great and the perceived risks so high that the initial resistance to change may be very stubborn.

In the Thai case, however, and for some unknown range of sufficiency environments, the data in this study point to a shift away from community-level economic development efforts and toward general infrastructure development. The data for this study have portrayed a village population that is increasing its entrepreneurial behaviors dramatically, quite possibly at an exponential rate. But these behaviors were not being discernibly affected by the Thai government's income-promoting programs at the village level—a finding that, if it holds true, should have important effects on the budgets of a number of community-level development programs. The logic that is being used to justify substantial expenditures and to tie up some thousands of Thai extension workers finds no support in the data from these villages. Instead, villager behaviors to increase income appear to have followed naturally from additions to rural resources, in the form of roads, dams, irrigation, electrification, health services, police services, and contact with the modernizing outside world. Give the Thai villager exposure to what is available and the opportunities to take advantage of it, and rural economic investment will take care of itself—this was the consistent lesson among the villages in the sample.

Another implied alteration in strategy, and one that is applicable to both the scarcity and sufficiency cases, involves the framework for assessing the success or failure of local economic development programs. The most commonly used measures of program success are what might be called "input verification"—number of bags of fertilizer distributed, number of villages visited by the mobile-development unit, number of village reservoirs built, and so on. For the 41 villages of this study, these measures would have produced an image of a high level of income-raising inputs. Because the ultimate measure of success—a real increase in villager income over time—is exceedingly difficult to measure at the micro level, a common next step in the analysis is to compare the high level of local income-raising inputs with macroeconomic measures of agricultural product. If gross agricultural product is rising (as it is in Thailand), the best guess of the evaluator has to be that a causal relationship is at work. Certainly there are no grounds for claiming that none exists.

The kinds of behavior we classified as "personal investment" indicators provide an intermediate outcome measure for assessing whether that inference is tenable. The use of it has three strengths. The data can be collected inexpensively at the micro level: Data for the six indicators in the index we used could be

collected in an hour's visit to a village. The data are objective: Three of the six indicators in our index employed observational data; a fourth can be determined by looking at existing records; none of the six requires a subjective judgment. Most importantly, the data provide a genuine "outcome" measure that tests whether the logic behind the input is being borne out. The same indicators cannot be used interchangeably among countries, but the concept would seem to apply everywhere.<sup>2</sup>

### The Question of Priorities

The preceding discussion was based on the assumption that income growth in rural areas is the top priority. But the scarcity/sufficiency issue also raises the question of whether it should be so. Unquestionably, an India faced with the prospect of massive food shortages and perhaps famine must think first about economics. But do countries with sufficiency cultures have to make higher villager income their top priority objective in rural development? At least in the Thai case, it is by no means clear that poverty holds first place among the many sectors in which village life is deficient.

Compared to Western standards of living, of course, Thai villagers are poor, and villagers would welcome a higher economic standard of living. But if the question is how village life can *best* be improved, answers other than higher income come to mind. Better health care is one—for every case of malnutrition caused by poverty, how many are caused by ignorance about nutrition? For every infant death caused by poverty, how many are caused by lack of prenatal and postnatal care?

Or if economics are to be given priority, is growth or distribution the more important sector? Two of the great advantages that Thailand brought to the advent of modernization were its high proportion of independent landholders and its low population relative to arable land. A case could be made that Thailand's development resources should be focused not on increasing its rural wealth, but on population control and measures to protect the villager from losing his land. "Way of life" is another potential competitor with economics, though it is seldom perceived as such by development planners. It happens that the Thai people in general, urban and rural alike, believe that they possess certain approaches to life and personal relationships that are superior to other approaches. Among the Thai elite, there is no conscious intention to let modernization destroy these patterns. In view of this, why not treat the nourishment or adaptation of them as a subject to be considered in designing development strategy? It would be an unusual approach for a country to take; it is by no means a nonsensical one.

Other needs in Thailand could be identified that compete with economic growth for attention. Presumably similar examples could be cited in other



sufficiency cultures. The point is that although there are few things worse than starving, there are many things worse than being "poor" in the sense that most Thai villagers are poor. The governments of sufficiency cultures, like the governments of other developing countries, do not have the resources to give every problem the attention it deserves. What does set the sufficiency nations apart is the luxury they enjoy of being able to choose priorities on some other basis than the simple physical survival of their populations. In the Thai case, it is a luxury that has not been recognized.

We are not suggesting that a developing nation deliberately avoid economic growth or higher income for villagers. There is no intention of arguing that villagers ought to be guarded from the evils of Western materialism, still less that it would be possible to do so. On the contrary, the evidence suggests that villager efforts to increase income have a life of their own once villager incentives have been activated, regardless of further government encouragement. A pragmatic argument against concentrating rural development resources on economic growth could be made on these grounds alone. Why spend scarce resources to encourage a phenomenon that seems to be accelerating anyway? But that stance misses the more important possibility that, for a country like Thailand, rural economic growth might rank well below the top in a rational list of priorities.

### THE USES OF THE VILLAGE

The village is not in favor among development planners. Sometimes it is criticized as being anachronistic, or too small to serve as an effective unit of administration, or too poor in resources. More often, as we discussed at the outset of the book, the village is simply overlooked. Its deficiencies as a tool for modernization are assumed. In contrast to this backdrop are two of the key conclusions of this study: that Thai villages possess or are able to acquire a self-governing capacity that is equal to a wide range of tasks, and that unless something is done about it that capacity will deteriorate as modernization continues.

The underlying question is how the village fits into the structure of the nation-state that each less developed country is struggling to build. Is it assumed that the eventual product will be an urbanized society similar to those of the West? Is the village a unit to be deliberately discarded as soon as possible, or allowed to atrophy as nature takes its course, or deliberately sustained through government policy?

These questions do not permit prescriptive answers; they are among the most intensely individual to each country. In the scarcity case, when something on the order of an amoral-familism moral code has become deeply rooted, it may be futile to try to work through traditional local institutions. Perhaps centralization or reorganization of the countryside is the best approach. But what is characteristic of local government in the scarcity environment is not

necessarily true of local government in the sufficiency environment, as the discussion of functional capacity in Thai villages sought to demonstrate. These comments based on the Thai case appear to be in order.

The first conclusion, that Thai villages show a remarkable latent ability to take care of their own affairs, has implications at two levels. On the operational level, it suggests that developing nations look to the possibility of pushing more responsibility out the end of the administrative structure, to the village.

Implementation of small-input local development projects is an obvious use of the village. Too often, village participation in these projects has been justified in terms of its psychological or public relations effects—the common (and patronizing) rationale is that the villagers are more likely to use the input if they feel they have a stake in it. The tendency has therefore been to limit the village's real control over the managerial tasks to cosmetic levels. Symbolic decision-making roles plus the contribution of the village's labor have been thought to be adequate for generating the desired sense of ownership. The data from the sample villages point to the far-reaching possibility that real village control is the best way to get the job done right. If we use the most unsentimental of indices—cost control, appropriateness of design, efficiency in implementation and maintenance—the evidence that the village does better than the government on small-input local development deserves much closer examination in the Thai case, and perhaps elsewhere. Even if the village is found to do only "as well" as the government, the possibilities for reducing the existing drain on the government's limited manpower resources are obvious.

But beyond using the village to manage its own projects, developing nations should look more closely at questions about where to locate police powers, juridical authority, tax collection and disbursement, and the other governmental functions that are so widely being arrogated to centralized bureaucracies that are undermanned, underskilled, and too often undermotivated. How long will it be, for example, before the Thai court system can provide the same judicial services to villages that village leaders now provide? More importantly, should it try to do so? Or is it instead desirable to look for ways to adapt and bolster the traditional system already in place?

As we have attempted to show throughout the study, there are good reasons for considering the latter course. What it amounts to is a reevaluation of the proper structural goals for the government of a developing country. Unfortunately, the widespread identification of nationbuilding with the development of centralized and national institutions makes this reevaluation especially difficult. In theory, there is no contradiction between delegating substantial authority to local government and at the same time developing national institutions. But at least among Thai officials and, for that matter, among most scholars in the field of political development, even limited autonomy in the hinterlands is seen as being a hallmark of the premodern state. In historical perspective, that view is correct. It does not mean that centralization of authority is ipso facto

modern or desirable. The proposition is that the village is inherently in a better position than the central government to perform certain important tasks of governance, sometimes alone and sometimes in tandem with support services from the district and provincial levels. It is this possibility that makes the prospective deterioration of the village's functional capacity a potentially tragic consequence.

Even on a pragmatic level, the deterioration would be costly. In the Thai case, there were at the beginning of the 1970s some 43,000 villages with some 30 million people living in them. For the foreseeable future, the Thai government will not be ready to take on the burden of the de facto services now provided by those communities to their inhabitants. Insofar as deterioration in functional capacity takes place, those services will go unprovided. And insofar as they are not provided, it will mean fundamental deterioration in the quality of a villager's life for some extended period of time. It is hard to accept that this must be part of a "successful" modernization process. It is even harder to accept in view of the evidence that public policy designed to enrich the content of village government may be effective in halting or even reversing the tendency to deterioration.

This is the pragmatic argument, based on the exigencies facing modernizing governments whose administrative ambitions outreach their current capacity. But perhaps the long-range possibilities for building upon the village as a base should be engaging the attention of development planners. It seems particularly appropriate at this particular point in history that a country like Thailand look to its villages as a continuing focal point for self-government. There is no good reason to acquiesce reflexively in the consolidation of authority at the center at the same time when we in the West are casting about for ways to decentralize units of government that have grown too large and unresponsive, and at the same moment when communications and information technology are creating possibilities for combining centralized resources with local authority.

The developing countries bear a number of costs for modernizing after the West. If there is any advantage in modernizing late, it should be in the possibilities for learning from the West's experience and for traveling on a somewhat straighter course to points that the West is approaching very circuitously. In assessing its village heritage, a developing country should consider whether it is seeing only its society as it has been or also a latent image of what its society might wish to become.

## NOTES

1. George M. Foster, "Peasant Society and the Image of Limited Good," *American Anthropologist* 67 (1965): 310. Emphasis added.

2. The use of investment as an indicator of development impact and an application of the theory to the Thai context is described in Robert E. Krug, Paul A. Schwarz, and Suchitra Bhakdi, "Measuring Village Commitment to Development," in *Values in Development: Appraising Asian Experience*, ed. Harold D. Lasswell, Daniel Lerner, and John D. Montgomery (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1976).

## LESSON 5

### LEARNING STYLE

#### Learning Objectives

The participants will:

1. Compare and contrast two cases about rural development and recognize the perspectives from which each was written.
2. Understand the concepts behind Kolb's experiential learning model.
3. Discuss the limitations of the model and its applicability.
4. Apply the concept of learning styles to assess their participation in the debate.

#### Activities

1. Debate on two cases. (1 and 1/2 hours)
  - a) allow each side ten minutes to develop strategy.
  - b) opening statements.
  - c) have external evaluators to determine winner?
2. Break (15 min)
3. Lecture - Experiential Learning Theory (30 min)
4. Triads (30 min)

Task - Discuss role taken in the debate. How was your particular learning style demonstrated in the debate? Were you silently observing, actively participating? What aspects did other people consider in the two cases that you had not? How do you think your learning style affects what you learn?
5. Handout Homework #5 - Establishing Trust (10 min)

## HOMWORK 5

### ESTABLISHING TRUST

#### 1. Read:

1. Letham, Managing Project-Related Technical Assistance.
2. Lacroix, Integrated Rural Development in Latin America.
3. Tendler, Inside Foreign Aid.
4. Hildebrand, "The Sondeo Approach."
5. Marcotte, "Farming Systems Research."
6. Chambers, chapter 5, 103-139.

#### 2. Task for the week:

List ten people whom you tend to mistrust. Choose one of these and engage in activities with him or her to raise the level of trust between you and that person.

#### 3. Write:

In 3 to 5 pages discuss what strategies you used to establish trust and the problems you encountered with the person and with yourself. Relate this to the readings by analysing what assumptions the strategies of Lacroix, Hildebrand, Marcotte and Chambers make about the establishment of trust in their approaches.

Please make a photocopy to hand in at the next session.

## COMBINING DISCIPLINES IN RAPID APPRAISAL: THE SONDEO APPROACH

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### SUMMARY

Multidisciplinary agricultural research teams can augment information on agricultural technology needs. In Guatemala a reconnaissance survey team of ten, equally split between socio-economists and technologists, has been used to assess farmer constraints and technology needs in advance of agricultural research. Quantified information and questionnaires are not required and the survey lasts only one week. The team investigated farmer conditions in pairs made up of a social scientist and a natural scientist. On each of four days the pairing changes. Daily post-survey team discussions are regarded as essential. Each member of the team prepares a report and these are finally amalgamated into one joint report. Experience has shown that combined disciplines can, if well managed, produce incisive and efficient diagnoses of rural conditions and needs and educate the participants in multidisciplinary thinking.

### INTRODUCTION

Several characteristics are critical to an efficient and functioning multidisciplinary effort: first, those concerned must be well trained in their own field; secondly, they need a working understanding of—and must not be afraid to make contributions in—one or more other fields. Team members must not feel the need to defend themselves and their field from intrusion by others. Working together, all members of the team should view the final product as a joint effort in which all have participated and for which all are equally responsible. That means that each must be

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satisfied with the product, given the goals of the team, and be willing and able to defend it.

Perhaps the most critical characteristic required to achieve success in a multidisciplinary team is this identification with a single product in which all participate. The product can be complex and involve a number of facets but it should result from the joint effort of the whole team and not contain strictly identifiable parts attributable to individual team members. Failures of multidisciplinary efforts in agricultural institutions frequently result because teams are organised as committees that meet occasionally to 'co-ordinate' efforts, but in which the crop work is left to the agronomists, the survey to the anthropologists and the desks to the economists. In these cases there is not a single identified product but, rather, several products or reports purported to be concerned with the same problem.

#### TEAM EFFORTS IN AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTES

In the generation of improved agricultural technology for small traditional farmers, all multidisciplinary team members must be oriented towards and identified with 'technology' as the 'product' of the team (normally just the agronomists or animal scientists identify with the product). All must be willing to consider a wide range of variables and constraints and not leave these worries only to the anthropologists or sociologists. Further, all members must be willing to spend some desk time considering alternatives and their consequences on the clients' goals and not leave this just to the economists. The agronomists should be capable and willing to criticise the economic or social aspects of the work, and the social scientists, the agronomic aspects. In turn, these criticisms should be used to improve the product so that all can be satisfied with the final result.

In most agricultural institutes agronomists (who usually greatly outnumber the social scientists) are concerned about too much influence from the socioeconomic group in work at the farm level. This is manifest in resistance by agronomists to identifying too closely with the farmers (even with those on whose land they conduct trials). It also surfaces with respect to the evaluation of technology. The agronomist is much more comfortable if a final evaluation follows the farm trial phase of the work where he, himself, makes the evaluation. The agronomist, then, decides if a technology is 'good'. If, later, the farmer evaluates this 'good' technology and does not accept it, the agronomist considers it a problem for the extension service, or of poor infrastructure, of low prices, or of lack of initiative on the part of the farmer himself, but not a problem for the agronomist, who has produced what he considers to be a 'good' product. In this situation, evaluation by the farmer is equated with influence by socioeconomicists, who dare ask the farmer his opinion and who would tend to take into consideration more variables, including the present weaknesses in infrastructure, the price level, the farmers' capabilities, etc., in the development of a

technology so that the product of the team's efforts could be used immediately without the need to await the development of other facets of the sector.

#### THE SONDEO: A TEAM RAPID SURVEY APPROACH

The Sondeo is a modified survey technique developed by the Guatemalan Institute of Agricultural Science and Technology, ICTA, as a response to budget restrictions, time requirements and the other methodology utilised, to augment information in a region where agricultural technology generation and promotion is being initiated.

In order to understand the methodology, it is first necessary to understand how ICTA is organised at the regional level. Each of the regions in which the Institute functions has a Regional Director who is the representative of the Director General of the Institute and of the Technical Director. Within the region, each area in which work is being carried out is in charge of a 'Sub-regional delegate', a technician who has a minimum amount of administrative responsibilities. All the technicians, from whatever discipline or programme, who work in the area, are responsible to him. This multidisciplinary team is usually comprised of some or all of the following: plant breeders, pathologists, a socioeconomist and approximately four general agronomists who are the Technology Testing Team. This group, backed up by the national Co-ordinators of Programmes (corn, beans, etc.) and Support Disciplines (socioeconomics, soil management) are responsible for orienting and conducting the generation and promotion of technology in the area. The work includes basic plant breeding and/or selection on the (usually small) experiment station in the area, farm trials, tests by farmers of promising technology, evaluation of the acceptability of the technology tested by farmers and economic production or farm records maintained by farmers with the help of the technicians. In order to provide the original orientation to the team, the Sondeo, or reconnaissance survey, is conducted by members of the Technology Testing Team who are going to work in the area, sometimes personnel from an appropriate Programme, and a team from socioeconomics comprised of one or more of the following: anthropologists, sociologists, economists, agricultural economists and/or engineers. Usually, there are five people from socioeconomics and five from the Technology Testing Team who form a ten-man Sondeo team for an area.

The purpose of the Sondeo is to provide the information required to orient the work of the technology generating team. The cropping or farming systems are described, the agro-socioeconomic situation of the farmers is determined and the restrictions they face are defined so that any proposed modifications of their present technology are appropriate to their conditions.

If ICTA is to work in an area that is not previously defined, such as by the bounds of a land settlement or an irrigation project, one of the objectives of the Sondeo is to delimit the area. This is done by first selecting the predominant cropping or farming

system used by potential target farmers in the area and later determining the area in which this system is important. The reason that an homogeneous traditional or present cropping or farming system is used is that it is this system that ICTA will be modifying with new or improved technology. Hence, having a well defined, homogeneous system with which to work simplifies the procedure of generating and promoting technology. The premise on which the selection of an homogeneous cropping or farming system is based is that all the farmers who presently use it have made similar adjustments to a set of restrictions which they all face and, since they made the same adjustments, they must all be facing the same set of agro-socioeconomic conditions.

As well as delimiting the area of this homogeneous system, the tasks of the Sondeo team are to discover what agro-socioeconomic conditions all the farmers who use the system have in common and then to identify which are the most important in determining the present system and therefore would be the most important to consider in any modifications to be made by the team in future. Finally, the end product of the Sondeo is to orient the first year's work in farm trials and variety selection. It also serves to locate future collaborators for the farm trials and for the farm record projects.

Because the farm trials are conducted under farm conditions, during the first year they provide an additional learning process into the conditions that affect the farmers and are invaluable in acquainting the technicians with the realities of farming in the area. The farm records—which are also initiated in the first year—provide quantifiable technical and cost information on the technology being used by the farmers. At the end of the first year's work, then, the technicians have not only been farming under the conditions of the farmers in the area, but they also have the information from the farm record project. For this reason, it is not necessary to obtain quantifiable information in the Sondeo, which is not a benchmark study. Quantifiable information for impact evaluation in the area is available from farm records which increase in value each year.

#### THE SONDEO PROCEDURE

The primary purpose of the Sondeo, then, is to acquaint the technicians with the area in which they are going to work. Because quantifiable information is not needed, the Sondeo can be conducted rapidly and no lengthy analyses of data are required following the survey in order to interpret the findings. No questionnaires are used so farmers are interviewed in an informal manner which does not alienate them. At the same time, the use of a multidisciplinary team serves to provide information from many different points of view simultaneously. Depending on the size, complexity and accessibility of the area, the Sondeo should be completed in from 6 to 10 days at a minimum of cost. Areas of from 40 to 150 km<sup>2</sup> have been



studied in this period of time. The following is a description of the methodology for a six-day operation.

#### *Day 1*

The first day is a general reconnaissance of the area by the whole team as a unit. The team must make a preliminary determination of the most important cropping or farming system that will serve as the key system, become acquainted in general terms with the area and begin to search out the limits to the homogeneous system. Following each discussion with a farmer, the group meets out of sight of the farmer to discuss each one's interpretation of the interview. In this way, the team members begin to become acquainted with how each other thinks. Interviews with farmers (or other people in the area) should be very general and wide ranging because the team is exploring and *searching for an unknown number of unknown elements*. (This does not imply, of course, that the interviews lack orientation.) The contribution or point of view of each discipline is critical throughout the Sondeo because the team does not know beforehand what type of problems or restrictions may be encountered. The more disciplines that are brought to bear on the situation, the greater is the probability of encountering the factors which are, in fact, the most critical to the farmers of the area. It has been established that these restrictions can be agro-climatic, economic or socio-cultural. Hence, all disciplines make equal contributions to the Sondeo.

#### *Day 2*

The interviewing and general reconnaissance of the first day serve to guide the work of the second day. Teams are made up of pairs: one agronomist or animal scientist from the Technology Testing Team and one person from socioeconomics who work together in the interviews. The five teams scatter throughout the area and meet again either after the first half-day (for small areas or areas with good access roads) or day (for larger areas or where access is difficult and requires more time for travel). Each member of each team discusses what was learned during the interviews and tentative hypotheses are formed to help explain the situation in the area. Any information concerning the limits of the area are also discussed to help in its delimitation. The tentative hypotheses or doubts raised during the discussion serve as guides to the following interview sessions. During the team discussions, each of the members learns how interpretations from other points of view can be important in understanding the problems of the farmers of the region.

Following the discussion, the team pairs are changed to maximise interdisciplinary interaction and minimise interviewer bias and they return to the field guided by the previous discussion. Once again, following the half-day's or day's interviews, the group meets to discuss the findings.

The importance of these discussions following a series of interviews cannot be over-stressed. Together, the group begins to understand the relationships

encountered in the region, delimits the zone and starts to define the type of research that is going to be necessary to help improve the technology of the farmers. Other problems—such as marketing—are also discussed and, if solutions are required, relevant entities can be notified. It is important to understand the effect that these other limitations will have, if not corrected, on the type of technology to be developed so that they can be taken into account in the generation process.

During the second day there should be a notable convergence of opinion and a corresponding narrowing of interview topics. In this way, more depth can be acquired in following days on the topics of increasing interest.

#### *Day 3*

This is a repeat of day 2 and always includes a change in the makeup of the teams after each discussion. At least a minimum of four interview-discussion cycles is necessary to complete this part of the Sondeo. If the area is not too complex, these cycles should be adequate. Of course, if the area is so large that a full day is required for interviewing between each discussion session, then four full days are required for this part of the Sondeo.

#### *Day 4*

Before the teams return to the field for more interviews on the fourth day, each member is assigned a portion or section of the report that is to be written. Then, knowing for the first time for what topic each will be responsible, the teams, regrouped in the fifth combination, return to the field for more interviewing. For smaller areas, this also is a half day. In the other half day, and following another discussion session, the group begins to write the report of the Sondeo. All members should be working at the same location so that they can circulate freely and discuss points with each other. For example, an agronomist who was assigned the section on maize technology may have been discussing a key point with an anthropologist and needs to refresh his memory about what a particular farmer said in a brief discussion with him. In this manner the interaction among the disciplines continues.

#### *Day 5*

As the technicians are writing the report, they invariably encounter points for which neither they nor others in the group have answers. The only remedy is to return to the field on the morning of the fifth day to fill in the gaps found the day before. A half day can be devoted to this activity, together with finishing the writing of the main body of the report.

In the afternoon of this day, each team member reads his written report to the group for discussion, editing and approval. The report should be read from the beginning just as it will be when finished. As a group, the team should approve and/or modify what is presented.

*Day 6*

The report is read once again and, following the reading of each section, conclusions are drawn and recorded. When this is finished, the conclusions are read once again for approval and specific recommendations are then made and recorded both for the team who will be working in the area and for any other agencies that should be involved in the general development process of the zone.

The product of the sixth day is a single report generated and authored by the entire multidisciplinary team and should be supported by all of the members. Furthermore, after participating for all six days with each other, each member should be able to defend all the points of view discussed, the conclusions drawn and the recommendations made.

## THE REPORT

To a certain extent, the report of the Sondeo is of secondary value because it has been written by the same team that will be working in the area. Most of its value lies just in the fact that they have written it. By being forced into a situation where many different points of view had to be taken into consideration and coalesced, the horizons of all will have been greatly amplified. Further, the report can serve as orientation for non-participants, such as the Regional Director or the Technical Director, in discussing the merits of various courses of action. However, it is also obvious that the report will appear to be one written by ten different persons in a hurry, which is just exactly what it is! It is not a benchmark study with quantifiable data that can be used in the future for project evaluation; rather, it is a working document to orient the research programme and that served one basic function in just being written.

The exact format and content of a report of a Sondeo will vary according to the area being studied and the nature of the crops or livestock enterprises included. The following is a brief description of an outline of a report recently completed in one area of Guatemala where grains and vegetables were of primary interest (see Chinchilla<sup>1</sup>).

*Purpose*

Describes the reason the Sondeo was undertaken and the dates.

*Homogeneous technology*

Describes the principal characteristics of the technology regarding the crops of interest found within the limits of the area and the important differences outside the area that changed the nature of the cropping system and defined the limits of the area.

*Description of the delimited area*

Geographical limits, altitude, soils and other important features, including a map drawn with the boundaries as precise as possible.

*Land*

Land tenure and farm size were important restrictions in the cropping system and were described.

*Labour*

General labour availability and periods of scarcity and the special tasks performed by women in the homogeneous system were described.

*Capital*

The capital flow in the traditional system which provides the funds for investing in both the basic grains and the vegetables was described and the poor functioning of the small farm credit system was noted.

*Corn*

The most important components of the corn production system were described.

*Beans*

The rôle beans play in the system and their lack of general importance was discussed.

*Vegetables*

The production system and the marketing of vegetables were described.

*Livestock activity*

The special importance of livestock and of the livestock-crop interaction was discussed.

*Conclusions*

Conclusions for each of the above sections were drawn with special emphasis on their meaning to the future work of ICTA.

*Recommendations*

Those relevant to ICTA and to other organisations in the public agricultural sector as well as the private sector.

Because one of the principal purposes of the Sondeo is to guide the efforts of the resident Technology Generating Team, some of the important recommendations from this Sondeo are elaborated below. These recommendations obviously guide

the type of technology which will be included in the farm trials and requested from the experiment station in support of farm trials. Specific treatments to be included and the experimental designs to be used are generally left to the team members and the national Programme and Discipline Co-ordinators to determine.

(1) Maize is the most important subsistence crop in the area. The farmers tend to think in terms of a fixed minimum quantity required for the family and the animals. Because of the competition of the vegetables for labour and capital, low technology is used in the maize and, frequently, land is substituted. This must be considered in the mix of technology generated.

(2) Cropping systems must be devised that rotate or intercrop vegetables with maize, but not at the cost of reducing maize production. It is also necessary in these systems to realise that most of the capital and labour will be utilised on the vegetables and not on the maize.

(3) In vegetable technology, priority should be given to disease control and fertilisation.

(4) Even though beans are an important subsistence crop, given the importance of vegetables and the shortages of funds for research, it is recommended that little emphasis be given to beans in this area at the present time.

(5) Because of problems with the small farm credit programme, it is recommended that the technology to be generated should not be based on the hope of such a programme in the short run.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS

The disciplinary speciality of each member of the Sondeo team is not critical so long as there are several disciplines represented, and, if the Sondeo is in agriculture, a significant number of them are agriculturalists. At least some of these should also be from among those who will be working in the area in the future. The discipline of the Co-ordinator of the Sondeo is probably not critical, either, if he is a person with a broad capability, an understanding of agriculture (if it is an agricultural Sondeo) and experience in surveying and survey technique. However, the Co-ordinator must have a high degree of *multidisciplinary tolerance* and be able to interact with all the other disciplines represented on the team.

The Co-ordinator, in a sense, is an orchestra director who must assure that everyone contributes to the tune but that, in the final product, all are in harmony. He must control the group and maintain discipline. He arbitrates differences, creates enthusiasm, extracts hypotheses and thoughts from each participant and ultimately will be the one who coalesces the product into the final form. It is perhaps not essential that he has prior experience in a Sondeo, but it would certainly improve his efficiency if he had.

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## The Disarticulation of Farming Systems Research with National Agricultural Systems: Bringing FSR Back In

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### SUMMARY

Despite efforts of the 1960s and 1970s, such as capital and technology transfer and high yielding varieties of the Green Revolution, undesirable social and economic changes persist and in most cases have accelerated. One of the current methodological approaches to analyzing and solving agricultural problems, farming systems research, is encountering the same frustrations and lack of success as its theoretical forerunners. It is the contention of this paper that unless FSR is articulated with its political economy and an enlightened national agricultural policy designed with equity, it will not succeed.

### INTRODUCTION

With the onset of the 1980s decade came the increasing realization that world food security needs were not being met. Despite the increased agricultural production accompanying the much acclaimed capital and technology transfer programs of the 1960s and the high-yield plant breeding of the Green Revolution in the 1970s, undesirable social and economic changes persist and in most cases have accelerated. These programs have been associated with peasant displacement, increased scale thresholds beyond the reach of self-sufficient farmers, and further inequitable distribution of wealth. In many countries farmers left the land due to an inability to make requisite profits, were drawn to cities seeking dwindling opportunities or

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were made landless farm laborers as high-tech, capital-intensive agricultural production expanded both in scale and market dominance. Furthermore, in many instances, increased yields either have not kept pace with population growth, which has contributed to declines in per capita agricultural production, or were not distributed to hungry and even starving populations via the marketplace or international relief efforts. That there is continued poverty and immiseration begs the case for a critical look at the international agricultural development strategies and their articulation with existing political economies.

Concurrent with this realization was the advent of a new buzzword and methodological approach to analyzing agricultural problems: farming systems research (FSR). Theoretically the incorporation of small, self-sufficient farmers into a bottom-up strategy combined with the modern technological research centers of national agricultural systems (NAS) would provide heretofore undiscovered directions for solving the problems.

In this paper, it is argued that FSR, while making claims of being holistic, ignores the political economy and class structure within which recommendations are made, and therefore, fails to account for the considerable disarticulation between the realities of the political economy and the production goals of on-farm FSR research. In short, FSR proponents fail to take into consideration the international, regional, and national market and fiscal policies that militate against their recommendations. Furthermore, given the closed systemic character of FSR models, such consideration is problematic. It is proposed then, that this failure to consider critical exogenous factors is in part the product of FSR's theoretical heritage in 'systems' and functionalist analyses.

It is concluded that unless the interests of those at the bottom of rural social structures, for which FSR programs have been designed, are consistent with the class interests of those making national policy decisions, disarticulation will occur causing FSR to eventually fail to meet its objectives.

#### THEORETICAL PLACEMENT OF FSR

Recently FSR (and by association the development dimension—farming systems research and development) has come under criticism for its limited application within the political-economy perspective. Oasa and Swanson, in a critique of FSR's limited analytical framework, have explicated its paradigmatic heritage of economic development programs. Briefly, a connection is drawn between FSR and its historic forerunners of capital and technology transfer programs. Since FSR's programmatic approach came directly from this heritage and was born and fostered by the International

Agricultural Research Centers, the historical and intellectual limitations of FSR's forerunners have been incorporated into its methodological approach.

Another critique is that of Biggs,<sup>1</sup> in which the scientific approach to problem selection and solving is analyzed. It is argued that the individual problem-solving techniques and approaches heretofore selected have inadequately considered the resource, political, and socio-economic environments within which the problems (and solutions) occur.

It is our contention that a complete understanding of these criticisms first requires a discussion of the theoretical framework from which FSR emerged. The remainder of this section will examine the conceptual origins of FSR as a means for analyzing its theoretical and consequently its practical limitations.

According to its proponents, FSR, as an approach to agricultural research and development, '... views the whole farm as a system, and focuses on (1) the interdependencies between the components under the control of members of the farm household and (2) how these components interact with the physical, biological, and socioeconomic factors not under the household's control' (p. 13).<sup>21</sup> Its primary aim is to increase the productivity of the farming system through improvement and development of relevant technology and complementary governmental policies. An implicit assumption is that in some unspecified manner the developed alternative technologies will increase total productivity and that such increases, in turn, will yield a corresponding increase in wealth, most, if not all, of which will be retained by the producer.

While the political heritage of FSR has been discussed<sup>13, 14</sup> the theoretical heritage remains to be explicated. Among the social sciences, this heritage is firmly anchored in the assumptions of functionalism, which has its roots in the work of Emile Durkheim.

The discipline of sociology, in an effort to capture some of the soaring legitimacy of 'science', has adopted the quantitative assumptions incorporated in the scientific method—thus making claims to be a social science.<sup>9</sup> Durkheim's innovative methodological work, which rested upon an organic analogy, reduced sociological phenomena to social facts that could be quantitatively measured—similar to the biological and inorganic sciences. The attendant assumptions of scientific empiricism were thus incorporated into sociology: societies were reduced to closed, interdependent organisms in constant motion toward equilibrium. Consequently social scientists could claim to stand outside their object of study, unhindered by their own values and biases, objectively observing, quantifying, and describing the object of analysis, as would a natural scientist. This tradition has been carried through Structural Functionalism and Systems Theory by

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both Talcott Parsons, and his contemporary biological science counterpart Ludwig von Bertalanffy, into the current farming systems method.<sup>15,24</sup>

It was von Bertalanffy's contention that phenomena such as species, solar systems and galaxies cannot be fruitfully viewed as mechanistic macro objects merely obeying deterministic laws of motion. He proposed an alternative mode of analysis in which such phenomena were nested among and within one another rather than disaggregating into randomness. His new paradigm allowed for the development of theories, systems theories, as they deal with specific phenomena such as organisms, populations, ecologies, groups, societies and the like. In 1947, von Bertalanffy wrote:

'...there exist models, principles and laws that apply to generalized systems or their subclasses irrespective of their particular kind, the nature of the component elements, and the relations of "forces" between them. We postulate a new discipline called General System Theory' (p. 11).<sup>24</sup>

This paradigm necessitated a transdisciplinary synthesis which included general phenomenological aspects of organismic systems such as hierarchical order, trends towards higher organization, differentiation into subsystems, and progressive centralization. In recognition of the validity of Aristotle's statement 'the whole is more than the sum of its parts', and recognizing that the popular mechanistic approach ignored this wisdom, von Bertalanffy argued:

'Since the fundamental character of the living thing is its organization, the customary investigation of the single parts and processes cannot provide a complete explanation of the vital phenomena. This investigation gives us no information about the coordination of its parts and processes' (p. 11).<sup>24</sup>

Since agricultural research in general, and FSR practitioners specifically, have been criticized for not taking advantage of 'systems' concepts in defining physical, biological and social phenomena, Hart and George<sup>8</sup> have developed a systems model in the von Bertalanffy tradition (see Fig. 1). This model illustrates a hierarchical system that includes both vertical and horizontal system interactions such that functioning subsystems' outputs serve as inputs for others. It should be noted that this is not the only FSR model that is utilized. However, it is one of the models utilized in a collection of readings by '...the leading practitioners in FSR'.<sup>22</sup>

The General System Theory presented by von Bertalanffy rests upon the assumption that such a system is both a model with universal traits and a set of elements which are interrelated among themselves and their environment. This model of interrelated parts is (1) hierarchical, (2) tends toward higher

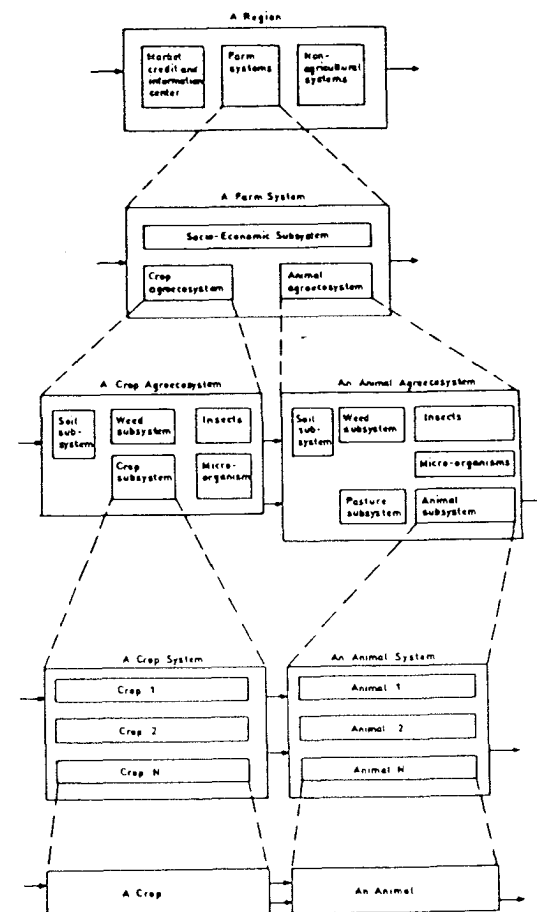


Fig. 1. Hierarchical relationship between agricultural systems (Hart & George).<sup>8</sup>

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organization, (3) includes differentiation into subsystems, and (4) requires a progressive centralization, and by inference, reductionist analyses. In so far as FSR's proponents claim to be articulating a 'system', it would appear that it is a 'system' within von Bertalanffy's paradigm. FSR's proponents do attempt to theoretically assess the entirety of the farming 'system' as it impinges on the primary unit of analysis—the farm household. Both human and technical 'elements' and their interaction are observed from a systemic perspective. Concern for determining any interaction among the technical elements is internal with respect to the environmental endowments and constraints. With regard to the human element there is additional concern over exogenous and endogenous factors. Furthermore, in recognition of the complexity of the farm household decision process from a systems perspective, the analysis by necessity becomes general and interdisciplinary in its conceptual formulations.

Clearly, such an approach provides an opportunity to 'systematically' examine the target population from multidisciplinary perspectives. Such a view, it is argued, provides necessary information beyond the scope and capability of a narrow focus on the target population. For example, a policy-level price change may have critical implications for the individual farm household, and yet as an exogenous variable, the farmer may know nothing of the change or not be in a position to be proactive, but reactive. Thus, the FSR team should be able to broaden the research perspective and provide leadership for 'positive' change.

### CONCEPTUAL CRITIQUE

Having identified FSR's 'systemic' heritage it is now possible to examine how this heritage both directs its paradigmatic research agenda and limits its scope of inquiry. An initial critique, then, should be metatheoretical. According to Habermas<sup>7</sup> and Radnitzky,<sup>17</sup> empirical sociology is a technical approach which views action as rational in a limited means-ends rationality. Such a positivist approach tends to proceed through stages of increasing rationalization.

In the first stage, conveniently labeled 'technologies', models such as FSR, are constructed with specific variables emanating from the technical members of the participating sciences. The second stage, referred to as 'decision theory', involves the making of choices among the various technologies under consideration. Since particular technical interests of the FSR 'team' mediate the choice of technique, the values of these technicians are automatically included. Within the third stage, 'game theory', the rules of analysis are schematized and operationalized. At this point the values of the

technicians are accepted as given, and thereby become domain assumptions of the model. In the fourth stage, the cybernetically guided (or automatically controlled) techniques are automated, and decisions are made by computers which have been programmed to accept the value premises of the technicians. The analysis is accepted as scientific and therefore value-free and rational. Radnitzky (p. 327)<sup>17</sup> asserts:

'The idea that man conducts his fate rationally to the extent in which he uses social techniques and even the very employment itself of such techniques is cybernetically steered.'

Therefore, given such an instrumentalistic view of scientific theory, action may be economically rational and efficient with respect to ends. However, the ends themselves are never questioned or criticized.

Structural Functionalism's theory of development—modernization theory—neatly fits this type of rationalization. The problems selected and the research methods employed incorporate the assumptions of this 'scientific' approach. FSR is a conceptual offspring of modernization theory and therefore is subject to its promises and limitations. In FSR particularly, the majority of the work that has been accomplished has been ahistorical, procedural, and scientific. This has impacted upon its approach, its process of problem selection, its operationalization, and ultimately its conclusions.

A contradictory consequence of this process is that the technicians not only trust their model's conclusions to be unbiased, but, by acting on these conclusions through technical policy recommendations, they consciously or unwittingly assume that science can provide technical solutions for fundamentally socio-economic and political problems. Thus, the conclusions reached often recommend yield increases, irrigation systems, alternative technologies, and market development, assuming that improvements will benefit societies in general. Despite three decades of development effort directed by various forms of modernization theory, human immiseration, poverty, starvation, and social inequalities continue to exist, and worsen, thus begging the case for a higher level of articulation. The alternative modes of analysis that have the potential of incorporating the best of FSR are the various perspectives embodied by the critical theory.

A common criticism of critical approaches is that they are not proactive, i.e., they offer incisive critiques but lack praxis. While such criticism tends to be more polemical than true (the early theorists of Western Marxism were also social activists) Radnitzky offers a way of combining the research dimension of FSR with the assumptions of political economy. While quantitative sociology concerns itself with making societal phenomena visible, critical sociology concerns itself with '... what we ... must do, viz. the planning and shaping of the future' (p. 343).<sup>17</sup> Thus, in addition to producing

empirical knowledge, there is also a critical task to historically situate the information. It is this addition, the critique or reflexivity, through which social science can achieve an adequate self-understanding. 'Empirical knowledge can be utilized for social technologies and hence be indispensable for rational administration; criticism—especially of ideologies—can contribute to a rationalization of practical questions about ends' (p. 319).<sup>17</sup>

### THE CASE FOR DISARTICULATION: THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The preceding theoretical orientation perhaps is best employed in de Janvry's<sup>4</sup> analysis of development policies in Latin America. His principal concern is to explain the inability for development theories and programs to reconcile efficiencies of production at the micro-level with efficiencies of production at the macro-level. That is, how are international and national policies disarticulated with development efforts at the micro-, or household-level. After carefully discussing the historical context of Latin American development de Janvry describes the inherent contradictions of these multiple-level development policies.

de Janvry's critical focus rests upon 'cheap food policies' and their inherent tendency to be disarticulated with household-level development strategies despite their intention to enhance production capacities and thereby increase family income. de Janvry (p. 39)<sup>4</sup> proposes that there are three dimensions to this contradiction:

'[1] cheap food policies that suppress the price of food; [2] concessional imports; and [3] technological change and the development of capitalism in agriculture. Each of these is in turn contradictory: cheap food policies imply the stagnation of domestic food production as modernization of agriculture is made unprofitable; food imports increase the stress on the balance of payments; and the development of capitalist agriculture marginalizes peasants and accelerates the liquidation of functional dualism.'

Each of these contradictions is in evidence in the case of the Dominican Republic, especially in terms of the national policy of suppressing agricultural prices in order to make food cheaper for impoverished urban workers. The artificially low price aimed at pacifying the urban poor has the effect of shifting the surplus-value created by the producer to the consumer. Thus, while the urban consumer might be temporarily satisfied, assuming there is an income to purchase the subsidized food, the low price garnered by the farm producer has the socio-economic and political consequence of

eliminating the marginal, limited-resource farmer and therefore of accelerating rural to urban migration. In the Dominican Republic, the urban population has increased from 30 per cent in 1960 to 53 per cent in 1982 (this does not include the 900 000 Dominicans in New York City). This rapid influx of new labor primarily contributes to even higher urban unemployment rates and federal welfare outlays. Presently, unofficial estimates of unemployment in the Dominican Republic exceed 40 per cent. This cheap food policy has facilitated the internal economic contradictions that traditionally have had the consequence of creating more landless laborers with no place to ply their unskilled nonfarm labor. Ironically, then, a cheap food policy that was supposed to pacify is laying the foundation for major social upheaval and political repression.

Concessional imports also have played a contradictory role. Imports from the United States in the form of food and feed grains have steadily increased since the 1950s.<sup>6</sup> This policy has the tendency to exacerbate the low commodity price policy for the marginal producer as well as to deplete federal revenues. Typically, policies that subsidize consumers for imported commodities (1) decrease the quantity of domestic production, (2) tend to transfer surplus-value from the producer to the consumer and middlemen (similar to the cheap food policy), and (3) create a loss in production efficiency (p. 195).<sup>23</sup> Unsurprisingly, it is the contention of critical theorists such as de Janvry<sup>4</sup> and Robinson<sup>18</sup> that food self-sufficiency must take preeminence over self-reliance.

'From every point of view—political, economic and humane—the first necessity for the third world is to increase production of basic foodstuffs. ... Production of food is the most effective form of import saving investment. For a country with a deficit in its balance of payments to import food means that it is borrowing in order to eat. The debt remains to be paid after the food has been eaten' (p. 132).<sup>18</sup>

A further manifestation of this concessional trade contradiction is the Dominican Republic's enormous international debt. The debt that remains to be paid in the Dominican Republic has escalated since the assassination of Trujillo to almost impossible proportions. From virtually nothing in 1963, the debt has risen to 3 billion US dollars in 1985. Fully 25 per cent of the traditionally unstable export earnings, almost exclusively from sugarcane, is required to service the debt (18.7 per cent in 1982;<sup>26</sup> estimated 25 per cent for 1985<sup>12</sup>).

This problem is compounded by the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) policies required of debtor nations. The main elements imposed by the IMF on aid seeking countries are: (1) reduced expenditures through restricted credit and increased interest rates; (2) control over price supports,

subsidies or wage rate; and (3) pressure not to impose tariffs, trade licenses, and multiple exchange rates that favor exports over imports. The IMF insists on devaluation of currencies in lieu of these policies.<sup>16</sup> Where the main exports are raw materials in inelastic demand [e.g., sugarcane], this fails to increase foreign earning and it pours oil on the fires of inflation at home' (Robinson, p. 98).<sup>18</sup>

The consequences are all too familiar. Low prices are maintained, production growth fails to keep pace with demand, more food is imported, and the national currency is devalued (from \$1 DR peso = \$1 US to 3 to 1 in one day), thus further eroding export earnings. Predictably, despite the cheap food policies, destabilizing urban riots and general unrest followed the most recent IMF negotiations.

Export policies also may undermine domestic food production. It might be expected that exportation of sugarcane, and winter produce, such as cantaloupes and tomatoes, provides US currency and employment and therefore on balance improves the 'general' well-being. In point of fact, unfavorable terms of trade resulting from 'monopolistic' conditions characterize the Caribbean sugarcane market. Robinson's<sup>18</sup> analysis of the winter produce industry provides an excellent comparison for sugar and winter produce production in the Dominican Republic. Furthermore, the primary import country, the US, controls the amount of sugar permitted into the country by simultaneously setting quotas and very high support prices, which protects the indigenous US sugar industry. The support price has been about \$0.19 per pound—as compared to \$0.03 for the world price. The high US government price is designed to support the historically concentrated US sugar industry and not the sugar industries of the Caribbean Basin. Consequently, with the decline in demand for sugar in the US (in part due to the development of sugar synthetics and substitutes) and the deepening fiscal crisis of the federal government, concessions in the sugar program have come at the expense of the Caribbean nations. Since 1982, the Dominican Republic sugar quota has been cut from 447 000 tons to 278 000 tons in 1986. The *Wall Street Journal* (p. 1)<sup>25</sup> has reported the following concerns of Carlos Morales Troncoso, the Vice President of the Dominican Republic:

'US sugar policy has been "catastrophic". He estimates that the region's sugar producers have lost at least \$300 million in export earnings since 1984 because of the quota cuts.'

The domestic agriculture crisis is evident in the inability of the Dominican State Sugar Council to pay 8000 small- and medium-sized growers, which has resulted in the layoff of between 20 000 to 100 000 farm workers—thus exacerbating the overcrowding in Santo Domingo's slums.<sup>25</sup>

In the competition for export markets such as sugar, the inability of countries like the Dominican Republic to control supply has led to a steady deterioration in the terms of trade between producing countries and sugar importers.<sup>12,18</sup> The deterioration of export earnings is further complicated by the unstable social conditions within the Dominican Republic. As the major source of hard currency income, the production of exportable agricultural crops like sugarcane and winter produce is actively encouraged by the government. This policy forces the producers of exportable agricultural commodities into direct competition with the domestic food production sector for productive land. As the major share of cultivable land, and eventually even marginal land, has been transferred to the production of these export commodities, production of domestic food has declined. Consequently, the country becomes increasingly less able to sustain its own food needs, and thereby further threatens its internal food security.

Finally, with respect to technological changes that facilitate the increasing dominance of capitalist formations in agriculture, the liquidation of functional dualism is accelerated. de Janvry refers to functional dualism as the relationship between capitalist agriculture and a quasi-commercial/subsistence farming sector, in which the smallholding sector contributes to capital accumulation in the capitalist sector. According to de Janvry, subsistence agriculture is the 'ultimate embodiment of contradictions of accumulation in the disarticulated economies' (p. 39).<sup>4</sup> He contends that it is functionally beneficial for the capitalist agricultural sector to coexist with a smallholding farm sector which provides cheap labor and cheap food. That is, the smallholding sector provides a necessary labor pool for periods of peak labor demand as well as cheap food which helps to maintain low labor costs. However, as the forementioned contradictions unfold, the smallholding sector becomes increasingly marginal. Consequently, as smallholders quit production, this sector can no longer serve the function of providing cheap labor and cheap food for the commercial agricultural sector, and thus is steadily unable to contribute to capital accumulation in the capitalist sector.

#### FSR's SYSTEMIC SHORTCOMINGS

These contradictions suggest that for development efforts to be successful, all levels of policy, at a minimum, must not be disarticulated with one another. Even within a systems-like perspective this disarticulation can be explicated. Figure 2 presents an overly simplistic idiographic description of a hierarchical model, but one that we feel succinctly advances our purpose, i.e., to demonstrate disarticulation, even in a systems framework. However, as

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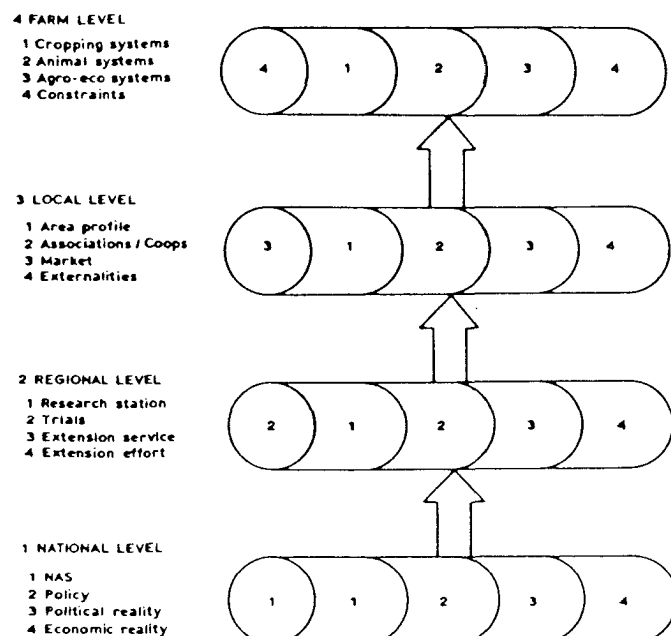


Fig. 2. General systems hierarchical model (Marcotte).<sup>12</sup>

opposed to the tendency for system theorists to work within the framework of a closed model, this heuristic model is open. Once again we will use the example of the Dominican Republic to illustrate disarticulation.

The National Agricultural System (NAS) is responsible for implementing national agricultural goals and objectives. The resulting policies are supposed to be articulated through regional organizations such as the research stations and extension service. In a closed systems model, these objectives would be operationalized through local institutions into cropping patterns at the farm level. However, there are at least two points at which this network is disarticulated. First, the type of research performed at the regional levels is market-commodity based (usually field crops). It is performed on single crops grown independently rather than on intercropping systems. Replications and results of the regional research are not commonly done in on-farm trials. Therefore, generalized regional research

often is not applicable at the household-level.<sup>20</sup> Second, while the stated policy may be to increase food production for consumption, the realities of a cheap food policy include inherent disincentives to maximize local production.

A fully articulated agricultural system aimed at improving the income of smallholders through research that increases total productivity not only would have to be supported by regional research centers that reflected smallholder 'farming systems', but also would include national market policies aimed at helping smallholders retain the increased surplus-value attained through increased productivity. However, as already noted, IMF and concessionary trade policies militate against such agricultural objectives. Rather, they support export crop production, such as sugarcane, which is highly concentrated and employs large quantities of non-Dominican labor, primarily Haitians.

FSR models do not take into account even the possibility of disarticulation between its goals for greater production at the household level and the policy imperatives at the international, national, or regional levels. This inability to account for disarticulation, as described earlier, is in part a consequence of its functionalist tradition's tendency toward reductionism. Reductionism refers to a mode of analysis in which the properties of complex wholes, whether molecules or social organizations, are explained only in terms of the parts of which each is composed. In brief, 'reductionism is the claim that the compositional units of a whole are ontologically prior to the whole that the units comprise ... [such that] there is a chain of causation that runs from the units to the whole' (pp. 5-6).<sup>10</sup> Hart and George's (p. 47)<sup>8</sup> FSR model, presented in Fig. 1, provides an apt example.

The principal 'prior ontological assumption' is that the primary objective is increased productivity of the 'farming system'. An ancillary assumption is that such an increase will accomplish the goal of improved viability and social well-being of the farm household. Consequently, the primary objective is simply increased productivity. These assumptions also reflect the assumptions of most agricultural schools and colleges of the West.<sup>2</sup> This is certainly an ubiquitous assumption among FSR proponents. The following citation from Caldwell (p. 22)<sup>3</sup> is representative:

'As Norman<sup>11</sup> states, "The primary aim of [the Farming Systems Approach to research] is to increase the overall productivity of the farming system—therefore, hopefully the welfare of individual farming families." I would suggest that our challenge is to move beyond "hopefully". Certainly we cannot assume ... that, "Take care of agricultural income and the household will take care of itself".'

The assumption is that increased productivity will produce increased agricultural income even though the household will not necessarily take care of itself. Such a seemingly unassuming position has the consequence of directing on-farm research toward the maximization of production within the agronomic and knowledge limits of the farming household. Oasa and Swanson<sup>14</sup> have argued that the history of technologically induced increases in productivity, whether among advanced industrial or third world societies, is quickly off-set by unfavorable terms of trade between producers and markets. Hence, it is unreasonable to assume that increased productivity leads to increased agricultural income for farm families.

Furthermore, by focusing on the most elementary parts of the farming system—which in Hart and George's model<sup>6</sup> are 'a crop' or 'an animal'—FSR practitioners are following a reductionist mode of analysis. Given the *a priori* assumption of 'increased productivity' within the context of particular crop and animal agroecosystems, it is taken for granted that the 'improvements' in the agroecosystems will articulate with the socio-economic subsystem, even though there is no apparent reason for making such an assumption in the model. Changes in the most elementary part of the system, then, are considered to 'cause' the desired change at higher levels of aggregation.

Hart and George's model also does not address how the increased productivity of the 'farm system' will interact with either 'market credit and information center' or with 'non-agricultural systems' which compose the 'region', nor how the efforts of the farmers to incorporate FSR recommendations are articulated with international or national agricultural policies. It must be concluded, therefore, that independent action to increase productivity at the farm level will percolate 'upward' through the hierarchical systems model and ultimately 'improve' the well-being of the region. Once again, this is an example of the inherent reductionist character of the model.

The Hart and George model leaves unassessed, then, just how much either endogenous or exogenous socio-economic conditions interact with efforts to increase plant and animal productivity. Such interaction, it is left for us to surmise, must occur in a proverbial 'black box' that is so characteristic of other types of systems analysis models where key points of articulation are left unexplicated.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, even among social scientists, it has been all too common to treat 'technological phenomena as events transpiring inside a black box' (p. vii).<sup>19</sup>

Finally, the assumptions of the Hart and George model ultimately rest upon the undesirable assumption of technological determinism.<sup>5,14</sup> Simply stated, the model must assume that technological changes induced through on-farm research to increase plant and animal productivity will achieve the

desired social change. All we have to do is tinker with technology and we can change social organization. The converse is, of course, that changing the organization of society as a means of achieving social goals is problematic, since traditionally, development programs have sought to ameliorate deteriorating social conditions and therefore maintain the socio-economic and political status quo.

### BRINGING FSR BACK IN

This last observation provides a departure point for recovering the research aspect, that is, the information-gathering dimension of FSR while discarding its functionalist/reductionist development dimension. It is our contention that gathering information on the physical, agronomic, and socio-economic characteristics of small-producer farming systems is essential for any agricultural development effort. This assumption, no doubt, appears to be quite familiar since it also underscores much of the thinking among FSR advocates presently. However, as we have argued above, such research must not be disarticulated with existing fiscal, financial, and development policies of the country as is the case currently where FSR is being implemented. How, then can FSR be brought back into development policy as *a mode of research* and not as a development policy *per se*?

Contrary to implicit assumptions of current FSR advocates, changing the social organization must be a necessary aspect of development policy. Simply changing the technology or increasing smallholding productivity is not enough. Increased productivity, whether via new technologies or otherwise, and the value created must be retained by the producer. In order for this to occur, the terms of trade between the producer and the market must be made more favorable to the producer and consistent with other national development policies, such as those for non-agricultural workers. Therefore, the national development policies, including fiscal, export trade, financial, and internal trade policies, must be geared toward the goals of simultaneously improving the well-being of both urban and rural residents.

Many development theorists and agricultural administrators would argue that social change beyond simple reforms—such as those usually offered by FSR proponents—is not a serious attempt at praxis. However we would counter that by simply following unarticulated development policies that are highly associated with particular nationalist or class perspectives amounts to nothing more than an effort to maintain the status quo, i.e. existing political economy (class) relationships. The status quo is, as always, nothing more than an ephemeral snapshot in a continuum of social change. It is a small wonder that such great amounts of scarce national and

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international development resources are spent on its maintenance. Furthermore, there are recent examples where dramatic political economy changes have occurred in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. It is quite possible that within the fragile political contexts of these nations it may be easier to articulate national and local development policies such that the information on agronomic, physical, and social characteristics of smallholders can be of importance.

The point here is, however, that FSR by itself, even under more favorable political economy conditions, remains nonetheless, a means of gathering necessary scientific information and not a development policy. This statement in no way depreciates the value of the information generated by FSR. As with any information, its use will tend to reflect the class, and its inherent values, in power. Thus, this statement is consistent with our concern that such information be articulated within the context of the larger political economy. Furthermore, even within such a context, FSR as a research strategy continues to be guided by the values and development assumptions of its practitioners. The difference is that the research agenda is set by policies in which there is full articulation. This does not mean development strategies that utilize FSR will be any more successful. Development will always remain a difficult task.

Efforts intended to produce bottom-up development, regardless of how well-intentioned, fail when left unarticulated with the larger political economy. To the extent FSR is viewed as a development strategy independent of the prevailing political economy—any political economy—it is likely to fail. FSR is not a development strategy *per se*, but a methodology for collecting necessary agricultural information. It is the utilization of this information by the agricultural administrators which will provide for enlightened policies and, thus, development with equity.

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## **Integrated Rural Development in Latin America**

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## A. INTRODUCTION

1. After World War II the emphasis of public development efforts was on capital investment projects, in line with prevailing development theories. The creation of physical capital, as engine for the "big push" (Rosenstein-Rodan), or to bring about the "take-off stage" (Rostow), was seen as the basis for economic growth and its attendant accumulation of wealth. It was further supposed that the wealth, accumulated principally at the socially and economically better off layers of society, would "trickle down" to the poor. Although earlier attempts had been made to address the poor directly, notably with the community development concept of the 50's; and although doubts about the exclusive focus on capital formation had been voiced, notably by Viner in 1953 and by Tinbergen in 1958, it was not until the early 70's that governments started to redirect their focus from the formation of physical capital to certain aspects of the promotion of human capital. The main reason for this shift in focus was the belief that "trickle down" did not occur, or at least did not occur to the extent and with the speed previously assumed. As a result, attempts to create wealth were now combined with efforts to achieve a more equitable distribution of the development effort.

2. Early projects with a poverty orientation, such as the Puebla rural development project in Mexico, were purely equity oriented, concentrating on increasing production, and hence income, among poor farmers. However, it was soon realized that equitable growth required providing social services. In practice this meant a shift away from financing hardware towards "new style" projects which, although still strong in financing capital investment, also included components to satisfy "basic needs" and to supply social services.

3. With respect to lending to agriculture, the focus upon poverty and the emphasis on the development of human as well as physical capital, led to the concept of integrated rural development projects. These projects are concentrated efforts that bring to a specific rural area a basket of goods and services including social and infrastructure components. This concept had, by 1973, been developed and tested in various parts of the world, by a number of development institutions, including the World Bank. Between 1969 and 1973, the Bank authorized an average of only 3 of these multi-sectoral projects yearly; constituting about 9% of all its agricultural projects, and representing less than 6% of its total lending to agriculture. During the years from 1974 to 1979 these annual averages had risen to 9 multi-sectoral projects, representing almost 12.5% of all agricultural projects and accounting for about 11% of all lending to agriculture, almost double the average percentage of the 5 year period prior to 1974<sup>2</sup>.

4. The shift from fairly well defined and definable engineering-type projects to the far more complicated and uncertain "new style" projects, had profound consequences for the promoting and implementing institutions,

including for the World Bank. By the nature of the work done, these institutions were mainly staffed by engineers and economists; professionals whose operating methods and philosophy are dominated by fairly rigorous analysis. Now, these same people were confronted with the necessity to understand the motivations of people in alien cultures, they had to adapt implementation of project components to the wishes of recipients of the supposed benefits, they had to contend with personal and inter-institutional rivalry in the member countries they worked in, they had to understand and appreciate the risk to the beneficiaries of adopting recommendations that often looked good only on paper. With respect to the implementation of the projects, they had to contend with a large number of components, each dealing with a particular economic or social aspect of the multi-task project; components that were unrelated and whose simultaneous development created a totally new problem of inter-agency coordination. While success or failure of most engineering type projects is rather uncontroversial, success or failure of a new style project, combining economic and social development goals, can become a subjective judgement, often related to moral and political convictions. Not surprisingly, there is disagreement about whether certain projects, and indeed the whole concept of integrated rural development, should be called a success or a failure. In short, human development proved to be vastly different and often much more frustrating than building a bridge or an irrigation system. The shift in emphasis has thus led to much uncertainty and discussion in the institutions involved as well as to much soul searching and frustration among their staff. This process of adaptation to a new development philosophy is on-going and appears far from finished.

5. The following report tries to make a contribution to understanding and hence to future design of "new style", integrated, rural development efforts in Latin America, and to the adaptation of the institutions involved for the task they have set themselves. The degree of participation of beneficiaries in design and implementation of integrated rural development projects is a special line of inquiry that has been followed throughout the report. The work is based on an extensive literature survey, complemented by field research in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Mexico.

## B. RURAL DEVELOPMENT

6. Agricultural development generally tries to raise agricultural production and productivity and is of a technical nature. It is similar to other efforts to develop physical capital as a means for economic growth. The construction of irrigation works, land clearing, the supply of agricultural credit, the support for agricultural research and extension, etc. are all, by themselves, technical aspects of agricultural development. Rural development, though, by definition is oriented more toward benefitting primarily the poor. Hence, in a narrow interpretation, rural development is agricultural development among the poor segment of the rural population. Raising the poor (usually small) farmer's production and productivity requires not only the traditional efforts of agricultural development, but includes other specific aspects related to the nature of the clientele as, for instance, the provision of health services to increase work capacity; the provision of education, to increase comprehension and absorption of new knowledge and of extension, to increase technical skills, etc. This aspect of rural development, as a direct result of working with the poor, makes rural development synonymous with human development. Thus, the fundamental distinction between pure agricultural and rural development is the emphasis on physical capital development for the former, and human capital development for the latter. It is this distinction that is often overlooked and that has created much frustration, particularly among the practitioners of agricultural development. Most institutions, including the World Bank, entrusted rural development, when that became a dominant part of prevailing policies in the early 70's, to their specialists in agricultural development. These latter were technicians, mostly agronomists, agriculturalists, and economists who were trained and experienced in "old style" agricultural development projects. For many, the new style rural development projects represented nothing more than a shift in target population, i.e. towards the poor. The concomitant fundamental change in the nature of the work done was not always perceived.

7. Early in the discussion about rural development, policy makers realized that agricultural development activity among the poorer segments of the population was probably not sufficient and argued to include other than purely production related components in rural development projects. For instance, social services and infrastructure related components were proposed on the basis of expected synergism between the different components. Further arguments to include other than production related components were based on equity considerations, i.e. more on moral than on economic grounds. Finally, some project workers, familiar with the early years of the new style projects, say that the attempt to meet "basic needs" was justified as an effort to channel the increased income of small farmers, resulting from productivity increases, into socially useful forms of expenditure. Without this paternalism, it is alleged, the extra income would be largely spent on frivolous forms of entertainment.

8. The rest of this chapter will deal briefly with : (1) clientèle of rural development, i.e. the small farmer; (2) the history of efforts at rural development, and (3) the institutions involved in this particular facet of economic development.

#### 1. The Small Farmer

9. Rural poor are regarded as a single target group for rural development efforts, as if this group constitutes a homogeneous mass of rural population, but poor rural societies are at least as diverse as the better known urban societies. There are landless laborers, seasonal workers and sharecroppers at the lower end of income distribution. There are small farmers with production insufficient, or barely sufficient, for their own subsistence. And there are small farmers with a marketable surplus which contributes to total family income. Apart from groups directly linked to the land and its production potential, there are small entrepreneurs and tradesmen either itinerant or located in rural towns. The primary target population of rural development is the small farmer, and the other groups will benefit only indirectly from most rural development projects. It is sometimes argued that "integrated" rural development project must include all rural poor, but in practice attention has generally been focussed on the existing small farmer, since to help the others would usually require sweeping social and political changes (land reform, etc.).

10. The definition of a small farmer is difficult, because of the diversity of natural endowments for agricultural production. A definition of small farmer cannot simply be related to the area of land owned or worked on. It cannot be related solely to the type of production obtained or even to the absolute level of income generated. For the practical purposes of defining a target population for rural development, the small farmer should best be defined relative to his production and social environment. The lower limit of small farmer should be the farming family who has sufficient resources to produce just enough for its own subsistence. This may include production of an occasional surplus in order to generate the cash, or to barter, for products not produced on the family farm. Defining the upper limit of "smallness" is more difficult. There is enough diversity among rural conditions to make it impossible to determine in general terms an upper limit to the definition of "small farmer", i.e. an upper limit to the type of farmer that should benefit substantially from rural development in Latin America. However, following the reasoning of Morss, et. al.<sup>3)</sup> the "largest" small farmer can be defined relative to the "smallest" small farmer. The largest farmers still eligible to be included would be those whose production techniques do not differ principally from those used by the smallest farmer. A typical example where this condition applies is much of the highland areas under the integrated rural development programs in Colombia. In many parts of the areas under the project, farming is very intensive using multi-cropping systems on often very steep hill slopes, exclusively manually worked. This applies to small as well as to larger farms in these areas. The largest farmer included under this definition would face essentially the same risk as the smallest farmer when adopting new techniques, inputs or crops. In other

words, the willingness and ability to take chances with respect to agricultural development should be more or less the same for the entire class defined as "small". Finally, the largest "small" farmer should not cultivate significantly more land than the average farm in the area.

11. It is our experience that the definition of small farmer is more difficult on paper than his, or her, identification is in the field. There is a certain kinship, a certain class identification, among those farmers who manage to subsist fairly well. This class tends to define itself and its members. It automatically excludes the very poor, who may work as sharecroppers or as seasonal workers on the small farmer's property. On the other hand, those belonging to the small farmer's class are not considered peers by larger land holders in the same area, i.e. by those whose holdings are substantially larger than the average around them.

12. The extensive literature on small farmers offers some extreme positions on whether the small farmer acts economically rational or not. The views range from seeing small farmers as fatalistic, favoring luck over knowledge and as being subject to severe community pressures against innovation, to the view that the attitude of traditional producers towards production, and particularly changes<sup>4)</sup> in production can be explained satisfactorily by profitability alone. A more temperate view holds that small farmers are rational, but fear innovations because of the high risks they usually entail for a subsistence farmer. They are generally more knowledgeable than external experts about the reality of their existence. Proponents of this view often contend that the real problem lies in the nature of modern technology and in the institutions promoting it rather than with the small farmer, as the new technology makes the farmer highly vulnerable and dependent on fluctuating markets and on<sup>5)</sup> institutions controlled by non-farmers and not accountable in case of failure.

13. It would appear that the latter view is the most realistic. Small farmers in any specific area have usually survived there for generations and have accumulated a rather solid body of - maybe instinctive - knowledge about the possibilities, limits and risks of cultivation in the particular region. Living relatively close to the subsistence level, the risk of experiments for them is very large - it can easily spell starvation if things go wrong. This element is often overlooked when schemes are promoted which seem to involve fairly reasonable risks compared to the expected returns. One such case, in which risks were actually calculated is the Caqueza project in Colombia. This project, an early integrated rural development pilot project in Cundinamarca, initially assumed that low corn yields found in the area were due to a lack of knowledge about modern production techniques on the part of the farmer. However, after two years of on-farm experimental work, in which the farmers cooperated and in which it was shown that the new techniques could more than double their corn yields, farmers by and large still refused to adopt the new technology. Further analysis of production data showed that the recommended technology required tripling the traditional value of inputs, with nearly all of this increase in the form of cash outlays at the time of field preparation and seeding. Furthermore, project personnel calculated that the increase in

cash cost, associated with the recommended new production technology, was not offset by a commensurate return. Each dollar invested in the inputs under the new technology returned only \$2.44, while each dollar of invested inputs under the old technology, i.e. for seeds, fertilizer and pesticides returned \$3.75. Still, increased cash requirements and reduced returns for each dollar spent appeared to be insufficient reason for the almost total rejection of the new technology. After all, it could also be calculated that counterbalancing the diminished returns to cash were increases in land returns by 155%, increases to labor by 73% and increases in returns to total investment by 13%. Furthermore, production per hectare increased by somewhat over 200% and net returns rose by 253% under the new technology. On balance then the technology offered was clearly profitable. Subsequently, a production risk calculation showed that the risk to be incurred by the farmer in terms of dollars per hectare was three times as high for the recommended new technology as it was under traditional production methodology. In spite of the substantially higher net returns of the new technology, the risk per dollar net return was still 50% higher under the new technology than it used to be. It was concluded that the farmer's perception of risk was an important, and maybe the decisive factor in his decision of whether to adopt or not to adopt the new technology.

14. Another factor that influences small farmers' attitude towards changes, such as suggested new production approaches, are group and community pressures. Small farmer communities often face distinct socio-cultural inhibitions against personal accumulation of wealth; they may be subject to income levelling mechanisms such as religious and extended family obligations. This can strengthen their determination to remain at the subsistence level of the community rather than rise above it. The previously mentioned study by Morss, et. al. suggests that such local sanctions against innovation or accumulation have been important in a number of rural development projects, as have social, including family, obligations, and strong preference for leisure. Thus, the small farmers' willingness to adopt recommendations for new production techniques depends not only on his estimates of possible risks, but also on complex, subjective considerations, resulting from the socio-cultural climate in which he lives.

15. The small farmer in most Latin American countries is particularly vulnerable with respect to marketing his excess production. Marketing cooperatives are still rare, particularly among small farmers. Examples abound, where either unscrupulous management or strong differences of opinion among members led to premature abandonment of cooperatives. As a result, most small farmers depend upon the itinerant trucker merchant ("rescatista") to sell their marketable surplus as well as to buy production inputs and household goods. It would be wrong to assume that the trucker merchant system is monopolistic, high cost and inefficient. To the contrary, it is often difficult to see how any other system could collect products for a market from widely scattered small producers with a poor or non-existent feeder road system and totally inadequate public transportation. It is often argued, particularly by those who advocate low food prices for poor urban consumers that the profit margins of intermediary traders are excessive. This is

unlikely, because in most areas there is sufficient competition within the system to prevent monopoly pricing. Nevertheless, better price information system strengthen the bargaining hand of the small farmer vis-à-vis the trucker merchant and could result in an overall decrease in profit margins of the latter.

16. There is often a paternalistic relationship between the small farmer and the trucker merchant who buys up his occasional surplus production and supplies him with his occasional requirements for inputs and household goods. This paternalistic relationship works both ways. The trucker merchant depends to a certain extent on the small farmer as a source for products to be sold. The small farmer depends upon the trucker merchant in times of distress, particularly as a source of credit. It is a relationship that is similar to that between a tenant farmer or sharecropper and the land owner, his "patron". As a matter of fact, in Brazilian rural development projects in the northeast where the project entity, a public sector institution, had acquired land from large land holders, this same institution was then expected by the small farmers to assume the old paternalistic role of the patron as part of its responsibility as a land owner.

17. Sudden changes in existing production and marketing patterns can lead to precarious situations. A number of rural development projects, notably those in Colombia, have been quite successful in increasing production of the small farmer population in their areas. However, this created over-supply and actual inability to sell the increased production in some instances. In most of these cases, public sector institutions engaged in marketing functions have been unable to find outlets for the surplus production of the small farmers of these areas.

18. The small farmers' excess production that goes to market is mostly in the form of food for direct consumption. These are precisely the food items whose prices are often controlled by governments in order to keep inflation down and in order to appease urban consumers. This puts an added and institutionalized burden on the marketing problem for the small farmer's output.

19. Finally, while agricultural production is emphasized as the main source of small farmers' income in monetary terms and in kind, the value of their agricultural production is typically only somewhat over 50% of the total income of the average poor rural family in Latin America. The remainder is derived from other activities of various members of the family, such as trade and wage labor. If an integrated rural development project results in overall increased economic activity, the smallholder family not only benefits directly through increased production of its own, but also indirectly through increased income from its non-agricultural activities.

## 2. A Brief History

20. Efforts at rural development are not new. An early international rural development exercise, and one that can be seen as the predecessor of current programs, was community development. Its decade of growth and prominence were the 50's, although the origin of the term can be traced to the 30's when it was used to define community participation in municipal planning in the United States. In 1948 the term community development was first used officially in relation with rural development efforts, in what latter came to be called developing countries, by the British Colonial Office. Community development as proposed then was intended to help the British Colonies in Africa to prepare for independence by improving the territories' economy and by strengthening local government. Upon British initiative a number of fairly modest national community development efforts were launched in British territories in Africa about 1950. The first large community development program was initiated in India in 1952 with support from the Ford Foundation and the United States Foreign Economic Assistance Agency. Soon thereafter the concept was accepted by a number of countries worldwide, as well as by the United Nations system. Primarily as a result of promotion and financial support by the United States, community development experienced phenomenal growth in the decade of the 50's.

21. However, the varied experiences which led to the formulation of the concept of community development were related more to social goals functions and to political objectives than they were to economic development. Hence, the prevailing ideology underlying the concept and approach of community development was biased towards social welfare and politics, with matters of economic development and growth having secondary priority. The strong support for the community development concept in the 50's by the United States was rooted in the international political situation of that era. Essentially, community development was seen by its advocates as the free world's response to totalitarianism. A central theme in the cold war era of the 50's was that the free world, and in particular its developing nations, faced a double threat from international communism with military aggression, and the possibility of internal subversion through communist inspired agrarian movements. It was then still believed that military and economic assistance would be sufficient to counter these threats. The community development concept was seen, both by the United States and the United Nations as a democratic means to bring about economic, social and political development. The long term objective of community development was to build stable, democratic nations. With this background and origin, community development was described as organization, education and social action in, for and by the community. It was designed to encourage self-help efforts to raise standards of living and to create self-reliant communities with an assured sense of social and political responsibility. The development of infrastructure and social services and even the increase in production, i.e. economic development, were seen as somewhat incidental to the basic political motive of community development. Community development thus, as far as the developing countries were concerned, was of alien origin, and was to



further objectives that, at best, were not directly related to their day to day problems. Furthermore, it was political in an imposed way, it did not plan for revolutionary changes in the existing political and economic order.

22. Mostly through massive support by the United States and later on a somewhat more modest scale by the United Nations, the community development movement saw some spectacular growth in the early 50's. By 1960 more than 60 nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America had initiated national community development programs. India's much vaunted community development program launched in 1952, gave the movement an added legitimacy. Actually, until about the mid-50's the Indian program served as a prototype for national programs in other Asian countries. Where national community development efforts were being implemented, usually a large new bureaucracy was established to administer the program and to coordinate its components, executed by various technical ministries and regional offices. At the field level, the community development activities were usually initiated by posting a specially trained civil servant, the "multi-purpose village level worker" into a community or village. These village level workers were generally secondary school graduates with several months of pre-service training in a community development institute. He, or she, was supposed to guide and assist villagers in identifying their needs, and translating those needs into action programs. For doing that the village level worker was supposed to have skills in a variety of subjects ranging from village organization to technical matters of agriculture and the supply of health services. These generalists were supposed to be assisted by specialists from central offices.

23. There were very limited and sporadic efforts made to recognize the stratification of most rural communities and the resultant different interests ranging from those of the landless laborer to those of the commercial farmer. The village level worker often identified easiest with the local elite and thus alienated the majority of the population. Consequently, there was little attention given to assuring that benefits from community development programs actually accrued to the rural poor. Realizing this, the majority of the rural poor did not respond to the community development approach.

24. Compounding this problem was the widespread internal conflict and animosity within the major United States agencies that supported development and provided technical services. Conflicts, which permeated the foreign aid agencies were essentially ideological battles pitting generalists against specialists, social scientists against technocrats. Finally, by the early 60's, these bureaucratic battles were won by the bureaucratically better entrenched technical services' personnel who were less abstract, and some would say more practical, in their perceptions of economic development. As a corollary of this, community development agencies in developing countries were merged into long established ministries of agriculture or internal affairs, if not totally abolished.

25. Probably because of the nature of the victors in this bureaucratic battle, the criticism most often heard, in retrospect, of the community

development movement is that its programs were inefficient in reaching economic goals. This criticism is voiced in spite of the fact that economic goals never had priority with the movement, since the evolution of the community development movement went from social welfare and public works to cooperatives, to organizing local government and finally to some technical support for agriculture.

26. By the early 60's a number of large community development programs were being discontinued, including the well known Indian program. It is fair to say that by 1965 the community development movement had ended. The two main reasons for the rapid decline of the movement appear to be the sharp reduction of interest in the topic in the United States, and diminishing financial support for it, and the realization of leaders in principal developing countries that community development failed to achieve stated objectives. A fundamental reason for the ineffectiveness of community development as a concept of rural development was that it did not, and was not intended to change the basic structural barriers to a general acceleration of economic growth since it did not promote growth among the lower levels of society. It also remained an alien movement in most developing countries, directed and financed by foreigners.

27. We have described the community development movement, its growth and decline in some detail because of the striking parallel between this concept and the concept of integrated rural development, which we will discuss in the following chapter. The era of community development was followed, in Latin America, by a period of institutionalized agrarian reform. Land reform, the large scale exchange of ownership of land between different social classes, has a long history in Latin America. Early attempts at land reform were the result of severe social inequities and came about after violent revolutionary action outside the institutional framework of the state and society. This was generally true of revolutionary land reform movements up to the early 60's. The land reform movements of 1917 in Mexico are probably the best known of this era of land reform.

28. By the early 60's, governments throughout Latin America felt increasing pressure to increase production and agricultural exports in order to meet food requirements of the growing urban populations on the one hand and to meet foreign exchange requirements for industrial development on the other. As a result, land reform movements were institutionalized as a means to rationalize and improve agricultural production. This new motivation for land reform was supported by secondary motivations such as the Cuban Revolution, which increased the fears of extremist agrarian movements in many countries, by a desire to stem the flow of rural poor to the cities, and by the political pressures that originated from the Punta del Este Charter of the Organization of American States in 1961. Based on the ideas of Raul Prebisch the Punta del Este conference established a development policy for agriculture based on a combination of agrarian reform and support for technological improvements. In most Latin American countries the institutionalized agrarian reform of the 60's was accompanied by the formation of a number of public sector institutions, to deal with and to

assist the newly landed farmers.

29. Redistributive land reforms in general have been most successful if they were exercised against the remnants of feudalism. They have been less successful if they were promoted against large land holdings which were either under-utilized or condemned because size limits were imposed on land ownership. The former type of land reform, directed against outdated social structures could generally find broad political support. The latter, directed against sometimes strong opposition of the landed elite has generally been less successful in redistributing land from large land holders to small and medium scale rural farmers. Land reform is often seen as a pre-condition for effective rural development since increases in production require land ownership by the rural poor which is assumed to be the only means to provide a sufficient motivation to increase agricultural production.

30. With the possible exception of some Central American countries and parts of Brazil, elimination of estates as a justification for agricultural reform has been exhausted in Latin America. Thus, agrarian reform based on transfer of land ownership that aroused little political opposition was finished by the end of the sixties. Further agrarian reform would have implied redistribution of land ownership away from increasingly strong sectors of society. This did not happen, and as a result, by the early 70's the agrarian reform movements in most Latin American countries had essentially come to a halt. From then on attention became focused on the concept of integrated rural development as a means to foster economic growth among the rural poor and a way to achieve a more equitable distribution of the fruits of economic development.

### 3. The Institutions

31. Public sector institutions engaged in rural development work both at the international and national levels are mostly staffed with planning and evaluation personnel who are trained primarily in economic analysis. These economic (and financial) analysts are supported by technical specialists, mostly agronomists and agricultural subsector specialists. The distinction between agricultural development and rural development is often unclear for these specialists who work on both types of projects.

32. Local implementing agencies often are staffed, at least at the decision making level, by persons with administrative and professional experience in other institutions of the public sector. Because of the nature of the work undertaken, the staff of agencies involved in rural development tends to be from ministries of agriculture, agrarian banks, or agrarian reform institutions. Many people at the decision making level in such Latin American institutions have been educated in either Europe or the United States. Functional key personnel such as those dealing with agricultural extension, technical assistance, and agricultural credit are often only accustomed to work with medium and large scale farming. Policies and operational methods of many institutions in Latin America were developed in

Europe and in the United States by similar institutions which, however, work for a different clientèle. Principles and methodologies employed there were designed for the economic and social reality of the countries concerned. For instance, agricultural extension, technical assistance or credit as supplied to the highly technified and well capitalized producer of commodities in the mid-western part of the United States are vastly different from the methods that should be employed to supply the same goods and services to a smallholder in Colombia operating a multi-crop production system producing partially for his own subsistence and partially for an uncertain home market. Thus, a problem faced by the practitioners of rural development is that national institutions often have neither the personnel and the operational methods for the real task at hand, nor the inclination to adapt their methodologies to the needs of the small farmer. Local institutions often continue to promote unsuitable technologies such as mechanized mono-cropping systems with capital intensive use of inputs developed for extensive commercial agriculture, instead of trying to develop systems to enhance the efficiency of the traditional multi-cropping systems that use a minimum of purchased inputs and employ a maximum of family labor. Only recently and sporadically are public sector institutions in Latin American countries coming to realize that technical assistance and supply of credit should be specific to the demands of the small rural farmer clientèle.

33. Hence, it is gradually recognized that redirection of funds for development towards the rural poor in new style projects will require changes in the evaluation and operational capacity of donor as well as national implementing organizations. These institutions must be better geared to respond to local needs while building local social and technical capacity. Unfortunately, many institutions both international and national, are under pressure not to effect these necessary changes. Most institutions have to meet short term goals and pressures for immediate results are very strong. Timing and amount of funds committed for disbursement are used as internal yardsticks to judge professional performance. Such emphasis on short term results makes it difficult to adapt evaluation and implementation procedures to local requirements, and often prevents the institution from moving beyond an ad hoc relief and welfare approach to poverty. A corollary is the bias toward project as against program funding. Projects can be clearly circumscribed, they are by nature bound to specific deadlines for implementation. They have expected start-up costs and emphasize technical facilities and equipment over the development and funding of capacities to sustain the operation and to maintain it after the project has disbursed its funds. By the nature of the institutions, and the way they operate, their professionals are not rewarded for being responsive to local conditions nor for contributing toward the development of local institutional capacities. Personal initiative of competent and dedicated staff of these organizations occasionally produces efforts in that direction, but they remain fragmented and individual and are, as yet, not institutionalized.

34. The emphasis on short term results, on meeting deadlines, on disbursement of funds, leads to a strategic approach of institution building that is equally short term and is often meant to serve mainly the direct

interests of a specific project. These interests are then equated with the interests of the main institutions supporting the project, rather than with the project and its beneficiaries proper. As a result, special project units are established, using special incentives to lure personnel away from the more permanent institutions of the public sector, undermining the latter's potential for sustained long term action. Pressures to move large amounts of money put emphasis on projects and project components that are capital intensive. The administrative overhead, in terms of professional time to be spent per dollar disbursed can thus be minimized. Effective work with the rural poor, though, would require a much higher ratio of staff to dollars disbursed and obtaining achievements takes much longer than experience with capital development projects would suggest.

35. The large international donor agencies, in line with commercial practices, emphasize the "sales function" of their professional staff. As a consequence, the largest portion of operational budgets go to project identification, preparation and appraisal; to the efforts necessary to making the loan. Resources spent on project supervision and evaluation are notoriously limited and are under constant pressure to be reduced even further. This tendency is against the expressed wish of many field personnel, who welcome the multiple and broad based experience of most staff members of large international organizations, as well as their political neutrality in the country concerned. They appreciate the continuity that international agency personnel can bring to public sector institutions that have a high turnover of personnel. But again, it is most often because of personal initiative by dedicated and competent individual staff that the consistent support is given. This type of more intensive effort is not institutionalized, and is in effect continuously threatened to be diminished, mainly for reasons of cost. Institution building results cannot be quantified and easily shown as "output".

36. There are large numbers of non-governmental agencies engaged in one or another aspect of rural development. Often, these organizations are based on personal initiative, drive and ambition of a charismatic leader who is following his, or her, own vision of human development. Sometimes these organizations are established by other agencies or institutions such as churches, unions, and even political parties. Generally, the non-governmental organizations are small and their impact is limited both geographically as well as substantively. For that reason and for reasons of questioned effectiveness, non-governmental organizations are often dismissed as inefficient agents for rural development by the larger public sector institutions. However, given the immensity of the problem of rural underdevelopment, and the relatively limited impact that the massive effort of international agencies and national public sector institutions so far have achieved, it does not appear justified to omit any possible resource in mounting efforts at integrated rural development. Many non-governmental private agencies engaged in rural development in Latin America receive international support from large donor organizations with social and developmental philosophies similar to those of the particular organizations supported. With respect to rural development, relief and welfare

organizations with religious backgrounds and politically oriented institutions left of center, mostly from European origin, are the main institutional supporters of private efforts at rural development in Latin America. The type of rural development activity in which the non-governmental organizations are engaged is more oriented toward community development and to a mediator role between the rural poor and the services of the public sector than is the case for most large scale rural development projects supported by international donors and the main national public institutions. One of the reasons for this somewhat different emphasis is the origin of many of the non-governmental agencies, in relief and welfare work, before their relatively recent reorientation towards productive efforts as a basis for rural development. Thus, although both public and non-governmental institutions see rural development as a combination of production related activity and relief, the public sector institutions, today, tend to emphasize agricultural production while this emphasis only begins to emerge among the non-governmental institutions.

### C. INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT

37. The discussion of rural development contained in this chapter is sub-divided into two parts : the first deals with the concept and major issues, the second with observing integrated rural development projects and interviewing both project personnel and clientèle in Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Mexico. The synthesis at the end of this chapter leads to the suggestions made subsequently in the last chapter of the report.

#### 1. The Concept

38. The concept of integrated rural development is often considered vague, particularly in academic literature, either because the philosophy is considered unclear, or because the concept is considered too confused to serve as a practical strategic tool. Field experience shows, however, that the practical application of the concept is less vague than it is often considered to be. Most practitioners use the term "integrated" as describing the fact that this type of rural development projects tries to integrate a number of otherwise unrelated components, each of them addressing one aspect of rural underdevelopment. It is generally agreed that the various components of the projects can be sub-divided into three main categories : components related to agricultural production, components related to social services, and infrastructural components. Among the first category, those directly related to agricultural production are agricultural credit, extension and technical assistance, input supply, and marketing assistance. The most frequent social components are education and health. Among infrastructure components, road construction tends to predominate, followed by the construction of potable water supply systems, irrigation works and rural electrification.

39. By definition then, integrated rural development projects are those that try to bring a basket of goods and services, consisting of production, social and infrastructure components to poor rural areas. Not only the operational implications of the concept appear to be fairly clear to its field practitioners, but the reasons for integrating a number of otherwise unrelated components appear to be agreed upon. Often, the justifications advanced for including social components are based on moral convictions, i.e. that the rural poor have an innate right to social benefits such as health and education, partly because they are supposed to be available to poor urban dwellers. For other practitioners the inclusion of social components in rural development projects is justified if these components contribute to the effectiveness of production related components, as e.g. when a healthier farmer is able to work harder and hence produce more, or when a better educated farmer is able to absorb more fully the benefits of new technology. Finally, there are those who do not see a justification for the complexity entailed in combining a number of unrelated components into one project. Mostly this view can be found among the traditional practitioners of agricultural development, i.e. among those who

do not distinguish between rural and agricultural development.

40. The most temperate view of integrated rural development, and a consensus that can be reached with most practitioners is based upon seeing components as complementary to the basic objective of a project. It is generally agreed that the basic objective of rural development projects is to bring about an increase in production and productivity of the small farmer rather than welfare. It can then further be agreed that other components be brought into integrated rural development projects only if and when needed to support the major objective. But often project design simply follows a blueprint approach. Overzealous project designers include the largest possible number of components, and their implementation is fixed with time frames and deadlines, based on scant information about realities in the project area. Typically, agricultural credit and technical assistance are found as production components; health and education as social components; and road construction as an infrastructure component. Projects designed with such a standard set of components, coupled with rigid implementation and disbursement schedules, lack the flexibility necessary to fit the complementary components to the local situation.

41. However, the less rigid and least bureaucratic of international organizations allow project design and implementation timing to be adjusted during the life of the project, based on its particular requirements. As a matter of fact, the majority of projects require such adjustments in their original design. Many projects are extended beyond the usual five year implementation period. These actions are usually taken to adapt the reality of project implementation to project design, i.e. to increase complementarity between components to reach an optimum combination of project activities.

42. Most integrated rural development projects rely on existing sectoral agencies of the public sector to implement the various project components. The ministry of agriculture will be responsible for technical assistance and extension, the ministry of health for the health component, public works for road construction, etc. Usually, there is a project directorate responsible for day to day management of the project and, particularly, for the coordination between the various sectoral agencies. Difficulties associated with these coordination activities have become the best known, and most widely commented on management problem of integrated rural development projects.

## 2. Issues

43. The following are the major issues identified in discussions with project personnel, with beneficiaries and with other practitioners of integrated rural development. They are either related to the projects proper or to the institutions that promote or implement the individual projects.

44. a. IRD, Does It Work? - The answer to this loaded question is a qualified yes. Integrated rural development appears to work but often not exactly as it was intended to, particularly in the early years of



implementation. It does not produce quick results. Underperformance with respect to meeting deadlines, pace of disbursement of funds, and problems with project management have led to many frustrations for those responsible for project design and supervision. Much of this frustration is related to both the institutions promoting the projects and the concept of the projects themselves.

45. The complexity and the required technical sophistication of project design effectively exclude the target population from participation in project formulation. Thus, technocratic outsiders are making decisions about problems and their solutions. The resulting project is usually in line with prevailing national policies and project objectives are couched in terms of national development and production goals, contributions to export potential and the like. The requirement of bankability leads to stereotyped project formulation, anticipating what financing institutions want to see, by personnel trained in standard evaluation procedures by the same banking institution. This procedure atrophies the effort of project evaluation as well as the generation of creative ideas and unusual solutions. On the contrary, preparation/appraisal reports tend to become rigid implementation manuals.

46. The dichotomy between project design and the reality of implementation is quite obvious in most projects. Uncertainties, absence of real knowledge about the area targeted, and the inexperience of the project personnel almost invariably lead to an initial period of a few years when tangible achievements are minimal. In those projects that ultimately can be considered successful, this initial period is used, in essence, by well motivated and dedicated project personnel as the real project preparation stage, in the sense that during this initial stage of project formulation, decisions can be made about what can and should be done in terms of project components in the particular area. This initial period is used to establish a rapport between the project personnel and the intended beneficiaries, which may lead to a certain level of beneficiary participation.

47. The fact that time tables, deadlines and implementation expectations are often unrealistic, is recognized by some of the larger donor organizations whose supervisory personnel shows flexibility and willingness to adapt the project's planning to the realities of implementation. Funds are shifted between components, deadlines for certain components are extended, the inability to implement certain components is accepted, and often, projects are extended beyond the usual five year implementation period. However, there is a gap between these lessons from the field and project evaluation and approval procedures. There is a certain inertia in institutions to adapt themselves to the operational requirements of a new concept. As a result, influential members of the institutions blame the concept of integrated rural development for many of the frustrations that actually originate in their own institution's slowness of adaptation.

48. b. Beneficiary Participation - The clientèle of an integrated rural development project participates not only in the project's benefits but

also in some decisions about and within the project. In the early stages of a project, however, there is usually little or no dialogue between project personnel and the intended beneficiaries. Project personnel, new to the area, know neither the social structure nor the politics of the society it has to deal with. The inhabitants of the area tend to regard these new arrivals in the light of their previous experience with public sector personnel, i.e. the police, the tax collector, and, in some countries, a local politician. Under such conditions meaningful beneficiary participation in project evaluation and design is difficult to establish. A second reason why extensive representative participation does not take place is related to the structure of rural society. Rural society is stratified with very poor layers such as laborers or sharecroppers, intermediate layers such as small land owners and tradesmen, and elites, such as large land owners or village notables. It is unrealistic to expect within a rural project sudden democratic decision making by a heterogeneous population which normally does not do that. Finally, universal representative beneficiary participation conflict with the motivations of the bureaucracy of some donor agencies. Committing money for disbursement is the key to their career and full participation by project beneficiaries would typically imply that the project would be implemented at the people's pace and scale, because project personnel would have to struggle with the population's learning processes. As a result, project design would have to be more conservative, project implementation schedules would have to be lengthened and discounted cost benefit analysis would come out much less favorable than if stricter controls of a project are assumed.

49. Basically, integrated rural development projects are service delivery efforts, and beneficiary participation normally is limited to decisions about how to do things and to sharing in the benefits of the project. Decisions about what to do are mostly made by project staff, who are responsible for the money spent. This separation of responsibility between the project personnel who decide essentially about what to do, and the beneficiaries who participate in how to do it is not really an unrealistic or unfair separation of responsibilities. After all, in most deprived rural areas it is quite easy to see what can be done: in essence anything that would contribute to economic and social well being of the population and to an equitable distribution of the fruits of development. Usually, a number of ideas and pet projects have been around for a long time. Thus, drawing up a list of actions that could be taken is easy. The problem is to establish priorities, given the financial constraints faced by the project. Project personnel, not directly involved with political considerations in the area can by and large be considered better placed to decide on political and economic trade-offs. But participation by the population in how to do things is important for two reasons. First, it will bring to the project the particular expertise and knowledge of the rural population with respect to general conditions and natural phenomena in the area. Second, decisions about how to implement certain project components may generate enough popular interest and a sense of participation to induce long term involvement necessary for the maintenance of works and for the continuation of progress achieved.

50. c. Coordination of Project Components - Problems with the coordination of activities of the various sectoral agencies participating in a project have plagued almost all integrated rural development projects. When discussing coordination problems, reference is mostly made to horizontal coordination, i.e. integration of usually independent services in order to secure a unity of purpose and joint action. Management problems arise because separate budgets are involved and bureaucratic power struggles arise as the various institutions mobilize their political backers to win jurisdictional and legal arguments. As Judith Tendler has pointed out, these institutions act rationally from their perspective. Tendler distinguishes between strong and weak institutions in general, and with respect to rural development in particular. Strong institutions are those that generate revenue or have strong supporters lobbying for their interests, such as construction companies who support the interests of public sector institutions responsible for rural road construction. Strong institutions also can often garner a strong political constituency in the form of influential elites in the area. Weaker institutions on the other hand are those that do not have their own revenue base, strong supporters or strong constituents. Institutions supplying rural health and education are typically weaker than institutions supplying production related services, such as the ministry of agriculture or the agricultural bank. Strong agencies will want to play a central role in the project, and will often have enough political backing to obtain that role. Weaker agencies, perceiving their subordination to the stronger institutions, will be disinclined to participate in the project. They will prefer to concentrate their effort on activities that are completely within their control. This has been typically the case with the health components in integrated rural development projects.

51. Problems of vertical coordination, i.e. intra-organizational integration and problems of integration of a project with national policies are much less frequently discussed. Integrated rural development can of course be more successfully implemented the fewer the coordination problems and the stronger the national commitment to this type of development effort. Project implementation will be facilitated when national development policies articulate the necessity to coordinate efforts, including a requirement for the various institutions to collaborate in the effort. Also, projects will run more smoothly when there is an appropriate organization within ministries to support integrated rural development at the field level.

52. The history of integrated rural development in Colombia provides a good example of the importance of top level commitment to a rural development policy. The Colombian integrated rural development program started with modest pilot scale projects in the early 70's. By 1975, the results of these pilot projects had become sufficiently known and appreciated for the newly elected President Lopez Michelsen to give it his strong personal backing. At that point, the concept of integrated rural development was made part of national development policy; major international organizations, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and AID were invited to cooperate, while the president extended substantial personal efforts to develop a

nation-wide program. Recognizing the potential problems of coordination between the various agencies that were supposed to cooperate in this national effort, Lopez Michelsen personally secured their collaboration.

53. Three factors should be kept in mind in designing and implementing integrated rural development projects. First, the more a project is perceived as being strictly local, the less opposition it will create at the national headquarters level of major institutions. This factor suggests decentralization of programs, i.e. the transfer of certain powers and functions to local authorities and the selection of projects for fairly small areas. Second, coordination of efforts between personnel of sectorally different institutions is usually better at the operational level in the field. Inevitably, personnel of such institutions working in the same geographic area will be in frequent contact with each other. Unless there are strong personal dislikes, this personnel will discuss common problems encountered in their respective work and find ways to accommodate each other. Higher echelons in the institutional bureaucracy will increasingly have other, and often conflicting interests and coordination efforts will be influenced more by unrelated issues. Third, the role of overall coordinator, and sometimes mediator, is best played by an institution which does not have a direct functional responsibility. A staff type agency, such as a national planning office or a development ministry are better equipped to perform the coordinating role than, for instance, the ministry of agriculture or a ministry of public works. A staff type agency is particularly appropriate if it has budgetary responsibilities, such as national planning offices often have. The power of the purse is a very strong motivator to enlist collaboration.

54. The attempt to solve the coordination problem by creating entirely new autonomous implementation units has not been very successful. The idea to create a new unit for project implementation was the logical consequence of the frustration of early project designers and supervisors. Their experience lead them to regard existing institutions as inefficient, technically incompetent, understaffed and philosophically conservative with respect to the ideas behind the new rural projects. Thus, they saw clear administrative advantages in establishing a brand new unit. This was particularly so if they could find like-minded local professionals to manage and staff such a unit. However, experience has shown that these new administrative units operate only as long as they have the financial and administrative backing from the international agency, through the project under their responsibility. Almost nowhere have these new administrative units been able to survive in the local political and bureaucratic establishment. As a result, these project units were disbanded after the project was completed, or when disbursements stopped.

55. The best place for the coordination unit is in an independent, existing, government agency at the highest possible level. Colombia has done that from the inception of its nation-wide program for integrated rural development, by placing the directorate for this development in the national planning department<sup>8)</sup>. Ecuador has recently established a "super" ministry

responsible for all of the country's 17 integrated rural development projects in its current five year development plan in order to have a non-sectoral agency responsible for coordination of its integrated rural development program. However, the disadvantage of this new ministry is its newness; it is not part of the bureaucratic establishment of the country, and does not have any particular clout, other than that resulting from the channeling of finances for the various projects.

56. d. Impact and Clientèle - Integrated rural development is targeted on a clientèle called "rural poor", which is very ill-defined. The lack of definition of "rural poor" has been exacerbated by the need to focus projects on farmers who have a production potential, because integrated rural development is supposed to be development, and not welfare. Thus, many analysts failed to recognize the complexity of the structure of rural society, the target clientèle. Subsequently, and as a corollary, they often fail to recognize that only a fraction of the population has production potential, in the sense desired for integrated rural development projects. The twin results of a vague definition of the client have been a very limited impact of integrated rural development projects, as compared with the efforts extended, and a bias with respect to benefits extended, i.e. towards farmers with highest production potential. By definition, the latter tend to be those who were somewhat better off from the beginning. For instance, national Brazilian statistics indicate that the country's entire POLONORDESTE program, the major development program in the Northeastern part of Brazil, has reached not more than approximately 100,000 poor rural families directly in more than 10 years. The same source estimates that the area covered by the POLONORDESTE program contains approximately three million rural poor families. Consequently, the direct program reached approximately 3% of the rural poor. Even if one assumes that there is a multiple of indirect beneficiaries, total coverage is modest.

57. Focusing exclusively on those who have a production potential excludes landless laborers, and in effect, most sharecroppers. Although the latter are often included as potential beneficiaries of agricultural credit under integrated rural development projects, societal and institutional constraints may prevent their participation. For instance, under the Colombian Integrated Rural Development Program, sharecroppers are specifically included as potential beneficiaries of agricultural credit. However, the program's administrator, the agricultural bank, requires a land lease document as proof of a sharecropper's production intentions. In the period of agrarian reform, in the 60's, such land lease documents were often used by sharecroppers to claim title to the land worked on. As a result, written proof of sharecropping contracts to-day is extremely difficult to obtain from a Colombian land owner. Consequently, most sharecroppers are excluded from agricultural credit, one of the main benefits under the integrated rural development project. Since other benefits such as home improvement loans and loans to extend rural electrification to a property, are tied to production credit, sharecroppers under the Colombian program are effectively excluded from the direct benefits of the entire program. In Mexico, more than 60% of agricultural labor is landless; in Colombia about

40% of agricultural labor is landless. These portions of the rural poor remain excluded from the direct benefits of integrated rural development projects, since they have no production potential, although they benefit indirectly from such components as health, education, construction of rural roads, and from secondary effects such as an increased demand for labor, coupled with higher wages. Also, a sharecropper who works under an agreement to obtain 50% of production, will see his share increase in line with total production increases brought about by the project. As a matter of fact, the indirect benefits of integrated rural development projects for those at the lower levels of the rural society provide a strong argument to include social and infrastructural components in rural development projects. It is precisely these components that benefit the poorest of that society.

58. e. Size of Project Area - Many integrated rural development projects are large, covering vast, varied, and heterogeneous areas. Population, both in type and density, as well as agricultural and other activities can vary considerably from one area of the project to the next. Field experience suggests that it is more effective to limit a project to a general farming district that is homogeneous as far as its type of population and agricultural production potential is concerned, i.e., project boundaries should be based on ecological or economic conditions rather than on administrative divisions. In functionally or socially homogeneous areas, problems tend to be similar in the entire area, and the same number and type of components can be brought to bear in an integrated rural development effort. In fact, many nationwide projects tend to get divided into area specific sub-projects over time. The Colombian integrated rural development program distinguishes internally between, for instance, the project parts in Cundinamarca or in Antioquia. Actually, there is so little interchange between the various sub-projects under the nationwide program that they function as individual and independent projects.

59. f. Monitoring and Evaluation - Following definitions in a recent World Bank publication<sup>10)</sup> monitoring is here defined as the provision and use of information to enable management to assess progress of implementation and to take timely decisions to make sure that progress is maintained according to schedule. Evaluation is defined as the process that draws on the same data, generated by the monitoring system, to help explain trends, effects and impact of the project.

60. Monitoring, evaluation and interchange of ideas between projects are generally weak in Latin American integrated rural development projects. There are surprisingly few publications relating objectively the experiences of integrated rural development. And even those publications that are available, repeatedly mention that cost figures, production data and other quantitative information are not available. This leads to the conclusion not only that monitoring and evaluation are not reported, but that there is also a lack of systematic documentation, collection of data, etc.

61. It is not surprising that evaluation and monitoring are not done systematically, since they are highly political and may affect future funding

and employment prospects of personnel engaged in these activities as well as of those being monitored and evaluated. More generally, there is no tradition in Latin American societies of objective reporting that could underpin systematic monitoring and evaluation. Evaluation is more of a public relations effort than an information gathering exercise. As a result, little is known about the objective successes and failures of projects and little agreement can be reached in this respect with regard to specific projects. What some call successes, others will call failures, both opinions based on subjective and intuitive interpretations of actual or imagined events. Human development efforts such as rural development are particularly prone to such confusions about what constitutes success or failure since many intangible benefits and costs can be counted and interpreted quite differently, following personal, subjective viewpoints.

### 3. Field Experiences

62. The following sections relate field experience in four countries, highlighting different approaches to defining and implementing integrated rural development projects. These observations are based on visits which focussed on discussions with both clients/beneficiaries and by interviews of institutional staff, politicians, etc. both at the local and national (capital city) level.

#### a. Brazil

63. Integrated rural development projects can be found in different parts of Brazil; in the northeast, in the state of Minas Gerais, in the frontier areas of the northwest and in the state of Paraná. The best known and still largest program of integrated rural development projects is located in the Northeastern part of the country, called POLONORDESTE. As of the middle of 1982, the POLONORDESTE program comprised 43 different integrated rural development projects covering a geographical area corresponding to slightly more than half of the northeastern part of Brazil and concentrating a variety of investments and services in geographic areas that are selected largely on the basis of their agricultural potential.

64. An overriding impression of the Brazilian experience is that it is not a program at all. Rather, Brazil has a large number of projects that are unrelated, without systematic communication or exchange of experience between them. There are several reasons for this fragmented development. First, the Brazilian integrated rural development projects are identified, organized, and actually implemented by the states. Although the development agency of the Northeast, SUDENE<sup>1</sup>, is supposed to play a coordinating role, in effect that role is very limited. The second reason is related to the origin and method of financing. Project funds, particularly for the Northeastern projects depend on yearly central government budgets. Experience over the last 10 years has shown that such funding varies substantially from year to year, while the way in which it is made available to the operational level is rather complicated. In the Northeast, for instance, resources for production

related components are channeled through the Ministry of Agriculture, which makes them available to its Delegates in each state. The extent of cooperation by the Delegates of the Ministry of Agriculture in the integrated rural development projects in their state depends entirely upon the goodwill of the Delegate proper. Resources for social components are channeled through the Ministry of the Interior. This ministry, in turn, makes the funds available to the finance secretariat of the state in question, which then turns funds over to the particular project. The project directorate is responsible for administering the funds for the various components under the project.

65. Administrative units established specifically for the operation and management of projects often have no legal status and their personnel is delegated to them from a variety of other institutions in the public sector. Administrative procedures are cumbersome and dedication of such personnel to work in the integrated rural development project is sometimes questionable. For instance, the funds for the payroll of one of the largest and oldest project management units, in the state of Bahia, have to be distributed to the various institutions from which its personnel originates, which use these funds to pay the salaries. As a result, there is much confusion, delays in payment and dissatisfaction among the personnel. The administrative establishment of the individual states tends to ignore the projects when they are not directly involved and funding comes from Brasilia. As a result, state funds that otherwise would have gone into areas where integrated rural development projects are operating, often go to other areas in the state. Moreover, once disbursement stops, projects tend to peter out.

66. However, there are exceptions, as in the state of Minas Gerais. That state deals directly with international organizations, such as the World Bank, and funds major parts of its integrated rural development programs from state resources. As one practitioner observed: "in the Northeast you deal with projects in poor areas in poor states, in Minas Gerais you deal with projects in poor areas in a rich state." Differences between management and administration of projects in the Northeast and in Minas Gerais are in consequence quite large and fundamental. In Minas Gerais there is a much stronger commitment among the local political and administrative establishment with respect to integrated rural development. As a matter of fact, in the 1982 elections for governors, all three candidates in the state of Minas Gerais pledged their support for the integrated rural development programs of the state. There are also differences at the operational level between the projects in Minas Gerais and in the Northeast, differences that may relate to the different administrative structures as well as to the conditions in the areas. By and large, the personnel of projects in the Northeast would like to see the projects have fewer components, in order to be less complicated to implement. In Minas Gerais, on the other hand, the higher echelons of the integrated rural development program administration would like to increase the number of components available for any one project. Personnel in Minas Gerais appears to be gravitating to a notion of a state-wide program to support a large number of small, area-specific, integrated rural development projects. The overall program should have a



maximum number of potential components available to serve the specific needs of any particular project.

67. An occasional complaint is that project areas are chosen mainly for political reasons, rather than for developmental potential, and if the developmental potential is considered, it is judged more on technical grounds, i.e. with respect to agricultural production potential, than it is on social grounds. These criticisms reflect the problems of an approach that seeks to combine economic and social objectives. A more frequent complaint comes from project personnel in a number of states: that the projects are too large, and hence too heterogeneous with respect to population, physical structure, land holding, climate, and agricultural production. They would like to see smaller projects, but have not yet arrived at the notion of a programmatic approach supporting a number of smaller, area defined, sub-projects.

68. In spite of the political, administrative and budgetary problems the actual development of many projects in Brazil is impressive. A main reason is the dedication of personnel in charge of field operations. Mostly, these are young graduates from local colleges, socially conscious men and women who have found a constructive way to vent frustrations with their society and yet make a contribution to it. These young people realize at the start that they do not know very much about the task at hand or about the people they are supposed to work with. So they go out and try to learn. Generally, teams of up to 10 project workers will spend at least a month living and working among the target population, collecting sociological information and beginning to build a bridge between themselves and the rural families. The information gathered during these initial exercises is used to gain a sociological insight into the area they deal with and, particularly, to identify possible associations or groups that either have a natural cohesion or that could be formed.

69. However, what these young project workers have in enthusiasm and dedication, they often lack in practical experience. This is particularly noticeable in such components as, for instance, extension and technical assistance to agriculture. Given their natural inclination, and sometimes their educational background in the social sciences, they emphasize community development. This lead to organization and increased social awareness among the target populations and also to a certain measure of beneficiary participation. As such, this type of project personnel and the way they operate are quite appropriate and beneficial for the first phase of an integrated rural development project, i.e. the phase of learning and developing a rapport between the project personnel and the target population. However, the subsequent phases of tangible production achievements tend to be rather weak. As a matter of fact, project personnel complain about the complexity of having too many components to be integrated in these projects and, what they call "extension work" tends to relate more to social, community development than to agricultural production. Furthermore, this emphasis on the societal aspects of development leads to a neglect of other, somewhat more remote and technical aspects such as the introduction of more

appropriate technologies, construction of bio-gas plants, the use of solar energy, simple post harvest processing techniques to reduce spoilage, or aspects of storage and marketing. Project personnel often appears to be ignorant about technical aspects of rural life, particularly about those that are not usually found in their immediate surroundings. Hence, the lack of tangible, physical achievements in those projects may well become increasingly frustrating, unless efforts are made to upgrade the technical capabilities of project implementation personnel.

70. Recurring operational problems are related to the erratic availability of agricultural credit, which reflects the financial budgetary problems mentioned above. Availability of credit is most often cited by the small farmer himself as the major benefit accruing from the integrated rural development project. Thus, it is most detrimental for overall project success that credit availability at, for instance, the Bank of Brazil's local office is unpredictable and haphazard. A variety of reasons are usually given for the frequent lack of funds, depending on who one talks to. Some blame local branch managers of the banks as not being sympathetic to the project, or to the plight of the small farmer. Others contend that central authorities have not made funds available to the local level for onlending to small farmers, etc. Both observations probably apply to the situation, although to a degree varying from region to region.

71. Other problems arise fairly often from land tenure arrangements and marketing bottlenecks. Since secure land ownership is the major precondition for obtaining credit from commercial sources, the sometimes vague tenure/ownership arrangements in rural areas have created problems when ownership was not "regularized", i.e. when farmers either did not have a written title to their land or, if they had a title it was not registered. Therefore, several projects (Rio Grande Do Norte, Paraná) have separate "land titling regulations" components. With regard to marketing, efforts to improve the situation for small farmers in project areas have been ineffective, mainly because marketing was left to public sector institutions which are not well equipped to perform such functions, especially if they are established in competition with, or even to replace, traditional middlemen. Bureaucratic procedures are not easily adapted to dealing in mostly perishable goods which have to be bought, transported and sold in a short time and at a profit.

72. Finally, there are a number of private projects that merit attention. The largest and oldest private rural development project in Brazil is a 60 year old project in the Northern part of the state of Paraná. It has developed over 1.3 million hectares of virgin land, founded 6 major cities and 57 minor ones, sold approximately 50,000 farm properties, with an average size of about 30 hectares, ranging from 12 to 73 hectares to small farmers, and sold over 75,000 urban residential plots. The total population of the project's area is now several million.

73. Early attempts at development of the Northern areas of Paraná i.e. around 1910, were based on a model that had been successful in the northeastern part of the state of São Paulo and in parts of the state of Minas Gerais. This was based on opening large tracks of land for plantations growing coffee. The early settlers in Northern Paraná realized that they needed more financial assistance in order to be able to extend transportation infrastructure, particularly railroads, to the area, and so to relieve their relative isolation. One of their efforts to attract additional investments into the area was to contact a British technical mission visiting Brazil in the early twenties. This mission was looking for lands to establish cotton cultivation, similar to the then very successful cotton growing undertaken by the Sudan Syndicate. Expected high fertility, low land prices and the expectation of rapid appreciation in price of the land because of the construction of a railroad, led to the purchase in 1925 of more than 1 million hectares in the Northern part of the state of Paraná by British investory. The original intention, though, to grow cotton, was a complete fiasco for a variety of technical reasons. The company had to abandon efforts in that direction and decided instead to attempt colonization of the land acquired. As a first step the company bought, in 1928, the railroad company São Paulo-Paraná. Also, in preparation for subsequent land sales, the company went to great lengths to assure correct and unassailable title to the lands acquired. It went so far as to pay several times for certain tracts of land to various interests that claimed ownership. In retrospect, the firm title to the lands acquired by the company and subsequently sold to small holders has proven to be one of the cornerstones of their successful development.

74. The British company's development philosophy was radically different from the large plantation-style development practiced in that part of Brazil at the time. Its plans were based on concurrent urban and rural development and on linking the area with major domestic and export markets. With respect to the latter, the purchase of the railroad from São Paulo, and its gradual extension into the project area was a crucial factor. The company's basic development plan for the undulating terrain was to build roads over the crests of the hills, with the properties, like fishbones from a central spine, extending downwards along the gently sloping terrain towards the rivers in the valleys. Concurrent urban and rural development was achieved by planning major cities at roughly every 100 kilometers on the main penetration roads and minor towns at intervals of 10 to 15 kilometers. The unit size of rural properties to be sold was kept small intentionally, in order to achieve a high density rural population, able to support and use the growing transport and urban infrastructure. A green belt was conserved around cities as well as around towns, in order to settle small producers of horticultural products, chickens and eggs, to supply the city and town populations with their daily needs. The average rural plot sold was a narrow strip of land of approximately 30 hectares, extending from the road running along the crest of the terrain to the river at the bottom of the valley. At the higher elevations, close to the road, coffee was planted. This is generally the area least affected by frost. The farmer's residence, horticultural plots, and stables for small livestock were built at the lower

137

parts of the property, close to the river. Water was obtained either from tube wells or from the river. In the early 30's, the period of the company's major expansion, 30 hectares of land in that part of Brazil was sufficient for a small farmer family to be entirely independent. The reason was the existence of one secure cash crop, coffee. Throughout the 30's and the 40's, Brazil's federal policy with respect to coffee prices and support for coffee was crucial for the development of many colonization projects.

75. The price of the land must have been affordable to a large segment of the Brazilian and foreign migrants that moved into the area, given the briskness of sales during the initial period of major expansion. According to personnel of the still existing development company CMNP (Companhia Melhoramentos Norte do Paraná), at least 50% of the ultimate land buyers started out as rural laborers, saving to buy their plot. Currently land is resold, often for the third or the fourth time, at prices of approximately US\$1,000 per hectare.

76. The company has always done everything necessary to support its one and only objective: sell land. Nevertheless, the combined actions taken by the company add up to what today might be called an integrated rural development project. The company also built and operated hotels, saw mills, brick making plants, etc. at the places of intended urban settlements. It built the complete water supply systems for most of its cities; it donated land and even building materials for churches, hospitals and government offices, but it never maintained for its own exploitation any of the auxiliary services that were established as an aid to land sales in the first place. The company never found it necessary to supply social or even production related services on its own account: health, education, agricultural extension, etc., since the public sector supplied those services from the moment they were required. For instance, Maringá, a major city in the heart of the company's area, and the current location of the company's headquarters, was incorporated as a municipality only 4 years after the first house was built, i.e. in 1947. From that moment on it was eligible for the usual state and federal support to municipalities and was also able to develop its own tax base. Its current population is well over 300,000.

77. The CMNP has been a fully Brazilian owned company since its acquisition in 1944 from the original British interests. Most of its 500 share holders are company employees. Its current executive field director, headquartered in Maringá, was hired by the company as a railroad engineer in 1932. In 1975, the company had 22 senior personnel with more than 30 years of service. Its total staff currently numbers approximately 1,500. Realizing that the company finally would run out of land to sell, it was decided, about 10 to 15 years ago, to diversify into other activities. As a result, the company now owns and operates 17 farms in Paraná and in the state of São Paulo. The company has the largest cattle herd in the state of Paraná and is an important producer of one of the states current major cash crops, soybeans. Furthermore, the company has diversified into a number of industrial ventures. Moreover, CMNP has been looking actively into the possibility of acquiring a large tract of land at today's frontier, in the

state of Matto Grosso, to continue its original activity, land development.

78. Criticisms heard today about the type of development such as the one pioneered by the CMNP, and later copied by a number of other developers, is that the properties sold by the company are really too small. Furthermore, the high level of sub-division has led to erosion, and to pollution of the rivers along which the settlements have been made. The counter argument of company personnel is that the original plan and philosophy of the development were based on economic conditions of the twenties. In particular, coffee was then the most profitable crop and the clients could afford only relatively small areas of land. In other words, the type of development was dictated by the reality of economics of the time and by the type of client catered to. However, now conditions have changed. Coffee is no longer as profitable in this area as it used to be. Through erosion and through lack of maintenance of fertility, the land has become gradually poorer. Erosion and pollution problems, as well as the gradual deterioration of soil fertility may be blamed partially on a lack of continued involvement by the company and in part upon a lack of vigorous enforcement of existing laws by the public sector. For instance, all title deeds contained a covenant that 10% of the land of each lot had to be kept in woodlands. This restriction, meant to combat erosion, was never enforced, either by the company or by public sector authorities. Pertinent farmer training and well focused extension work might have helped to maintain soil fertility by different agricultural practices and by correct application of fertilizer.

79. Current developments on these tracts of land after a generation of farming has taken place, are three-fold. First, there is a tendency to aggregate adjacent plots. Farmers sell off to their neighbors and move onto lands further inland, particularly in the Matto Grosso. With the money obtained from selling their plot in northern Paraná, they can buy a substantially larger area in current frontier developments. Second, the type of products grown on the best lands are changing. Instead of coffee, one can see increasingly wheat, soybeans, some other beans, and even castor beans. The third type of development is that the poorer lands are gradually taken out of intensive farming and put into extensive livestock production. Thus, on the one hand, it would appear that the original small holder development of CMNP is gradually evolving into an area of medium to large scale properties, because it is suffering from a deterioration in quality due to erosion and pollution, and therefore shifting gradually from intensive farming to extensive cattle production. On the other hand, this development managed to open up more than a million hectares of virgin land, settled about 50,000 small holders, and was instrumental in the development of an entire urban base with various industries, without any public sector subsidy.

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**INSIDE  
FOREIGN AID**

Also by Judith Tendler

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*The Johns Hopkins University Press*  
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## INTRODUCTION

241

This volume was inspired by the spate of official evaluations of development assistance programs commissioned in the late nineteen-sixties.<sup>1</sup> The reports echoed, in milder form, much of the criticism directed at development assistance for some time by aid receivers and others.<sup>2</sup> I agreed with most of the criticisms, which are summarized below. Yet the remedies proposed by official and nonofficial commentators reflected a perception of the world of development assistance that was, to my mind, incomplete. Certain problems seemed to go unnoticed. Some organizational features were judged undesirable which, in my view, seemed desirable. Many of the proposed changes seemed certain not to produce the desired results. What seemed missing, in brief, was a sense of the organizational setting in which assistance decisions took place. I wanted to extend the discussion of development assistance by looking at the organization from inside its own walls, to show how the organizational environment had contributed to the outcomes described in the official and unofficial reports.

Most of the criticism of development assistance can be summed up in five categories: (1) assistance too often takes the form of unnecessarily large capital projects, overly intensive in equipment and foreign exchange; (2) the technology of such projects has often been too sophisticated to be absorbed by developing-country institutions; (3) the design and execution of financed projects has too often coin-

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cided with the interests of developed-country firms in the business of exporting consulting services and equipment; (4) in the case of U.S. bilateral aid, legislative and administrative requirements have been imposed which make the program look more like an attempt to subsidize U.S. exports than an effort to assist less-developed countries to grow; (5) the "ugly American"<sup>3</sup> type of professional is a final contributor to the problem, because of his tendency to think that his country's way of doing things is best. These problems have long been more vigorously described by some aided countries as donor-country hypocrisy, export dumping, "gravy trains" for donor-country consulting and exporting firms, imperialism, or neocolonialism.

Based on these diagnoses, it is usually prescribed (1) that a larger share of development assistance be channeled through multilateral institutions in order to cleanse it of the political and business interferences of a bilateral program; (2) that liberalization of donor-country trade policy be considered essential to any aid program promoting growth in the less-developed world; (3) that donor-country institutions make diligent attempts to learn how to simplify technology; (4) that procedures for evaluating a proposed project be streamlined and improved in order to select projects and project designs better suited to the priorities and resources of the aided country; (5) that better technicians be hired, and that aid-giving institutions train them in the special techniques of development assistance; and lastly (6) that developed-country technicians attempt to be less "ugly."

What distinguishes my study from the above discussions is my portrayal of the organizational environment as playing a central role in determining the content of development assistance programs. I see organizational factors as responsible for outcomes that are usually considered the result of other things — policy directives, political pressures, employee training, project analysis techniques. Other discussions, for example, explain how better analytical techniques improve the quality of project selection. This study, in contrast, focuses on the overriding influence exerted on project selection by the way in which organizational output gets defined. Whereas other studies focus on the constraining effect of policies imposed by the legislative and executive branches, this study looks at the way in which the organization adapts to such constraints and how this adaptation gets incorporated into organizational behavior. Whereas other studies stress the problem of insensitive technicians and the need to recruit

and train better ones, this study explores how the organizational environment itself attracts the insensitive technician. Whereas other studies question the political motives behind development assistance, this study explores the possibility that genuine motives get crossed up by the needs of the organization to gain control over its environment. This study, in short, analyzes assistance programs in terms of the deterministic nature of their task, task environment, and organizational design.<sup>4</sup> It attempts to find the organizational rationality that lurks behind much of the behavior of development assistance organizations.

The difficulty of tracing today's development assistance problems back to these organizational factors explains to a certain extent why critics have singled out other, more visible causes: bureaucratic inefficiency, pressure by developed-country manufacturers with equipment to sell, political payoffs, underdeveloped-country irrationality, technical competence, or masked neocolonialist motives. Most such explanations, unlike those relating to the organizational setting, point to highly visible groups who have been known to behave on other occasions in the criticized way. These explanations fit in with theories, accepted in one quarter or another, about how certain types of groups or countries behave. I do not deny the value of these explanations, but suggest that they have been hit upon first because they are more visible and correspond to existing analytical approaches to organizational and political behavior.

Some of the problems outlined above belong solely to the U.S. bilateral program and its executor, the Agency for International Development (AID). The attempt to explain AID's problems often centers on the subjection of that agency to the pressures of private interest groups and to poaching by other government entities. Most public sector entities, however, are subject to some form of external buffeting, so that this explanation does not tell us enough about this particular organization. One wants to know more about how the organization dealt with such assaults — in short, how it coped with the normal pressures of the bureaucratic scene.<sup>5</sup>

Equally fragmentary is the finding that AID's bureaucracy was insensitive, overlarge, and unadaptive. That is how bureaucracies often turn out to be.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, when adaptive and innovative behavior does occur in an organization, it is often analyzed in terms of the organizational characteristics that enable the entity to overcome the lethargy and resistance to change that is inherent in any bureaucra-



cy.<sup>7</sup> One wants to know, then, how and why the innovators and risk-takers in AID were kept from playing their role. Did the agency's environment spurn them? If not, there is even more reason to be curious about why the forces of lethargy and resistance prevailed.

AID started out with some characteristics unusual for a public sector bureaucracy. This endowment, unnoted by evaluators, seemed particularly suited to a task like development assistance — a task that was far outside the range of the typical functions performed by most public sector bureaucracies. In fact, the U.S. organization may have started out better fit for the task at hand than the less-maligned multilateral agencies — the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and regional banks such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The disappointing performance of the U.S. agency, in sum, was particularly interesting, given the fact that it had started with a better than even organizational chance for success.

In observing AID from within, one is taken with the intricacies of a bilateral foreign aid organization subject to the slings and arrows of the rest of the government to which it belongs. Only after a time does it become apparent that many of the more important "bilaterally-caused" problems of U.S. foreign aid are prevalent in the multilateral organizations as well. This is surprising not only because the problems seem such an obvious result of bilateralism but because "multilateralization" has been proposed for some time as one of the most potent methods for improving the quality of U.S. foreign assistance. It is supposed to rescue the donor organization from the undermining influences of U.S. political and national security goals, U.S. business pressure on the design of projects and decisions, and congressional hostility to foreign aid. Yet, if a certain type of problem behavior is found in any assistance organization, regardless of its remoteness from national entanglements, then the vaunted multilateralization does not necessarily make inroads on some of the criticized problems.

The intent of this inquiry, then, is twofold: to explore the unique character of the Agency for International Development as a public sector organization, and to analyze certain problems which, although most visible in the highly bilateral context of one particular agency, turn out to afflict other types of development assistance organizations as well. The first three chapters concentrate on the bilateral AID. The next three extend the discussion to phenomena pervading both bilateral and multilateral organizations. The IBRD, or World Bank, has

become the most significant lender of development assistance funds in the nineteen-seventies, and the IDB is the largest and oldest of the regional development banks. Though of lesser significance, the UNDP is brought into the discussion partly because of the excellent description of its organizational environment in the Jackson Report, revealing that it was characterized by some of the same organizational problems that occurred in IBRD, IDB, and AID. Though the UNDP differs from these other organizations because it specializes in technical assistance and feasibility studies, it plays an important role as supplier of financeable projects to these organizations and, despite its differentness, has experienced remarkably similar organizational problems.

The IDB is a unique hybrid of multilateralism, bilateralism, and regionalism. Unlike the IBRD, it is staffed in large part by recipient-country technicians, which introduces politics into decisionmaking in a way that is distinct from both AID and IBRD. Unlike AID, moreover, the IDB's contributors are multinational, although all are within the Western hemisphere. Since its largest contributor is the United States, moreover, the organization is subject to AID-like bilateral forces; but these forces are much less intense and determining than those involving AID.

The differences between IDB, IBRD, and UNDP — and the way these differences relate to their funding arrangements — are discussed at length in the literature.<sup>8</sup> I treat all three organizations as "multilateral" — even though their differences may describe them better than their shared multilateralism — because I am interested in certain behaviors usually considered bilateral. At the same time, I point out their differences to show that certain organizational traits occur across a quite varied array of institutions dealing with development assistance.

A good part of the thinking in this book grew out of my association with the Latin America program of AID, particularly in Brazil, in the late nineteen-sixties. Much of the illustrative material reflects that association. The book, however, is not about AID's Latin America program. It is an attempt to say something general about development assistance organizations, based on a learning that could only have taken place through close involvement with one part of a large organization. During and after my AID-Latin America years, I had considerable exposure to AID programs in other regions, and to other assistance organizations, which provided an opportunity to check my

perceptions. Where possible, I have incorporated supporting material from the literature of these other programs and places, though I have not attempted to prove my analysis with systematic data from other countries and other organizations. I have enlisted my experience to concretize and enrich the argument and to lead the reader up to propositions that might otherwise seem preposterous.

Since my original experience with AID, its appropriations and personnel have been on the wane, while the IBRD has moved in the opposite direction. Between 1967 and 1974, the IBRD's loan commitments quadrupled, rising from \$1.1 billion to \$4.3 billion. During the same period, the funds appropriated for U.S. foreign aid declined by 20 percent, from \$2.1 billion to \$1.7 billion. Correspondingly, AID cut its personnel by half, from 17,600 direct-hire Americans and foreign nationals in 1968 to 9,400 in 1974. At the same time, the IBRD more than doubled its professional staff, from 734 to 1,752.<sup>9</sup> As a result of these transitions, the discussion of AID in the following three chapters may be more relevant to the IBRD than would have been the case some years ago. At the same time that AID starts to retreat from its decentralized system of resident field missions, for example, the once-centralized IBRD begins to look with more favor on the idea of establishing such missions. Other changes have been taking place in development assistance organizations — whether they are waxing or waning — such as the new concern with employment generation and income distribution. I have discussed these processes of change in the text wherever they enhance or modify my original argument.

Finally, most of the decisionmaking discussed in the book refers to project lending — though program lending receives explicit attention on pages 96 and 97. The IDB does not make program loans, and most IBRD activity is concentrated in project lending, with less than 5 percent of its 1974 commitments in program loans.<sup>10</sup> Though program lending has accounted for as much as 50 percent of AID's development lending, its share has decreased since 1969 to less than 10 percent of the proposed budget for fiscal year 1975. Sector loans have also become important in AID, accounting for 50 percent of the program in 1974 and 90 percent in 1975.<sup>11</sup> Although this approach represents a significant attempt to plan at sector rather than project levels, the sector loan is, to a certain extent, no more than a new way of grouping individual projects for presentation purposes. In that sector loans consist of a package of discrete projects, then, what is said here about project lending applies to sector lending as well. Similarly,

technical assistance activities are relevant to my discussion in that they are often directed toward generating applications for project financing. I concentrate on project lending, therefore, because it accounts for the major part of resources committed and a more than proportionate number of personnel. As a result, the project loan has had much more influence than the program loan in structuring the environment of development assistance organizations.

### THE TASK AND THE ORGANIZATIONAL FIT

The U.S. foreign aid agency was a quite special case of public sector bureaucracy. It had a decentralized structure and small familylike field missions, in combination with a remarkably present-oriented personnel system. All this contributed to an organizational environment that permitted considerable mobility, informality of communication and decisionmaking, and easy access to the top. This type of environment, in turn, was suited to organizational tasks which, like development assistance, tend to require a more than average amount of adaptive and innovative behavior. Certain features of AID's structure and personnel policies, then, seemed to have endowed it with a high probability of success. This unusual combination of organizational characteristics, along with an equally unusual task, has not attracted the attention of the analysts of organizations and bureaucratic behavior.

Although the agency's organizational environment was more conducive than most to adaptation and innovation, criticism of its performance has often focused on its unadaptive and uninnovative behavior. The reason the agency's performance fell short of its seeming fitness for the task is the subject of the next three chapters. This chapter describes the special nature of the demands made by the development assistance task on a public sector institution and the almost inadvertent aptness for that task of AID's organizational design.

#### THE NATURE OF THE TASK

One of the most distinguishing characteristics of the work of a foreign aid agency is its differentness from that of other government bureaucracies operating abroad or other money-spending bureaucracies at home. Like other public works entities, for example, AID has to spend money on highways and housing. But the typical highway or low-income housing project it finances will turn out wrong if done "by the book." The highway will fall apart long before the end of its service life because of lack of maintenance and vehicle load control practices in the aid-recipient country. Poor people may move into the housing project only at gunpoint, because that way of living seems so alien. Yet the foreign aid agency is held accountable if the highway falls apart or if the housing project remains unoccupied. At the same time, the agency may be just as censured for using procedures that strayed, in the interest of innovation, from standard technical norms.

Although the uniqueness of the foreign aid agency's task has been recognized and understood,<sup>1</sup> the organizational environment that such a task requires has never been specified. Nor has it been understood how the organization's inability to provide such an environment can contribute just as much to its ineffectiveness as can the pressures of outside interest groups, the insensitivity of the ethnocentric technician, and the restrictiveness of the legislature. When a task is different from most, and relatively new, there will be little technique to deal with it. The literature on the subject will be limited, the accumulated experience within government will be sparse, and the capacity of other government entities to carry out their normal watchdog functions will be meagerly developed. The routine response as a form of bureaucratic action will not work as well as in most large organizations. Familiar problem-solving techniques and activities will often be insufficient to carry out the task. The problem may require not only untried techniques of solution, but may first have to be sought out and defined — a kind of searching that is alien to much professional training in the developed world.<sup>2</sup> The task of development assistance, then, involves not only "doing." An essential portion of it has to do with learning.<sup>3</sup>

Because of the peculiar nature of the development assistance task, the written word will have special importance within the organization. Written chronicles of the agency's experience and analysis of what has been done will be needed much more than in a home-based

bureaucracy, where sure prescriptions for well-defined problems abound and where a general literature on how things work is usually available. Hence the agency's own writing will be an important medium through which a body of knowledge will be built up concerning the task at hand — knowledge that will help the organization to be less dependent on the erratic appearance of individual innovation.

The special character of the foreign aid agency's task requires that the organization have the proper atmosphere for groping without too much idea of what will result, for straying from tried and true solutions, and for struggling to escape from customary ways of thinking about things. The agency will need a number of bureaucrats with a penchant for this type of behavior; and an organizational environment will have to exist to which such types are attracted, in which they can make cohesive and informal groups, and in which they are able to gain power.

Although all this may seem obvious, its practical implications are directly contrary to the argument used to justify the responsibility of developed countries to aid the less-developed world. For I have been saying that the atmosphere of a development assistance agency has much in common with that of a less-developed country starting out on the path of development: wide gaps in experience and knowledge of the problems confronted and a corresponding maze of bureaucratic procedures that seem to provide an essential protection to the bureaucrat from the uncertainty and opaqueness of the world about him. Making things even more difficult for the assistance technician or administrator than for his recipient-country counterpart is the fact that the former lacks the native person's feel for what will work and what will not. Regardless of such difficulties, however, development assistance was established on the premise that the developed world possessed both the talent and the capital for helping backward countries to develop. Development know-how was spoken about as if it were like capital — a stock of goods capable of being transferred from its owners to the less privileged.<sup>4</sup> But development knowledge is not simply a stock with transferable properties. The peculiar nature of the development task makes knowledge a product of the transfer experience itself.

This augmented definition of development assistance — where the transferred resource is both input and output of the transfer process — makes it difficult to provide as clear a rationale for the assistance as

underlies the commitment to transfer capital. For knowledge that is still to be learned cannot, by definition, be more abundant in one part of the world than in another.<sup>5</sup> The difficulty of reconciling the rationale for development assistance with the need of the assistance organization for learning space can perhaps be attributed to the fact that our culture "does not contain concepts for simultaneously thinking about rationality and indeterminateness."<sup>6</sup> In practical terms, this difficulty has constituted a significant impediment to allowing these organizations to grope as much as they needed to. In order to maintain credibility with Congress, public watchdog entities, and investors (in the case of the multilateral banks), the organization could not admit that it often had to thrash around for solutions. Conversely, the pat technical solution was often slapped on a problem that might require another, less charted approach — sometimes in an inadvertent retreat from the uncertainty of less tried and true techniques.<sup>7</sup>

A result of the difficulty of accepting and putting into practice the augmented definition of development assistance is that when problems arise, they are attributed to the wrong causes — causes that fit the knowledge-as-stock definition of assistance. If an attempt to transfer a stock of knowledge to the underdeveloped world does not work well, the problem is said to result from imperfections in the transfer mechanism — inadequately trained technicians, counterproductive bureaucratic procedures, the impingement of forces from without — rather than from an organizational environment that does not generate its share of the skill to be transferred.

As a result of this narrow definition of knowledge transfer, the recommendations that accompany the evaluations of development assistance seem to be founded on an unlimited faith in the ability of developed-country man to cope with less-developed-country problems — a faith that is very much a result of the analysis of the failure. That is, put developed-country man in a streamlined organization, remove counterproductive outside pressures and legislative constraints, train him to be less ethnocentric, improve the techniques he must use, give him intense training in these techniques — and he and his organization will be much better fit to carry out the task at hand. If, however, a good part of the task is learning and adapting, then a good part of the burden rests on the organization and not the individual: he will not be better at development, no matter what his training, unless the organization is set up in a way that requires learning as an output.

The rationale behind development assistance, in sum, causes donor organizations to surround themselves with a protective aura of technical competence — an aura which must be maintained if they are to survive in their institutional world. This makes it difficult to generate the experimental environment necessary for their work. It also tends to result in placing the blame for failure on the wrong thing.

### THE ORGANIZATIONAL FIT

The literature of organizations has shown that a certain type of organizational structure has been most conducive to the accomplishment of a task like development assistance, where "problems and requirements for action arise which cannot be broken down and distributed among specialist roles within a clearly defined hierarchy."<sup>8</sup> The organizational structure indicated is decentralized, with superior-subordinate demarcations blurred, access to superiors easy, and considerable responsibility assumed by subordinates. The environment of AID fits this organizational description well. The agency's geographical dispersion and small field missions required a decentralized structure with considerable delegation of responsibility. Certain personnel policies had the same effect, although they were designed, as will be seen, with other purposes in mind.

The blurring of hierarchical lines in AID was partly a result of gaping vacuums of knowledge and power at various points in the organization. To a considerable extent, the agency was peopled with organizational types who were self-effacing, back-stepping, and apologetic. One did not often hear an AID professional express pride at working for the agency or speak contemptuously of other federal bureaucracies. (Perhaps the latter is a better measure of an organization's self-confidence.) Professionals at the IBRD, in contrast, would regularly exhibit amused scorn for the technical competence of their AID or IDB counterparts. Budget Bureau technicians, too, displayed an elitist self-confidence in their organization and a disdain for the abilities of the government entities they were overseeing. In AID, it was common for some of the brightest and most successful professionals and administrators to let it be thought that they were looking for positions elsewhere, even when they were making no serious efforts to leave. They thus managed to withhold their respect from the agency while continuing to work for it. A good part of the characteristic AID humility expressed itself in relation to Congress, particularly

at low levels of the organization and early stages of project design. At such points, a new idea was more frequently scrapped with "what would Congress say?" — than adopted with the attitude of "how could we get this one around Congress?"

The new recruit to the agency was often surprised to sit down at his first meetings and discover people who were not intrigued with the process of economic development, who were ground down and exhausted by their bouts with developing-country environments, and who were not curious about the inner workings of their organization's successes and failures. They seemed to find a certain degree of comfort and enjoyment in each other's company, engaging in a kind of friendly griping about the "beneficiary" and his world. The innovator, in turn, was accepted almost with relief by his peers and superiors, since he could often produce what they could not. His job description, salary grade, or administrative rank did not matter. His intrusions into the territory of others would often be requested; or he would, on his own, step into the vacuum left by tired or frightened colleagues.<sup>9</sup> What was unique to AID was not a more than proportionate share of the latter bureaucratic type but rather an extremely challenging and frustrating task environment. The faces of AID probably looked about the same as those of any large, home-based federal bureaucracy. It was the world they had to work with that made them timid.

The agency's decentralized structure and dispersion abroad in independent, familylike country missions also contributed to the unusual fluidity of vertical and horizontal movement within the organization. It was not simply a matter of the smallness of the organizational subunits. Their location in a foreign country — often looked upon by the staff as an alien environment — meant that the work unit doubled as a kind of social unit. This contributed to a more casual atmosphere at work, which, in turn, facilitated accessibility.<sup>10</sup> The informality was not necessarily a sole function of decentralization into small independent units. Similar dispersion abroad, in the embassies of the State Department, produced just the opposite result: an even more hierarchical environment than in the headquarters organization in Washington.<sup>11</sup> It was the combination of decentralization with other factors, discussed below, that seems to have produced the less hierarchical result in the case of AID.

The system of decentralized country missions increased the opportunities for a staff member's mobility not only because of the small,

familylike nature of the individual unit. Equally important was the possibility of moving from one mission to the other. The agency's encouragement of such rotation through its designation of two-year "tours of duty" made it possible for the staff member who could not get what he wanted in his own mission to try his fortunes in another — thereby increasing his expectation of possible promotion or reassignment as a reward for his efforts. The constant rotation between missions meant that positions were always being vacated and chances were always occurring to move up. Hence the high rate of inter-mission and field-Washington mobility removed one disadvantage of the small unit — the difficulty of moving upward, or even sideward, because of the smallness of the organization.

343 The high incidence of rotation in AID and the State Department has usually been noted because of its unfavorable side: moving people from one place to another just as they are getting to know a country — or, perhaps more accurate for AID, *allowing* them to move. As seen above, however, the rotations that occurred in the agency were not all that arbitrary and disadvantageous.<sup>12</sup> The employee himself had considerable interest in moving about, and the most successful ones were usually entreated by the country mission to renew their tours rather than rotate. An important aspect of rotation, then, was that it counterbalanced the tendency of a large public sector bureaucracy to offer little hope for rapid recognition and promotion.

Also contributing to the possibilities for action and power by the interested AID innovator was the uniquely present-oriented cast of the agency's personnel system. The legislative authority for AID's foreign service personnel system (Sec. 625[d] of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended) — as well as that of its predecessor agencies — was based on the Foreign Service Act of 1946 as amended. AID was enabled by the legislation to employ most of its professional American personnel for overseas service under a rubric little used until recently by the State Department's Foreign Service — namely, the Foreign Service Reserve (FSR). This category had been designed to give the State Department and pre-AID entities the authority to hire professionals "on a temporary basis . . . with such specialized skills as may from time to time be required" (Sec. 401[3] of FSA of 1946). The time limit imposed on such employment was two non-consecutive five-year periods (Sec. 522). In AID's case, however, the time period was "the duration of operations" of the agency (Sec. 625[d] of FAA of 1961). In effect, this allowed the agency to employ people indefinitely

without giving them the normal employment security accorded Civil Service employees (e.g., seniority rights and veteran's preference during times of personnel reorganizations or reductions), Foreign Service Officers, or even the FSR officers of the State Department.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, unlike the Foreign Service Officer, the FSR officer was not required to take rigorous entrance exams.

The orientation of the foreign aid bureaucracy was exactly opposite to that of the career Foreign Service of the State Department. Because the same type of criticism has often been leveled at the two groups, as if they were one, it is useful to clarify this significant difference in their organizational environment. Unlike AID, the State Department's Foreign Service is imbued with the atmosphere of an elite career service.<sup>14</sup> As one would expect in such a service, criticism and innovative behavior suffer because of the young officer's long-run interest in advancing his career.<sup>15</sup> Entry is limited by a tough written and oral exam. A period of initial work well below the level of the young officer's interests, aspirations, and talents is the usual rule. The initial apprenticeship period is tolerable to the recruit presumably because his career promises a future of power, prestige, and adventure — and because his acceptance into this elite corps confers immediate prestige on him in the eyes of the outside world.<sup>16</sup>

AID and its predecessors, in contrast, have always been much less future-oriented employers, even in comparison to federal bureaucracies without a career orientation like that of the Foreign Service. AID was created in 1962 in order to, among other things, put together under one roof some of the previously dispersed foreign assistance activities of the government — the International Cooperation Administration, the Development Loan Fund, the Food for Peace Program, and the local currency-lending activities of the Export-Import Bank. The agency's attitudes about personnel corresponded to the manner in which it had committed itself to development assistance — as if it were a task like the Marshall Plan, something that could be terminated with success in a five- or ten-year period. "I don't think it will happen for 10, 15, 20 years perhaps," said the agency's administrator in 1963, in response to a question about whether the program would terminate after some specified period. "But it certainly will terminate in many places before then, and it may terminate completely before then. The personnel system that is used must be compatible with the possibility of terminating any part or all of the program which may not last too long."<sup>17</sup> Of course, the placing of a

terminal date on the assistance commitment may have been more a political maneuver on the part of aid proponents than a realistic assessment of what would happen. Aid proponents were said to have calculated that Congress would never authorize the funds unless it was promised that the program would eventually come to an end, sooner rather than later.<sup>18</sup> Whatever the case may have been, it was always clear to the agency that its existence would come into question by Congress as soon as the end of that temporary period came near.

The agency, then, could not honestly promise a long-term career to its job applicants. Unlike the State Department, it was not interested in entrance exams. Whereas the separateness of the State Department's Foreign Service personnel system was meant to serve the purpose of creating an elite career corps, the reasons for a separate foreign aid personnel system were just the *opposite*: to be able to get already trained and experienced people fast and at the same time be free of the Civil-Service-type employment obligations to them.<sup>19</sup>

In 1963, more than half of the agency's overseas staff (1800 out of 3300 Foreign Service Reserve positions) had limited-tenure appointments, meaning that they would gain tenure after an initial trial period of arbitrary length only with the agency's specific approval.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, almost half of the agency's American personnel abroad in 1968 were not direct-hire; they were either on loan from other government agencies or on contract — and hence were employed for limited periods of time. Finally, the agency did not request authority to include its personnel in a career system until 1966 because, according to its own rationale, it was engaged in a temporary task.<sup>21</sup> All this seems rather unusual behavior for a public sector bureaucracy which has been criticized for having been ossified and unadaptive.

The career horizon of the foreign aid employer and employee, then, was atypically short. People were expected to perform immediately and be rewarded immediately. In contrast to the Foreign Service, there was no time for, or value placed upon, rising up from the bottom and getting one's experience that way. The employee expected his job to bestow on him immediately the responsibility and discretion that his experience merited. People tended to find their levels on their own — without as much resorting to formal reassignments, promotion, reorganizations, or job redefinitions as in other federal bureaucracies. Those who could not cope gravitated toward more secure "paper-pushing" functions, and those who were interested "took over" very soon after entering. The unusually short-term career hori-

zon of the agency and its employees meant that the fear of stepping out of line, and of what it would do to one's career, did not pervade the organization the way it did the Foreign Service. At the least, such fear was not a constraining element for those who were interested in experimenting or changing existing practices.

The relative absence of hierarchy and excessive preoccupation with promotion in AID must have had a positive effect on the agency's ability to carry out its task. Its overseas technicians, that is, could perform best if they got out into the culture of the country where they worked and got to know its people. If they were preoccupied with rising up in the ranks, however, they would consider it important to spend more time with those who would help their ascendancy moves — i.e., other Americans. The type of activity that led to promotion in the more rank-oriented Foreign Service of the State Department, as one observer has pointed out, had little to do with the ability to speak foreign languages and develop social relations with host country nationals, or with the knowledge of foreign cultures and political patterns. Specifically, "the important social contacts for the American diplomat who wishes to rise in the hierarchy are those with other Americans, both important American visitors and members of the American missions. Too much association with natives is likely to involve some slighting of this relationship to other Americans, and is, consequently, likely to retard promotion."<sup>22</sup> AID's fluid environment and ease of promotion, in contrast, must have been an important liberating factor, in the sense that overseas employees would not be sacrificing so much in terms of career opportunity by spending time with the people of their host country.

AID appeared to be unique, then, in setting the scene for a dedicated, risk-taking corps of technicians clever enough to pursue the goals of their organization and at the same time defend it from attempted incursions from the outside. The organization was fitted out with some atypical characteristics, which seemed, almost fortuitously, just what was needed for the atypical task at hand. This potential for healthiness in the AID environment stands out even more clearly when contrasted with the analyses of lack-of-innovation problems in the future-oriented ranks of the State Department.<sup>23</sup>

The State Department, interestingly, resorted more and more to the reserve category originally used mainly by AID and predecessors, rather than the more elitist career-oriented Foreign Service Officer category. In 1959, FSR accounted for 28 percent of the total number of

new FSO and FSR appointments, and 38 percent in 1961;<sup>24</sup> in 1968, FSR's were 36 percent of the total number of FSO and FSR staff members. The Herter Report stated that the FSR category had become "the primary vehicle for obtaining needed skills at intermediate and higher professional levels in the State Department."<sup>25</sup> Indeed, recent evaluations of the State Department's Foreign Service recommended that some of its "creativity" problems be remedied by modifying the recruitment system in a way that made it look more like AID's temporary foreign service. The State Department Task Force on the Stimulation of Creativity recommended that the department allow officers "to be released for up to 4 years to pursue brief careers elsewhere in government and in other professions . . . with provision to return to the Service without prejudice to their careers."<sup>26</sup> An article in the journal of the Foreign Service Officer's Association recommended the end of the FSO career service and its replacement with the recruitment of experienced professionals.<sup>27</sup> In sum, the State Department's elite Foreign Service, in attempting to deal with its own lack of innovation and adaptiveness, was advocating personnel changes which would make the service more like the non-elitist AID.<sup>28</sup>

Although I have characterized the agency's present-oriented personnel system as desirable, most of the attention focused on this system was of a critical nature. As early as 1962, for example, a report on foreign affairs personnel concluded that "the failure to establish a recognized career service and professional status for persons engaged in foreign assistance work" was the main cause of difficulty in recruiting high quality personnel.<sup>29</sup> In 1965, the *Foreign Service Journal* editorialized: "If there is one agency in the foreign affairs field in which greater administrative flexibility, unity and order in personnel matters are required, it is certainly AID. Many officers are on limited FSR appointment. No permanent appointments to AID's career service have been made since 1961. There is a hodge-podge of personnel systems with FSO, FSR, FSR (limited), AD (Administratively Determined), and Civil Service ratings, derived from a variety of legislative sources."<sup>30</sup> In 1968, a report commissioned by the American Foreign Service Association said that the major contribution of "the able and dedicated staff of AID and its predecessor agencies" to American foreign policy was "all the more significant" because this personnel "has been denied coverage under a stable personnel system."<sup>31</sup> In 1969 the agency was complaining to the Congress that its lack of a career system and its temporary status were obstacles to recruit-

ment.<sup>32</sup> The agency's rate of turnover was said to be higher than that of other government agencies — 25 percent as compared to 20 percent — and this allegedly reflected the general level of employment insecurity.<sup>33</sup>

The Agency's temporary status was criticized for its effect not only on staff recruitment and morale but also on the organization's ability to carry out its unique task. "It is perhaps inescapable," said the report of a congressional committee evaluating AID personnel administration and operations, "that the hasty manner in which it was necessary for this country to organize and staff the successive foreign assistance programs and to continue changing programs and key personnel to meet changing conditions, would eventually create a large, amorphous, unstable agency, which would provide one of the most serious handicaps in carrying out the complex foreign assistance programs."<sup>34</sup> Likewise, an ex-member of the Nine Wise Men, President Kennedy's *ad hoc* advisory committee on Latin American policy, recounted that the Alliance for Progress operated "as if it were likely to go out of business at any moment. . . . As a result . . . it functions like a disorganized ministry in a poor and backward country."<sup>35</sup> The author goes on to say that this problem resulted in a lack of the use of modern management and policy tools and a "shoving into the background" of the problems of information and research.

The short-term career horizon, then, may not have had as positive an effect as I have described. It may actually have caused the kind of job insecurity that prevents the development of adaptive, innovative behavior — and it may explain to a certain extent why the agency was not blessed with more of such behavior. Security is necessary to ensure the potential experimenter that he can take unpopular stands, sometimes fail, and go out on a limb without losing his job. Just as important, such security facilitates the formation of informal groups within the organization, for employees feel less need to compete with their colleagues "when promotions and dismissals depend on explicit and openly announced standards."<sup>36</sup>

Piecemeal organizational approaches and frequent changes, however, do not necessarily bring on the type of inadequate performance that AID critics have described. After all, stable and long-lived government bureaucracies with secure personnel systems have been criticized for the same lack of adaptive behavior and experience, but the shortcomings have been attributed in these cases to excessive security and stability. The rigidity of the Foreign Service, in the works



cited above, is seen as a consequence of the fact that it is an age-old entrenched organization, insulated from the forces of change by the timelessness of its values and career system.

An example of the potentially positive results of organizational newness and insecurity is the Latin American experience with autonomous state companies — the so-called mixed companies. The evolution of this particular organizational form in the public sector has in many cases constituted a significant breakthrough for government action in developing countries. The mixed company successes, however, were based on the same organizational characteristics which were considered to have caused the problems of AID. That is, the successful mixed companies frequently started out without much structure or security, made up of the better personnel of the government ministries from which they had broken away. Their ability to free themselves of particularly cumbersome civil service and procurement procedures was of major importance, especially in that this allowed rapid hiring and the paying of attractive salaries. The success of these new organizations, then, was their very newness, their manning by persons who had previously worked in the same branch of the public sector, and their breaking away from the more constraining aspects of government bureaucracy.

Although the analogy between the mixed company and AID is not completely fitting, it at least shows that we cannot accept "organizational disorder" and "temporariness" as "obvious" explanations for the problems of AID. Indeed, one of the reports that criticized the impermanent nature of AID's personnel system suggested elsewhere that career stability was probably not a desirable feature for the personnel system of an organization carrying out a task like development assistance:

The requirements of AID's program preclude a permanent career service because the needs for specialized personnel abroad change every year. . . . Better personnel will be obtained by hiring persons for temporary tours of duty. They will be forced to identify with their profession. . . . The decisive reason not to include these specialists in an AID career system is that, in the main, the career contexts and career loyalties of the best professionals lie with their professions and the whole range of activities with which those professions are associated. An association with AID, even if it could be made permanent, would not attract very many of the best professionals to spend most of their working lives overseas, far from their professional colleagues and the stimulus of professional association.<sup>37</sup>

In addition, it seems that the insecurity of the AID personnel system

as it existed on paper had not been reflected in the amount of firing and "removal of deadwood" that one would expect. The Herter Report suggested that the temporary "reserve" designation of AID foreign service officers was really "a misnomer in terms of its originally intended use as a temporary hiring device" because Foreign Service Reserve appointments in AID could be made for the duration of the agency's operations. In the State Department, in contrast, such appointments were limited to a given period of time. Hence, "a substantial portion of AID's Reserve officers have been with the Agency and its predecessors for many years. . . . Clearly, the Agency has a substantial nucleus of what amount to career personnel even in the absence of a formally constituted career service."<sup>38</sup>

Any government job offers what might be called informal security — as opposed to the formal security of being a member of a particular federal bureaucracy. The civil servant who distinguishes himself in a government job automatically becomes highly eligible in the eyes of other government entities. He is noticed and may receive job offers from these entities, especially if his work involves contact with them. Thus, if his agency is on the wane, this type of person is usually in an excellent position to find a good place in another government bureau. Some agencies are looked upon by ambitious young professionals as a way to establish their reputations for future opportunities in the political, business, or government world. AID in particular was considered this way, especially by lawyers, partly because of the high possibilities for mobility described above.<sup>39</sup>

Finally, the AID environment was an insecure one only in relation to other Civil Service departments. With respect to the private sector, the AID employee was still considerably more secure. There was a significant difference, moreover, between the reaction of the ambitious or competent bureaucrat and that of the less competent one to threatened personnel reductions. The latter lived through such periods with great fear, much talk of what would happen, and resentment at the insecurity of the work environment. The former, in contrast, would sometimes even welcome the rumors of personnel reduction because of the opportunity "to get rid of deadwood," or they would pay the rumors little heed, secure in the knowledge that they would not be touched. Or, when the program was threatened with complete demise, they would joke about the fact that the only result would be "a changing of acronyms" for the agency — and that they expected to take the same place in the newly-initialed entity,

whatever form it might take.<sup>40</sup>

In conclusion, one has to look beyond the obvious explanation of chaos and insecurity in order to find the reasons for AID's problems. Chaos and insecurity may have been an integral part of an organizational environment that was better equipped than most for coping with the job of development assistance.

## Chapter Three

### THE MISFIT

Certain development assistance problems are commonly explained in terms of the ethnocentricity of the developed-world technician, his insensitivity to other cultures, and his inability to meet the challenge of new situations. This chapter, in contrast, shows that AID's structure and task environment made it almost inevitable that certain problems usually attributed to individuals or a culture would have surfaced in any case as organizational phenomena. The task at hand required an organizational environment that could produce learning; the organizational level at which learning behavior was required was much lower, or at different points, than in a more typical government bureaucracy; and the type of person recruited for these positions was no different from those recruited for similar-level and similar-function positions in a home-based bureaucracy, where routine behavior at these levels is more functional.

#### BOTTOMHEAVINESS

AID differed from home-based government bureaucracies in that a major input into the program had to come from those outside it: either the recipient governments or other local borrower groups. This crucial beneficiary input into the production of development assistance was made at the organization's far-flung outposts — the country missions — rather than in conjunction with headquarters personnel in Washington. Recipient-country technicians, in short, usually

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Number 13

# **Managing Project-Related Technical Assistance**

## **The Lessons of Success**

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IDENTIFICATION AND DESIGN OF PRTA/1: SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES AND APPROACHES

TASK

QUESTIONS AND RELATED ISSUES

I. Examine Commitment and Achieve Consensus on Goals:

A. Identify Need

Diagnose need for institutional TA

- Recipient and aid agency (or project designers) should jointly engage in thorough diagnosis of need in order to achieve consensus that a problem exists and that TA is the best way to address it.

Assess appropriateness of technology and institutional design under consideration

- How much can be done by local staff? Designers should be aware of the interrelationship between project design choices (including proposed pace of implementation) and TA required for their implementation and use. What are the implications of the project investment for the use of human, physical, and financial resources over the short and long term?

Assess short- and long-term development objectives for the sector or entity

- What is the human resource development strategy for the sector?
- Is the goal to develop national capabilities in all areas of management or to develop "management autonomy"?
- Should training be provided for the entity only, or the sector as a whole?
- What are the linkages with larger mandates (e.g., women in development, environment, energy)?

Is additional external TA needed?

- Can local skills be tapped from the public or private sector? Repatriated from abroad?
- Is PRTA duplicating efforts of other multi or bilateral groups? Is the TA staff already present in the country working in the same area? Have results of PRTA in previous projects in the sector or subsector been taken into account?

Are there related training needs?

- Can TA and training needs be assessed concurrently? Should training be financed in advance of project execution?

B. Examine Feasibility of the Proposed Assistance

Assess state of the art and knowledge or expertise available to meet the TA need

- Can TA needs be met in terms of the state of the art and the expertise available, the organizational and political environment in which TA will be implemented, and the time frame and cost of the present project? If expertise is not available "off the shelf" (e.g., in institutional areas) should TA be provided in the form of "action research"?

Assess the availability of local skills and resources to prepare TA proposals and to manage the assistance, both substantively and administratively

- When such skills are not available, would recipient staff benefit from training in how to design and manage the assistance? Should aid agency staff themselves assist, or arrange for other preparatory assistance?

Assess the feasibility of achieving TA goals in a single project

- Would the success of TA be enhanced by planning the TA tasks as sequential parts of a development program, perhaps over a series of projects?

Assess internal and external factors likely to have an impact on TA activities

- Considering the organizational, legal, political, financial and other factors that may affect the success of PRTA should designers attempt to use these factors for the project's benefit, find ways to minimize their possible negative impact, or adjust TA goals to more realistically reflect the environment?

C. Achieve Consensus and Commitment About TA Need and Goals

Verify clarity of TA objectives and agreement of key stakeholders to such objectives

- State goals (criteria for success) in measurable terms (such as targets for training), to clarify what is expected of TA activities, as well as to help monitor their implementation.
- Seek balance between assistance for physical investment and for institutional or policy improvements.
- Verify that recipient's staff concerned with the TA at the political and technical levels perceive it as directly linked to project, sector, or country objectives; do not feel threatened by the TA; and are prepared to commit staff and other resources toward its implementation.
- Cross-cultural sensitivity may be required in order to understand how a recipient manifests commitment and what approaches or methods are most appropriate in seeking consensus.

Verify absence of other obstacles to TA

- Is there agreement on the cost of TA? Can it be lowered?
- Is the recipient willing to borrow for TA? Verify that no grant funds are available from other agencies.
- Is there agreement on the use of national, rather than expatriate consultants, where appropriate?

Reinforce commitment

- Provide recipient with access to experience of more advanced developing countries.
- Verify that needs for TA were kept to the minimum compatible with project objectives.
- Ensure that TA delivery systems other than the hiring of long-term experts will be considered during TA design.
- Ensure that the aid agency and recipient are prepared to modify the TA assignment in the light of implementation experience.
- In sum, ensure that TA is identified and designed in a spirit of partnership and that TA is part of an institution-building and human resource strategy, allowing the recipient to learn by doing.

956  
II. Design of the Services

A. Terms of Reference (TOR)

Specify PRTA tasks in Terms of Reference (TOR)

- TOR should clearly specify their objectives, desired outcomes, the task to be performed, its time frame and cost, and the reporting requirements. However, TOR should not be overly detailed, especially in the case of institutional and policy studies, and may need to be phased, so as to allow consultants to prepare more detailed proposals once in the field. Verifiable interim outputs may be desirable.
- Well-prepared TOR are flexible and negotiable, within reason.
- Specify assistance needed to help recipient launch implementation of study or policy recommendations.
- TOR should indicate the organizational entity to which the expatriate staff should be assigned, to whom they should report and to whom they should have access, and how much authority should be conveyed to them. The effectiveness of these arrangements will ultimately depend on local management and the relationship established between local and consultant staff.

Define role/write TOR for both expatriate  
and national staff  
Specify TA model and delivery mode

- This ensures that both foreign and local personnel will have meaningful assignments and a clear understanding of their responsibilities.
- TOR should indicate which model(s) of TA is appropriate for the tasks: (1) performer or substitute; (2) prescriptive; (3) counterpart-adviser; (4) collaborative. Also, what mode or combination of modes of delivery is preferable: long-term or short-term specialists or a combination of both, possibly in association with a training specialist, and teams of expatriate and national specialists; coaching by "visiting" experts or a panel of experts; or a "twinning" arrangement.

## B. Sources and Choice of Expertise

Identify potential suppliers of TA

- TA suppliers include expatriate and local individuals and consulting firms, U.N. agencies, NGOs and volunteer organizations, bilaterals, private manufacturers, similar operating entities, universities, trade and professional organizations.

Specify individual versus firm

- Is individual consultant or consulting firm preferable? Individuals may be preferable for longer term advisory positions or when management TA is required. Firms are preferable when complementary skills are required, backed up by professional and administrative support from headquarters.

Local versus foreign specialists

- The choice of expatriate, local, or joint venture expertise depends, in part, on the technology to be used in the parent project and how much adaptation is required to local circumstances. Other considerations include the urgency with which the recipient wishes the project to be implemented, the development strategy, the availability of local talent, and the relative level of local versus expatriate salaries.

## C. Training Design

Design PRTA and training in concert

- Transfer of skills and technology can be more effective if it is planned and implemented as an integral part of the project and other training efforts in the sector or country.
- If training can begin before the project starts, local staff are in a better position to make the most effective use of TA personnel once they arrive in the field.

- Call on a training or institutional specialist to design the training components as well as institutional measures to retain trained staff.
- Chances of successful skills transfer are better with an explicit, separately budgeted, training component, with two exceptions: (i) success has been achieved with engineering consultants training in contract and construction management; and (ii) skills are successfully transferred when nationals have primary or substantive responsibility for task achievement.
- If contract is expected to be given to a single firm that has proved effective both as consultant and trainer, be sure to allow enough time and financial resources to enable success at both tasks.

Choose a training strategy

- Training strategies include:
  - (a) "Sandwich" training with on-the-job work.
  - (b) Train on the job first, identify stars, send them for further training, build a cadre.
  - (c) Send trainees to a job overseas, e.g., under a twinning arrangement.
  - (d) Use short-term experts as coaches to train.
  - (e) Arrange study tours abroad.
- Training can be tailor-made or a standard program, a one-time or periodic activity, formal or non formal, on the job, in-house, in-region, or overseas.

Ensure ways for trainees to use new skills

- Ensure support of trainees' managers by involving them in beginning and ending training sessions or setting up special workshops or seminars for them. Follow up trainees after completion of training; incorporate training materials into operational manuals.

III. Administrative Design and Implementation

A. Make Logistical and Administrative Arrangements

Specify administrative responsibilities

- Select implementing agency and assess whether same agency should be responsible for designing, contracting, and implementing the TA.



Ensure that professional aspects of TA process are managed

250  
B. Provide for Periodic Evaluation

C. Arrangements for Staff and Trainee Selection

Select local staff

Select expatriate staff

- To meet professional and personal needs of expatriates and their families (housing, offices, and equipment), ensure that beneficiary agency can provide adequate support, otherwise strengthen agency's capacity or shift responsibility to consulting firm or other TA supplier.
  - Specify recipient's contribution (financial or in kind) to the TA assignment.
  - Specify arrangements for briefing, supervising, and backstopping the TA team, and its coordination with other agencies.
  - Promote continuity of staff from design to implementation, or at least access of designers and implementers to each other.
  - Make arrangements for prompt review of TA staff reports, especially Inception Report, which may redefine TA needs and TOR and require early action.
  - Schedule periodic joint evaluation among aid agency, TA recipient, and consultants to allow changes in assignment over time on the basis of implementation experience (flexibility to adjust TOR may be more significant for institutional than for engineering TA, although in the latter case scheduling may have to be adjusted or even the scope of work as conditions change).
  - Assess availability of appropriate local staff at an early stage.
  - Local consultants may be used where implementing agency staff are not available.
  - In some cases, it may be desirable for foreign consultant to help establish selection criteria and to assist in local staff selection, especially for training.
  - Staff self-selection can enhance the chances of having motivated staff. Special incentives may sometimes be necessary, however.
  - Key characteristics of effective local manager (and staff) include commitment to the project, effective use of consultants, good working relations with authorities.
  - Verify that recipient has generally accepted and sound selection and contracting procedures; otherwise provide guidance.
- 3-

Decide what selection criteria are most essential in achieving the particular PRTA task

360  
D. Make Arrangements for TA Follow-up

- Consider advantages of large versus small firm, U.N. organization versus individual contracts, the impact on TA staff morale of job security upon completion of assignment, etc.
- Ensure that if several groups of expatriates from different organizations are engaged, their conditions of employment are comparable.
- Individual qualities to consider in selection of expatriates include: technical competence; understanding of aid agency and recipient procedures and policies; and a range of personality characteristics (adaptability, dedication, flexibility, patience, tact, empathy, political sensitivity, and cross-cultural communication skills including linguistic ability). Training skills may also be a criterion.
- Psychological testing, interviews, or short-term initial appointments are ways to improve the matching of foreign and local staff.
- Create local permanent positions to replace expatriates. Arrange for decisions to be taken about policy recommendations and assign responsibility for implementation. Retain consultants for additional advice, training as needed.

## LESSON 6

### BUILDING TRUST

#### Learning Objectives

The participants will:

1. Outline the factors affecting the establishment of trust.
2. Evaluate the characteristics of an outsider who is trusted.
3. Assess how well this class is establishing trust.

#### Activities

1. Discussion of factors affecting the establishment of trust (1 hour)
  - a) feelings about homework assignment.
  - b) list factors on newsprint.
2. Break (15 min)
3. Midterm evaluation (30 min)
  - a) Triads  
Tasks - Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of this course so far. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the facilitator. What affect has the establishment of trust had on the success and failure of this class so far?
  - b) Large group discussion (30 min)  
What have we done in this class to enhance or inhibit trust among ourselves?
4. Handout Homework #6 - Managing Rural Development. (10 min)  
No class at scheduled time next week. On following Saturday will have all day class, 8-5 p.m.

## HOMWORK 6

### MANAGING RURAL DEVELOPMENT

#### 1. Read:

1. Heaver, Bureaucratic Policies and Incentives in the Management of Rural Development.
2. Korten, pp.53-162.
3. Chambers, pp.140-167.
4. Hyden, pp.182-205.
5. Moris, pp.116-125.

No class at regular time next week. Week from this Saturday we will play The Green Revolution Game from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Fine Arts Center, Room \_\_\_\_.

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# **Bureaucratic Politics and Incentives in the Management of Rural Development**

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SUMMARY

Neglect of the Management Factor

Poor public sector management is recognized as a key constraint on poverty-oriented rural development. But it is an elusive and neglected constraint because:

- (a) It is hard to separate the results of poor management from the many problems in poor countries which are beyond managers' control.
- (b) Management research has concentrated on the upper levels of bureaucracies, rather than the middle and junior officials who actually implement projects in the field. It thus does not meet the practical needs of managers or advisers.
- (c) Habits of thought and appraisal techniques have not changed to meet the needs of the 1970s generation of management-intensive rural development projects.
- (d) Professional bias encourages the wrong diagnosis of across-the-board organization and management problems as specialized, technical, sectoral problems.
- (e) Funding agencies have little access to key management processes in implementing organizations, and hence to the causes rather than the symptoms of poor management.
- (f) The access problem is compounded by the political sensitivity of management issues, especially the controversial question of who has control of scarce resources for what ends.

Why Emphasize Incentives and Politics?

Two major approaches to management improvement have been through the structural reform of organizations, and management training. However, structural reform is often short-circuited by the workings of the informal management system, and then results in no more than symbolic action. Management training is often not adapted to the environment of third world bureaucracies. An incentives approach to management complements existing structural and training approaches. It is also more fundamental, in that the pattern of incentives and motives within the bureaucracy ultimately determines whether new structures and newly trained managers will be used to their intended effect.

Four models of organizational processes are examined: rational, bureaucratic, garbage can and political. It is suggested that current management approaches imply that implementing agencies work primarily according to a mixture of bureaucratic and garbage can processes, to which a rationalist response would make sense. In reality, the political model is often more appropriate. The apparently unplanned, haphazard outcomes of much bureaucratic activity in fact suit important political interest groups, and are hence not as random as they seem. Rationalist solutions will therefore fail if they do not take account of political processes with their own rationality, and the incentive systems these imply.

#### Bureaucracy as Politics

The official goals of poverty-oriented development are multi-purpose and qualitative. Lack of goal clarity and difficulties in measuring achievement allow the pursuit of informal political goals within development bureaucracies. Informal personalist management systems also imply a looser structure and hence greater scope for playing politics in the implementation process. But the prevalence of politics and conflict, personalism and patronage are insufficient to explain why even winners in the struggle for resources and power are often consistently bad performers in the field. Seen from within, the bureaucratic picture is of interest groups in conflict. Seen from below--the viewpoint of the poor--it is one of coalition: a coalition of indifference to their needs. Conflict occurs primarily over the allocation of resources: but there is little perceived political advantage in using resources to maximum developmental effect once secured. The poor do not have the political voice to disturb this coalition. As a result, resources enter the bureaucratic system, but do not "trickle down" to the intended beneficiaries.

Perpetuation of many of the "problems" of bureaucracy--centralism, departmentalism, duplication, and sometimes red tape in decision-making--is often in the interest of the key political game-players adept at handling the system. "Rationalist" administrative innovation tends to destroy the informal management systems fundamental to the existing balance of power, and will therefore be resisted. The implications for an incentives approach to management are extremely significant. New programs and projects must take account of bureaucratic politics, and provide an incentive, in terms of a perceived personal advantage, for bureaucrats at each level and in every department involved. This implies the addition of a new dimension to project design: the assessment of motivation and incentives within implementing agencies, and systematic attention to the kind of incentive patterns which will make indifference to poor beneficiaries no longer the politically rational attitude.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ASSESSING INCENTIVES

#### Recognizing Political Rationality

One basic assumption, implicit in the idea of bureaucracy as politics, underlies the assessment of incentives--that individuals at all levels in the organization are for the most part behaving rationally from their own standpoint. Expectations of bureaucracy often implicitly accept that its definitive qualities are apathy and ignorance--Koestler's simplistic but revealing definition of bureaucracy, which he sees as the polar opposite of the meritocracy, defined as intelligence plus effort. The contrasting approach put forward here is that implementing organizations contain large reserves of intelligence and effort if appropriately stimulated: but that this stimulus is often missing, and/or these reserves are often concentrated in pursuit of unofficial goals which may not match those of funding agencies. It is not rational for individuals or organizations to exert themselves in a particular direction when there is insufficient incentive to do so: and it can therefore very well be argued that the logical result in many bureaucracies is often a combination of Koestler's two definitions--a situation where it is intelligent to be apathetic in pursuit of development goals. In the discussion of bureaucracy as politics, an informal decision-rule for civil servants was implied: "What political gain will implementing this policy bring me?" Following from the above assumption about rationality a parallel question needs to be asked by evaluators. The question the conventional evaluator has asked when examining progress in the field is "What has gone wrong here?" The basic question proposed in contrast is "What are the influences on the officials involved which make this result/action/non-action rational from their own point of view?" I.e., not "What makes this wrong?" but "What makes this right?" This is the question that is basic to the assessment of incentives. Asking this question directs attention to management and motivational root causes, while asking "What has gone wrong?" is more likely to direct attention to problem symptoms.

This notion of bureaucratic rationality must be distinguished from both "imperious" and "bounded" notions of rationality. This is clearly not the objective rationality of Pfeffer's first model (Table 1, page 11), since the political model of bureaucracy implies behavior which is often not in the rational interest of development goals. But nor is this merely bounded rationality, which still assumes that the individual is attempting to behave in some objectively or ultimately rational manner, but is constrained from doing so because of his imperfect knowledge and the bounds of his analytical ability. In contrast, bureaucratic behavior is often based on rational



self-interest, an approach to managerial behavior which in itself is no new one. It is implied in Herbert Simon's classic "Administrative Behavior" (Simon, 1962: 243): "This is the basic task of administration--to provide each 'operative' employee with an environment of decision of such a kind that behavior which is rational from the standpoint of this environment is also rational from the standpoint of the group values and the group situation." It has been specifically applied to rural development by Chambers (1974), for example:

Often, however, an examination of the work environment, perceptions and expectations of field staff will show, not that they are willfully negligent, but that they are reacting rationally to a situation in which it is not clear what is expected of them but in which it is clear that the exercise of initiative in development matters is at least as likely to be penalized as deviant behavior as rewarded for being good work (p. 23), and (p. 61): What does emerge, however, is that much of the inactivity and low work output can be understood as a rational response to a combination of terms of service, living conditions, working conditions and supervision. Neither penalties nor rewards provide strong incentives for better performance. In these circumstances, the potential abilities of staff lie largely dormant, a latent but unrealized resource. Staff could work eight hours a day instead of five. They could visit more than just the progressive elite of farmers. They could cover villages and farmers more distant from the places where they live. That they do not do these things is largely because they are rational. The question is how to change their work environment so that it becomes equally rational for them to work harder and better.

What is now needed is formal recognition of the importance of rational self-interest as defined by the patterns of incentives within recipient organizations. The effects of this incentive climate on individuals must be seen in proper perspective. Few officials are Machiavellian intriguers seeking all the time for their own advancement. Most are more reactive than proactive in their attitudes, and some are plain lazy and will be unresponsive even to a custom-designed incentive system. The following three bureaucratic types give a rough sense of the spectrum in the average implementing agency:

1. The Political Gamesman: The idea of the gamesman is taken from Maccoby's well-known analysis of top corporate leaders (Maccoby, 1976). His book is subtitled "Winning and Losing the Career Game", and this approach--to career as a game to be won--is the key to the bureaucratic gamesman. As a skilled politician, he will be highly sensitive to the informal goals and priorities of the bureaucracy, to the

sources of power, and to the key officials and politicians who are now or will become powerful. He will seek to advance his career by selling politically appealing projects to superiors and by implementing them in ways which take account of informal priorities (the case study below gives an example of this). He will ensure that the incentive systems controlling those below him reflect the informal goals that are in his career interest to pursue.

2. The Entrepreneur: The approach of the entrepreneurial bureaucrat can be described as follows: "Bureaucrats invest their energies where there is the greatest prospect of return. Developing country bureaucrats in particular are constantly making calculations because they have so many alternative investment options both in terms of their daily work (what meetings to skip, etc.) and in terms of their medium-term career (which project is likely to mutate into a corporation)" (John Howell, pers. comm.). The entrepreneur bureaucrat has some of the characteristics of the political gamesman. He has a career plan, and decides his priorities on the basis of his medium term interest. But he is reactive within a framework of investment options, responsive to rather than creating possibilities for advancement (the gamesman is more likely to propose the project which later mutates into a corporation). The entrepreneur's choice of priorities will affect the incentives of those below him; but he is as much a responder to incentives as he is an incentive-setter.
3. The Incentive-Follower: The majority of lower-level officials are incentive-followers only. They are the field staff described by Chambers, and in head office they are the yes-men clients of political patrons. Incentive-followers are almost entirely reactive responders: they have little concept of control over their careers and may perhaps best be described not as recognizing and reacting to positive incentives, but as following the "line of least resistance" within a given incentive pattern.

These categories are arbitrary in that all officials are to some extent incentive-followers (the gamesman's reactions to superiors and to a constraining environment) and all to an extent incentive-setters (the extension officer's effects on the motivation of client farmers). All are acting in their rational self-interest given their career goals and limitations. But it is important, among these rational actors, to distinguish those who are acting mainly as incentive-setters, since it is they who will control

attitudes and behavior in the organization, and ultimately the effectiveness of implementation.

#### Key Interest Groups and Incentive-Setters

The assessment of incentives within implementing agencies can validly concentrate on a small number of key groups or individuals and on an examination of how far their motives and aims conflict with those of other key groups, and those of project originators.

At the lower levels of organizations, interest groups are likely to be large--for example, the entire field officer contingent at a particular level of the extension service hierarchy. The entire group is likely to share similar problems and incentives, just as will the entire group of their immediate superiors. Groups will have different interests according to department and function, as well as according to their position in the hierarchy: extension officers will have very different problems and interests from those of water bailiffs, while water bailiffs are likely to form a different interest group from that of, say, the irrigation engineers controlling them. The organization charts of the various departments involved may thus be broken down very quickly into a series of groups which a priori may be expected to have common internal interests and to be to some extent in conflict with superior, subordinate or coordinating groups. Higher up in the hierarchy, groups give way to individual managers with particular personal interests. These groups may be cut across, or individuals may be united, by other groupings, based not upon departmental, hierarchical or personal interest, but on professional loyalty (e.g., engineers versus planners), race or age (which may determine attitudes to or possibilities for career development). When these groups are superimposed upon those derived direct from the organization chart, the picture becomes more complicated: but it still does not take account of the interest groups created by the informal management systems of a political bureaucracy. Superimposed again must be patron-client interest groups, which clearly will cut across horizontal hierarchical groupings, and are equally unlikely to be synonymous with formal departmental groups. It begins to seem as if there are more intersecting, shifting coalitions in the organization than there are individuals.

In practice, however, the large number of groups that a sociologist might isolate can be reduced to a few key groups and individuals whose strategic placing gives them control over project performance. Given that bureaucracies are basically authoritarian, the interests of more senior individuals and groups tend to determine the incentives of those below. Analysis should therefore start with the individuals near the head of the organization, whose attitudes will tend to dictate the incentive system for subordinates. If they share the aims of the project originators, attention can be turned to those next in the hierarchy, with the aim of determining

where conflicts in motivation occur which break the chain of common interest--for it will be at these points that commitment and cooperation will be lost, and the "trickle down" effect will become apparent.

The search for key interest groups and incentive-setters cannot, however, be confined to the formal hierarchy. Those in a position to control incentives are those who have power. Those with power, as the political approach to bureaucracy suggests, are those who control resources: and the control of key resources is far from limited to those with greatest formal authority. Starting-points for finding the incentive-setters would include answers to the following questions:

1. Who controls agendas. The obvious controllers of the organizational agenda are the planners who formally set priorities in conjunction with top management. But those with control over the agenda of important meetings and committees or with the ear of top (formal) managers can exert tremendous influence in seeing that certain decisions/problems are confronted and others not.
2. Who controls the budget process, central to the distribution of resources.
3. Who controls the procurement of physical resources. Given that the actual budget is seldom sufficient for all required resources, the process of equipment and supply procurement gives scope for favoring particular goals/activities.
4. Who controls the procurement and distribution of human resources. The quality of staff assigned to different activities can determine success or failure. So also can the informal applications of formal policy with regard to promotion, postings, housing, pay and allowances, and in-service training.
5. Which departments and interest groups actually get the most/finest resources and most favorable treatment. These may be the informal powers behind the thrones of the budget, procurement, personnel and planning processes.
6. Who is irreplaceable. Individuals who are irreplaceable have power. They may have technical expertise that is essential to the organization. They may simply be the relative of someone important outside the organization. They may have knowledge of complex bureaucratic procedures or special contacts in other departments such as

the Ministry of Finance: such "fixers" are crucial for ensuring the steady supply of resources--including the key resource of cooperation from coordinating departments.

7. Who controls information. Information is perhaps the greatest single source of informal power. The selection and presentation of information largely determine planning and the control of agendas, and also the evaluation of performance (through selection among objective judgment criteria, or simply distortion of reports). Among key positions in the communications network are those responsible for reporting and liaison between head office and the field, and those responsible for communication and coordination with other agencies.

#### Incentives, Priorities and Pressures

Breaking the organization down into a relatively small number of key interest groups and incentive-setting officials is a somewhat crude simplification of a complex reality: but this is necessary, since appraisal must be rapid, and specific targets must be selected for assistance and intervention, if attempts are later to be made to influence incentives. Similarly, some systematic effort must be made to classify and interpret the complex and often conflicting incentives and pressures that determine the priorities of interest groups and individuals--whether gamesman, entrepreneurs or followers. It is suggested that incentives as they affect the individual or group can for practical purposes be simplified into four sets of conflicting or complementary factors, which may be termed internal priorities, official and unofficial pressures from superiors, and local pressures.

Internal priorities may be defined as "intrinsic" motivation--that is, the attitude of the individual or group to his or their career. In the case of individual managers, personal levels of ambition may be important, as may personal values: in the case of both individuals and groups, attitudes towards work and career will be determined very largely by the personnel management and reward system. Factors include salary and allowance levels, opportunities for promotion and in-service training, questions of housing and posting. This is the area which has received most attention from field researchers, who have commented, for example, on the motivational implications of frequent personnel transfers in mid-project, and of alternative promotion systems based on merit, nepotism or length of service. It is an area of crucial importance, because it determines the basic attitudes and outlook of officials at all levels.

Official pressures from superiors tend to reflect the "party line", for example, the goals of the project or program as set out by the government. It is important to determine how far these are clearly expressed to officers down the line and in the field. Junior officials and field officers frequently share a different conception of the project from those of the project originators, are unclear about their roles and goals, and hence inevitably poorly motivated. Second only to the clarity of the official line in importance is the way in which official pressure is exerted on subordinates: the question of management style. Generalization is difficult, because different civil services and departments within them exhibit and indeed expect different types of managerial behavior. A cooperative management style appropriate in a department characterized by informal relationships would be interpreted merely as a sign of weak leadership in a department or culture that expected and respected authority and instructions. There will also be a trade-off with the incentives provided by the personnel management system--staff motivated by good salaries and conditions may be prepared to tolerate more authoritarian management. However, more cooperative management styles tend to encourage subordinates to share information and problems more frequently with their superiors--an important advantage in rural development, where "bottom-up" management is particularly important. The presentation of the official line is therefore as important as its content.

Informal pressures from superiors are likely, in a political bureaucracy, to be as important as official ones, and it is these that have been seriously neglected. Informal pressures reflect the actual priorities of superiors, where these are not in agreement with official priorities. Subordinates are extremely sensitive to these informal pressures, since it is by their response to them that they are likely, de facto, to be judged by their superiors. In the case of a subordinate with a wide-ranging job description, the official line coming to him may be equal emphasis on his various areas of responsibility: but if it is in his superior's or the department's interest to pursue one area rather than another, the subordinate is likely to realize rather quickly what his best interests have become. For example, if a superior's aim is to demonstrate progress in a new extension campaign, and this can be presented in terms of the number of farm visits and farmers meetings held by junior officials, then the informal incentive for junior officials is to hold (or at least report) the largest possible number of meetings, irrespective of their effectiveness: though both superior and subordinate know that the official aim is to increase acreage of the new crop, this need not be their informal priority. Informal priorities will seldom be announced, but they are nevertheless effective as pressures on subordinates who are concerned with their political future in the organization, or simply to keep in line with the boss.

Local pressures include all those day-to-day pressures on the individual or group stemming not from their superiors, but from the execution of their job and their relationship with peers, subordinates and clients.

For example, an irrigation manager in the field will be subject to pressure from peers to cooperate and probably to conform, pressures from farmers (complaints, requests for advice), pressures from subordinates, and from the many routine administrative matters that de facto take up the majority of his time. He may therefore be subject to four types of influence: from his own career ambitions; the official project implementation line; informal departmental priorities; and local pressures. Pressures from his superiors, reflecting the priorities of superiors and the pressures acting on them in turn, may be in conflict with local pressures, e.g., requiring attention to a strategic problem, rather than to clearing pressing and immediate tactical ones. Local pressures are neglected by evaluators, who, in short visits, and with counterpart officials taken off their normal duties to accompany them, concentrate on results in the field to the exclusion of getting a picture of daily workloads and problems. But the pressures and frustrations of an official's daily round inevitably bulk large in the trade-off he must make between conflicting pressures from different directions.

In principle, therefore, the individual or group's behavior may be governed by incentive factors quite apart from the dictates of official project aims--internal priorities, local pressures, and informal pressures from superiors. Project goals will only be pursued: (a) where these are not in conflict with more important, i.e., more rewarding factors; (b) where project goals are in conflict with other interests, but official pressures are so strong that they cannot be ignored; or, (c) most effectively, where internal priorities and informal and official pressures coincide as far as possible with each other and with project goals. An incentives approach suggests that the main aim of project and donor management should be to create a situation (c) where there is a minimum conflict between these four factors. It follows that determining which are the key interest groups, and what are the key incentives and pressures affecting them, must become a major goal of organizational appraisal and implementation analysis.

#### Case: Incentives in a Complex Project System

This section illustrates the incentives approach in a brief analysis of implementation problems on a major irrigation/settlement scheme in South Asia. The project in question was managed on an integrated basis by a River Basin Development Board with wide powers, and assistance from major aid donors. A number of problems were apparent. Agricultural credit default rates were extremely high; equipment offered under project aid loans had not arrived; farmers were late in beginning cultivation operations at the start of the wet season; essential inputs such as fertilizer arrived late or in insufficient quantity; farmers were growing flooded paddy rice on porous soil instead of the subsidiary food crops recommended in the project plan; some farmers harvesting late had no time to thresh their crop before the land preparation period of the subsequent season; perhaps worst of all, irrigation water use was double the per acre allocation in the project plan, and hence water supply for the tail end of the Scheme still to be irrigated and settled

was threatened. In addition, construction work in the latter area was haphazardly planned, with priority often going to activities off the critical path.

Most of these problems were linked in vicious circles. Farmers took longer than planned in land preparation because tractors available under the aid loan had not been procured and distributed. This meant that farmers kept paddy fields flooded for tillage after the peak period of rains, and hence used more irrigation water. Non-arrival of threshers under the aid loan meant that crops were often stacked after harvest until buffalo or tractor power became available for threshing. This increased grain wastage, and delayed the receipt of cash from the marketed surplus. This often meant default on agricultural loans, with the prospect that the use of modern inputs in the following season would be reduced. Delay in harvesting and threshing also meant a late start on land preparation in the next season, missing the peak period rains and thus continuing the vicious circle. These agricultural problems were, however, no more than symptoms of more fundamental planning and management deficiencies. Farmers were hampered by the absence of much of the government support designed into the early period of implementation. The Development Board was responsible for procuring tractors and threshers under the aid loan, and had not done so. Annual inputs were arriving late or not at all, again the Board's responsibility. Planned marketing services for the subsidiary food crops had not been organized, so that farmers had every incentive to grow their traditional flooded paddy crop on the porous soils, and hence vastly increase water consumption. Project management was in general inadequate.

In turn, planning and management problems could be traced to root causes in the area of incentives. The assessment procedure suggests starting the examination of incentives at the top, even if it is problems in the field which are most apparent. The Chairman of the Board was an able political gamesman, who had been promoted to his current position after assuring a senior politician that a massive acceleration in the speed of implementation of the Scheme was feasible. The politician's personal support gave the Chairman exceptional power. But his political future now depended on meeting targets defined by himself and interested politicians in terms of acres irrigated and delivered ready for settlement. His personal incentive was therefore to concentrate on construction activity, since the measure of progress was acres delivered with irrigation infrastructure, rather than agricultural output, etc., in the irrigated areas. This was therefore the key divergence in incentive terms between informal and political goals.

The Chairman was an engineer by profession and this, as commonly in irrigation projects, reinforced the bias towards construction. He surrounded himself with a loyal and effective engineering and construction staff in head office, which was clearly the key professional interest group. Significantly, the top managerial post in the area of settlement was filled and operated efficiently (perhaps because the arrival of settlers was part of the



measure of progress), while the chief managerial post for agriculture was left vacant for over a year--a clear enough indicator of priorities. The Chairman and engineering staff controlled the flow of information to the Cabinet and overseeing agencies. Reports of progress in the field consistently highlighted construction activity and downplayed agriculture and community development. The priority given to different forms of construction work reflected the Chairman's incentives. He concentrated on the building of irrigation infrastructure rather than Coop stores essential for community development purposes and the provision of agricultural inputs. Within the activity of irrigation development, he concentrated on jungle clearance and major canal construction rather than on minor canals and field channels. In line with the bias in measures of success, it was clear that work was concentrating on activities of high public visibility and concern. What had seemed haphazard planning from the perspective of official project goals was in fact perfectly rational given the incentives and pressures affecting the key interest group in the organization.

The pattern of incentives developed consistently down the line. The acceleration of effort meant that officials were overworked in all sectors, and therefore that they could not attend to all aspects of their formal job descriptions. Given the pressure to obtain bulldozers and other construction equipment, it was rational for procurement officers in head office to concentrate on these at the expense of agricultural equipment. The overworked Project Manager in the field naturally took the line of least resistance in concentrating on construction rather than agriculture and community development work. Personally enthusiastic agriculture officials had no support from head office and hence neither incentive nor ability to carry out their work according to the project plan. Coop officials responsible for procuring agricultural inputs could not plan requirements in advance, since they could not predict next season's cultivated acreage on the basis of the inflated targets for expansion of the irrigated area given them by the engineers. Water bailiffs attempting to reduce water issues faced political hostility (including telegrams to the local MP) from top-end farmers who stood to lose, and had no incentive to enforce restrictions, given the lack of support from top management. All were behaving rationally, but all failing by the standards of official project goals.

The above incentives-oriented sketch of problems and problem causes in an integrated rural project illustrates a number of important principles. First, the fundamental importance of identifying the divergence between official project and informal political goals. Second, the fact that the organizational pattern of incentives was determined at a high level in head office, far from the resulting problems in the field. This underlines the importance of investigating incentives as they operate vertically through the hierarchy, and of concentrating on key incentive-setting individuals and interest groups. Third, the way in which the key interest group was able to pursue its informal goals through control over the setting of organizational agendas, and control of information going to overseeing agencies. Fourth,

that while political gamesmanship was evident at higher levels, no conspiracy theory or informal politicking is necessary to explain behavior at the level of incentive-followers in the field. Field staff could not have given weight to all official goals given the work pressures upon them. The informal priorities of superiors were translated into pressure for results in certain directions which could not be ignored, either in terms of rational self-interest or simply in terms of carrying out instructions. In general--and most importantly--officials in the implementing organization were not planning badly and deviating from official development goals through ignorance or incapacity: they were doing so because of the incentives and pressures acting upon them.

#### The Practicalities of Assessment: When, By Whom, and How?

Previous sections have developed a conceptual approach to assessing incentives, and have given a brief illustration of application. The remainder of this chapter is concerned with the practicalities of assessment, and the need for integration with existing appraisal procedures.

When: Although the concern of this paper is with implementation, it is clear that the assessment of incentives must primarily take place during project preparation. This is because the assessment of political will to undertake the project should influence design, and may even raise questions as to whether it should go forward at all. It is also because the most effective way to influence incentives is to design measures to do so into the original project plan (Chapter Five). Systematic attention to assessing incentives would therefore require:

1. A Reconnaissance Stage Report, assessing the general climate of incentives and pressures in the organization, and recommending the broad form of project which might be most or least appropriate and hence successful.
2. A Feasibility-Stage Report: this should trace through the network of activities involved in implementation, stop at each critical action or assumption (e.g., about coordination), and assess whether the incentives exist for officials to act as planned.
3. Feedback During Implementation: this is equally important, for two reasons. First, it may be hard to fully assess the incentive system in the organization at the appraisal stage if it is not already undertaking projects closely comparable to that proposed. Second, inherent instability in the system, and the long implementation periods of rural projects, mean that incentives will inevitably change during implementation (sponsoring politicians may lose power, key officials may be replaced, budgets may be cut, new projects may come up which

offer greater bureaucratic rewards and hence change priorities, etc.).

By Whom: The use of a management or organization development specialist for this type of assessment has both good justification and disadvantages. On the positive side, it indicates recognition that management is an important subject area in its own right: since management problems are as (or more) likely to lead to project failure as any sectoral, technical problem, there is as much justification for a management specialist on the project appraisal team as there is for a soil scientist or economist. Second, it is justified because management as a specialist field requires assessment skills different from those of many sectoral experts. And the management specialist offers the advantage of organizational "systems vision" which does not see problem symptoms through the often distorting glasses of sectoral expertise. The disadvantages include the cost of adding yet another specialist to the appraisal team, and the fact that management specialists with experience of third world bureaucracies and rural development are anyway thin on the ground. Also, the management specialist is inevitably fairly "high profile." Despite his specialty (or because of the announcement of it), he may have more problems in gaining access to the informal management system than sector experts who are less suspected of the desire to probe into sensitive areas. Presentation as a planning expert may help to minimize the third problem.

Two conclusions may be drawn:

1. In general, the management challenges of development are still underestimated. In the case of large, integrated projects, this should be recognized, and management specialists included on appraisal teams as a matter of course. Large integrated projects are both the ones which can afford the extra professional costs, and the ones which imply greatest organizational expansion and interagency cooperation, and hence the greatest management problems.
2. The costs of appraisal may make a specialist management input impractical for smaller projects. The task can then either be given to one or more individuals or split among all members of a multidisciplinary team, each responsible for assessing incentives in his sector. The latter method has the advantage of encouraging each sector expert to take management factors into account when he plans his own aspects of the project: the result may be modified proposals at the technical level, with a better chance of implementation. On the other hand, given that the assessment task needs an integrated multisectoral view of the project, it can be useful to assign this to team members with this

overview--for example, an economist or the project leader.

How: The need is to penetrate the formal bureaucracy and to assess its informal priorities and processes. The two major practical obstacles to this are the questions of access and subjectivity. Senior officials of implementing agencies have every incentive to present and stress the excellence of the formal system in order to secure resources: somehow, access to the informal management system must be gained. And once off the security of the Organization Chart, the assessor of incentives must often rely on personal, subjective judgment about what is significant. Given that appraisal time is limited and the ideal approach of participant observation unwelcome, there are in practice two major methods of applying the conceptual approach outlined above. The first is interviews with field staff, which are likely to reveal very different views of organizational resources, goals and priorities from those gained from senior officials in head office. The second is performance checking to test the consistency of officials' professions about priorities with action in the field. What has been done and what has been neglected, and the amount of time that has been put into different activities will reflect priorities and pressures if the rational bureaucrat approach is correct. The evidence of performance will provide valuable objective information on how informal pressures from above conflict with official ones. Analogous in economics to the idea of "revealed preference", this extremely simple approach to evaluating what management has a real commitment to has not been available to the project evaluator who has assumed that if a non-action is not explicable by a skill or resource gap, then it is due to "bureaucratic inertia" or apathy. An approach which works back from the concrete evidence of achievement or non-achievement in the field to make inferences about motivation and incentives will tend to minimize the problem of subjectivity, whose biggest danger is the projection of the evaluator's own beliefs and assumptions onto the officials he is interviewing.

#### Presenting the Results

The results of an incentives assessment must be presented so as to maximize its usefulness. Full assessments cannot be presented in formal project documents, copies of which go to implementing organizations, since the procedure will be seen as potentially manipulative and unwelcome. On the other hand, the question of incentives cannot be ignored in appraisal documents, since one of the best methods of influencing incentives is itself to make the implementing agency formally aware that funding agencies care about incentives. The following compromises may be suggested for different situations:

1. Where the pattern of incentives throws real doubt on the question of project viability, a full assessment report needs to be made in confidence to the funding agency.

2. Where there are divergences between formal and informal priorities, but the project appears viable if incentives can be influenced:
  - a. Where the incentive problem is non-threatening, it should be dealt with fully in the appraisal document. An example would be where incentive problems primarily concern junior field staff with little political power, i.e., incentive-followers. Inclusion in the project document of a clear analysis of the problem and proposals to counter it is useful, because this formally recognizes the incentive system as the root cause, and commits the implementing organization to action in this area. Since the incentive problems affecting field staff that deal directly with farmers are particularly important and generally non-threatening, assessment of these should be incorporated into agency appraisal guidelines as a matter of routine.
  - b. Where incentives assessments are politically threatening, drawing attention to them will be counter-productive. An example would be the situation in the case study above. In such cases, the value of assessment would be in designing appropriate measures to change incentives, and the inclusion of these measures at appropriate points of the project plan. In addition, a confidential assessment of the situation should be written for the funding agency, first so that potential implementation problems can be anticipated and watched for: second, so that agency officials are aware of the reasons for and importance of measures in the plan document primarily aimed at influencing incentives.

CHAPTER FIVE  
INFLUENCING INCENTIVES

Points of Entry

The very idea of influencing incentives has overtones of manipulation and conflict. Given that the aim is to minimize conflict that will impede implementation, the essential preliminary to considering points of entry at the implementation stage is serious consideration of "points of exit" at the planning stage: the use of an incentives assessment to avoid investment altogether in projects where real lack of recipient political commitment has been detected. However, funding agencies may not welcome the frank appraisal of political commitment which this implies. Aid agencies, in particular, accepters of gradualist change, have not cared to analyze too closely the degree of gradualism they are prepared to accept, the degree of compromise they are prepared to make in pursuit of their official goals. Realistic assessment of those projects which promise to be implementable if incentives can be favorably influenced involves facing this question of compromise squarely. The need to maintain legitimacy as a foreign agency rightly breeds caution about activism on sensitive issues. Such caution is quite wrongly likely to result in a negative attitude towards conscious attempts to influence incentives in implementing organizations, on the grounds that this could be interference of a political nature. It cannot be stressed too strongly that it is a non-issue to raise the question whether agencies should be involved in the sort of recipient bureaucratic political activity described in Chapter Three. It is a non-issue because agencies have no choice: they already are involved in the political game. The trickle down effect is already diverting resources to the benefit of the bureaucracy and the rural rich rather than the rural poor. If funding agencies choose to adopt a do-nothing strategy, this is effectively a political decision to accept the present position. If agencies are serious about their official goals, the question (to paraphrase Sapolsky, p. 17 above) is not whether they play politics, but how to be better at it than others. This is the question addressed in the remainder of this Chapter.

There are two broad approaches to influencing incentives, concerned respectively with affecting intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation--in the language of this paper the internal priorities that shape attitudes to work and career--is determined largely by financial rewards and the personnel management system. The fact that these are often outside the scope of agency influence does not diminish their importance. As Esman and Montgomery (1980: 208) point out, field staff should be rewarded for the extra effort needed to work with the hardest-to-reach, most marginal farmers.

Changing financial and benefit systems and the creation of national awards for success in poverty-reducing projects and programs could do much to make the work of agricultural extension or bare-foot doctoring as prestigious and rewarding as careers in research or official medicine, and thus have tremendous effects on performance in the field. At the project level, where direct influence over base salaries is seldom possible, funding agencies may nevertheless be able to influence material incentives in a number of different ways. First, it may be possible to increase cash incentives other than salaries--for example, field and travel allowances. Second, non-cash material incentives such as better transport or housing may also be more open to negotiation, and equally effective motivators. Third, promotion, training, and the payment of annual bonuses can be linked much more directly to performance. Bottrall (1981: 118), in a detailed case study of irrigation project management, illustrates clearly the incentive effect of bonuses payable to field staff at the discretion of project management--an outcome facilitated by the unusual independence of the case project from the government budget, due to revenues collected from farmers in payment for project services.

The second broad approach to influencing incentives is concerned with extrinsic motivation, and it is this which has been least systematically considered elsewhere. Extrinsic motivation involves influencing the remaining groups of incentives--official, informal, and local pressures and incentives. The need is to find ways of reducing counter-productive informal political activity without creating unnecessary conflict, and without overstepping the funding agency's bounds of legitimacy. In the following sections, it is suggested that two broad points of entry minimize these dangers: approaches through planning and control, and approaches through feedback, monitoring and evaluation. The aim here is not to spell out the detail of planning and evaluation techniques whose principles are available elsewhere, but to show in particular how they can be used to influence incentives in a manner that is as depoliticized and non-threatening as possible. The considerable scope of such "non-political" methods of entry for creating effective change in informal political priorities is discussed, and illustrated with a number of examples of success and failure from the field. The final section of the Chapter then considers the limitations of such indirect influence, and the need to complement this with direct influence through both encouragement and pressure.

#### Depoliticized Entry: Planning

Perfectly legitimate influence in the prima facie non-political area of planning can have direct impact on the much more obviously political area of control. The procedures of better planning can hardly be refused as unwelcome by implementing agencies, for they represent merely more efficient means of achieving project or program goals agreed to by both funding agency and recipient. Yet planning has direct impact on incentives and motivation.

Goal Clarity: Effective goal-setting is the essence of planning. No official can be motivated to perform well unless he knows exactly what is expected of him. Clear job descriptions appear such basic tools that they may be assumed to exist, while attention goes to the fancier techniques of planning. Such job descriptions need not be the detailed exercise developed by western personnel managers. The essence is the clear definition of role and interactions, as found, for example, in the Training and Visit system of extension (see page 53 below). Only if individual roles are clear does a subordinate know what he needs to do so satisfy his superiors and win promotion: only then does a supervisor have an adequate standard by which to judge subordinate performance. Clear job descriptions therefore act as both a positive incentive, and as a negative pressure discouraging movement away from the official project line.

The task of writing job descriptions can be difficult, in that it involves disaggregating complex program goals into relatively simple "standard operating procedures" for individuals. It also usually involves making trade-offs between conflicting goals, which are seldom fully resolved, if at all, at the project formulation/funding stage. At the allocation stage, it is often politically wise to leave goals as all-embracing as possible, so that diverse interest groups may see themselves as benefitted, and hence support the allocation. (Whether or not this is desirable, it will continue to happen.) The task at the implementation stage is to see that choices between goals are faced at once, rather than left to be resolved by junior officials without sufficient power to counter local pressures. In particular, if choices about target groups are not made at this stage, the project is more likely to benefit influential interest groups than the poor: planning to avoid this outcome is considered further below. Senior management must be involved in the vetting of all job descriptions, since this is in fact an important extension of policy-making. This also forces top managers to think realistically about the pressures on junior field staff whom they may meet rather infrequently. At the general bureaucratic-political level, developing clear job descriptions is a way of clearly stating official priorities at all levels in the hierarchy, and a way of reducing the areas of vagueness which are necessary if managers are to pursue informal goals. It is small wonder, therefore, from a political point of view, that this important activity tends to be overlooked.

Realistic Goal-Setting and Participation: It should be possible to carry out the job as described. Though this is one of the more obvious points to be made about planning workloads, it is almost universally true that field staff are so overloaded that they have no hope of carrying out their jobs effectively, even if it is clear what they are supposed to do. There are two common results. The first is apathy--the feeling that if a field worker is supposed to visit an impossible number of farmers each day, he can never work satisfactorily and might just as well give up and visit no farmers. The second reaction is to focus attention on those elements of the job which are either easiest to carry out or which there is most pressure



to attend to (through local or informal pressures from above), i.e., to follow the line of least resistance. Clearly, unrealistic job descriptions are likely to result in deviations from official goals. It is, however, quite rational for senior managers to design impossible jobs for their juniors. Quite often, over-ambitious project or program targets are set by politicians and must be at least formally acquiesced to. In situations of manpower and budget shortages, this necessarily means stretching field staff impossibly thin. Aid donors are often partly to blame for this, in at least three ways. First, they are predisposed in favor of bounded-site, resource-intensive projects which mop up an unfair share of the best staff and reduce availabilities elsewhere. Second, they (and recipient governments) are often tempted to expand existing successful projects by widening the duties of field staff. Third, development agencies with foreign exchange to spend are often insufficiently willing to contribute local, recurrent funding for field staff essential to project success.

Once again, setting realistic goals involves making uncomfortable choices about priorities. Donors and consultants here have an opportunity to be of political help to top implementing officials, who on their own can do nothing to moderate unrealistic targets set by politicians (for example, the disincentive effects of the totally unrealistic targets for rice production in Indonesia between 1969 and 1974, set solely by Soeharto and an intimate circle of advisers, are considered in Hansen, 1971). Donors can legitimately insist on working out reasonable targets in conjunction with the implementing officials themselves. This is an activity where participative management is essential. The choice of goals may be a policy decision at a high level, but the realistic setting of quantitative targets can only be done in conjunction with implementing officials who are aware of constraints in the field. Such participative planning has the greatest possible incentive benefits, since officials are likely to be committed to targets that they believe to be realistic and have helped set. For this reason, participative goal-setting should be extended to the lowest levels of the hierarchy. Bottom-up rather than top-down targetry is not only realistic, but essential to motivation. More realistic goal-setting has important bureaucratic-political consequences too. Unrealistic targets encourage managers to focus on activities which are the most visible or the most measured, and general overload provides a smokescreen behind which informal goals can be given priority. Goals that are realistic as well as clear make deviation from the official line more obvious and less excusable.

Planning Planning: Given that the sort of basic planning efforts described above will constrain informal political activity, they will not develop by themselves. It is, however, perfectly legitimate for funding agencies to assist in the institutionalization of planning by designing a Planning Unit into the structure of larger, integrated projects and programs. Its terms of reference need to be carefully drawn, however, if it is not to become a center of political conflict. Planning Units must, above all, avoid the centralization of detailed planning functions. They should have two

major roles. First, to be available to assist other departments in the development of their own planning capability. Second, to aggregate and coordinate the various detailed plans from departments into a macro-plan for the project or program. This involves checking the realism of departmental plans, making sure that such plans are mutually consistent, and where such plans involve reliance on other agencies or departments, ensuring that appropriate arrangements for coordination have been made. The Planning Unit should report only to the program chief or directing board, and should furnish a realistic macro-plan, or a statement why present departmental plans are inadequate or inconsistent. It is then up to top management to instruct departments to improve or alter plans, or to make arrangements for coordination. Planning Units without executive power are essential if planning is to be as far as possible participative, aggregative and bottom-up. Lack of executive power minimizes the risk of a Planning Unit being seen as a political threat by departments concerned with their own autonomy. Institutionalized planning may also appear threatening from the political point of view of a chief executive: its introduction during implementation may seem an unwelcome restriction of his freedom of action in a personalist bureaucracy. Institutionalized planning must therefore be planned into the project at the design stage, as one of the quid pro quos of funding, presented as a means by which top management can increase its control of implementation activity.

Planning Coordination: The cooperation of coordinating agencies is a key resource requirement for integrated rural projects. Once again, coordination is unlikely to be politically rational and practiced unless it is specifically planned for. Cooperation must be seen as a plus-sum game. All too often, where the achievements of the project go to the credit of the "major" implementing agency, cooperation is seen as a zero-sum game, in which the coordinating agency loses the resources (physical, staff, time, energy) put into the project, for a return which goes to another organization. Coordinating agencies must be involved in all stages of the planning process, a key part of which must be the design of agreed mechanisms for ensuring continued coordination. Smith, Lethem and Thoolen (1980: 26) give a useful summary of such mechanisms ranging from "weak" to "strong". At the weak end of the spectrum, mechanisms include ad hoc meetings to coordinate as problems arise: midway they place measures such as participation in regular planning meetings and the development of liaison positions: at the strong end of the spectrum, written working agreements, full-time membership in committees, development of liaison groups, and participation in matrix structures (i.e., with dual reporting relationships). Regular planning meetings and the nomination of liaison officers are likely to be the necessary minimum in practice. The latter is an important means of reducing buck-passing and confusion, and should be introduced as a routine measure, since the liaison function need not be a full-time job for the individual involved. Members of the planning units of each agency are one logical choice for the liaison position, given their overall view of project activities, relative political independence, and access to top management. With regard to the stronger

measures put forward, written working agreements are a useful means of focusing on goals, priorities and the distribution of responsibility, and provide an essential reference-point for the future. A number of other mechanisms are less desirable, in that coordination has costs as well as benefits: the time costs of committee membership and the political costs of attempting to form matrix structures, for example, may well be unacceptable. The exception is the creation of liaison groups, providing that these consist of members of the Evaluation (see page 47) and Planning Units of the respective agencies, and are thus a logical extension rather than a duplication of internal planning and monitoring efforts. The function of such groups is considered further below.

Planning to Reach the Poor: Like coordination, benefitting the rural poor is a special problem in the context of a political bureaucracy. As Chapter Three noted, informal incentives at present make it rational for field staff to concentrate on larger, richer farmers who are more influential and easier to reach and deal with. Specific incentives and pressures must therefore be built into the project to make it rational for field staff to make efforts to reach the poor. The first essential is simply to specify the provision of benefits to poorer groups as a priority goal, if this is the official aim of the project. When goals are unclear, and trade-offs have not been resolved at the planning stage, field officers will usually be left with unranked, multiple goals: for example, in the case of an agricultural extension officer, increasing the acreage of a new crop, and raising the incomes of the least well off. Such lack of goal clarity is an effective incentive to concentrate on the richer rather than the poorer, given informal and local pressures. The second essential is again to make sure that targets are realistic. Project designers seldom take sufficient account of the greater efforts needed to contact and work with poor beneficiaries: elements of the project may need to be redesigned during implementation to take account of conservative attitudes to risk and innovation: and, even with the most appropriate of project designs, the discontinuance rate among poor beneficiaries will be higher than average. These and other factors will mean that the number of beneficiaries with which one field officer may hope to work may need to be reduced, and that slower progress (though in the right direction) must be expected and accepted. Only if field staff are set realistic goals will they treat poverty reduction as a challenge to be accepted rather than avoided.

Fundamental to this type of clear, realistic goal-setting is the identification of the right target group of beneficiaries at the earliest possible stage. Political pressure to proceed with implementation and produce results often means that this most crucial part of the planning exercise is neglected. The ideally planned project will be based on a thorough socio-economic survey of existing conditions in the project area, as an essential starting-point for designing proposals which take account of potential beneficiaries' existing priorities and constraints. Where such

surveys are not available, and there is pressure to proceed with implementation (the majority of projects), quicker-and dirtier methods of target group selection can be very effective (see, for example, Chambers, 1978: 11-14 for guidelines). These are simple enough to be applied by the village-level field staff who, in programs of wide coverage, may have to be responsible for the selection of beneficiaries/ contact farmers. Where this is the case, the Planning Unit must undertake a sample survey to determine whether such guidelines are actually being followed (see, for example, Cernea and Tepping, 1977: 59). There is every incentive to skimp this part of the planning exercise, on the part of politicians interested in the support of influential rural groups, on the part of top management wanting to proceed visibly with implementation, and on the part of field workers whose lives will be made easier if they can miss the poorest beneficiaries. Funding agencies can help here by allocating time and money in the project plan specifically for this purpose, by monitoring this stage of project activity more carefully than any other, and by offering technical assistance if necessary for the development of suitable guidelines and survey techniques.

Planning During Implementation: A major mental reversal is beginning to be made away from thinking of planning solely as the formal planning exercise before implementation. Equally important is effective on-going planning, adaptive to changing goals and constraints during implementation. Funding agency assistance in planning still tends to concentrate on the major project document needed for the allocation of funds. But it is just as legitimate for donors to offer assistance in on-going planning and management. The potential political threat of such assistance may be defused by stressing its technical nature, as in the apparently neutral control technique of critical path analysis. Critical path analysis requires first the definition of the range of activities going to make up the project: then their arrangement into a network, showing sequences and interconnections: then the identification of the resource requirements over time for the various activities. Critical path analysis therefore implies: (a) having a clear idea of project goals; (b) placing importance on the need for coordination (through networks stressing the complementarity of activities); and (c) defining responsibility for different actions (necessary in the matching of human resource requirements and project activities). Such continuous planning techniques usefully assist in clarifying official goals at all levels, and reducing the areas of vagueness in which informal goals may be pursued.

Depoliticized Entry: Feedback

Management is frequently described as decision-making. This, of course, is correct. But the emphasis in such a view is often misplaced, focussing almost exclusively on choice. Choice, however, is only one step in the decision process. Prior to the exercise of choice, information about the environment and possible consequences of alternative actions must be acquired and processed. Once this is done, the choice is usually

obvious. Instead of describing management as decision-making, we could describe management as information gathering and be both consistent with the original position and possibly more descriptive of the actual emphasis of managers (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978: 266).

Effective monitoring and evaluation complement good planning partly through their indirect effects on the reward element necessary to motivation. Officials may have clear and realistic goals, but will have little incentive to work towards them if what they do is not seen to be done and appreciated. But the establishment of better information flows has still wider implications for better project management. As Pfeffer and Salancik point out, the predisposing nature and function of information flows is not sufficiently realized. The job of deciding what is reported is an extremely important and responsible one, because it will determine the view of the project held at the highest political levels. Better reporting systems in effect constantly confront the official proposals of the project originators with the informal interpretations of them by the executive. If the publicly exposed discrepancy is too great, it becomes very hard for managers not to take action to correct it. Informal management systems can only flourish in areas where duties are vague and evaluation and inquiry not too closely pressed. If the political level is clear in its priorities, but has been misinterpreted by the executive, the political level has for the first time the right information on which to base the right orders to exert corrective influence. If the political level is not clear in its commitment to all project goals, its position will at least become explicit for the first time.

Monitoring should therefore have two major goals. The first is to provide information about progress without which on-going planning and control are not possible (for a thorough analysis of the use of information systems for control purposes, see Lawler and Rhode, 1976). This task is clearly basic to a view of management seen as an iterative process between planning and feedback. The second goal is to motivate managers and field staff. The ideal approaches for developing information systems to meet these two goals are somewhat in tension. The next two sections therefore discuss two major and potentially conflicting approaches, and ways in which these may be successfully implemented together.

"Participative Monitoring": From an incentive standpoint, monitoring must be seen as much for the benefit of the subordinate as for the superior. If realistic goals are set with the cooperation of subordinates, the aim should be a monitoring system by which subordinates can themselves measure their own progress towards their own mutually agreed goals. But the system cannot be solely under the control of field staff, or their incentive will instead be to misreport activities, for example by falsifying entries in their log of field visits. Systematic checks must therefore be made by superiors both to provide negative pressures against misreporting, and to provide the positive incentive of recognition of good performance. The need

is to develop monitoring systems which are objective and honest without the heavy (and demoralizing) hand of authoritarian supervision. Four suggestions can be made for procedures which will help to make performance checks positive rather than negative incentives. First, the bulk of routine monitoring should be carried out by field staff's own immediate superiors: the descent of specialist M/E staff from head office is hard to present as a supportive procedure. Second, superiors should never check performance by calling staff in for review, but should do so in the course of routine field visits when the superior may observe and participate in his subordinate's work. Performance checking is more objective when carried out in the field. But from an incentives standpoint, the key thing is that the superior comes to the subordinate, takes an interest in his work and problems, and resolves any difficulties and gives any advice he can. Performance is thus automatically evaluated in the course of discussion of the previous week or two weeks' work. Thirdly, peer participation should be built into the monitoring and management system. From the incentives standpoint, the institution of regular discussions of problems and achievements between a superior and all of his field staff in a local area has several positive effects. Sharing problems develops a sense of teamwork, and builds commitment. Peer group pressure is one of the strongest possible incentives for achieving conformity to norms. Providing challenging but realistic performance standards have been set in the planning process, this therefore reduces superiors' needs to act as controllers rather than consultants. Also, from a management standpoint, regular interaction between field officers in direct contact with beneficiaries is in itself one of the most effective forms of implementation problem-solving, and will often be superior in realism and practicality to the contributions of superiors and planners in head office. A fourth crucial way to strengthen the effectiveness of participative monitoring is the involvement of the beneficiary. Part of the superior's regular field visit should be spent in discussion with contact farmers or other beneficiaries, so that their satisfactions, dissatisfactions and suggestions for change are clearly registered. This emphasizes client orientation in general, and the fact that M/E in particular is not for the ultimate benefit of authority in the organization, but for the benefit of the farmers, etc., with whom staff are working.

The Planning and Evaluation Unit: While "participative monitoring" is the best positive performance incentive, it must be complemented by independent M/E on a sample basis conducted by an outside unit: without this, both senior and junior staff may find it in their joint interest to misreport progress up the line in their respective departments. This sort of "monitoring of monitoring" must be carried out by an independent unit not politically beholden to the implementing department. Such a unit must have total control over the choice of indicators used in reporting, and complete freedom from censorship from above. Since the unit's first function is to provide objective checks on performance, this supervisory role has the potential for conflict with the more participatory monitoring developed with incentives in mind. Whether the P and E Unit is seen as authoritarian and heavy-handed or

helpful is a question of management style. As in the case of planning, the central monitoring unit must see its function equally as the provision of consultancy services for the development of M/E in individual departments, so that these may strengthen control of their activities. Again as in the case of planning, the central unit must not seek an executive role: its function is simply to report to top management, and to aggregate departmental progress into a picture of overall program-wide progress. It is in the P & E Unit that technical assistance is likely to be of greatest value. Though the training function of technical assistance is rightly stressed as of key importance, in practice one of the most valuable things that foreign experts do is to act as a channel of communication for junior or field officials who often have a very clear picture of problems and suggestions for solutions, but who are unheard (or who are constrained from speaking) because superiors' informal priorities are elsewhere. The sad fact of life is that many junior officials are competent, but are prevented from acting competently. This is a major reason for the often-noted fact of technical assistance not "training itself out of a job". Sector experts may make their counterparts more technically expert, but when they go home may well leave them at their former political disadvantage in the organization. Hence the value of non-sectoral technical assistance in setting up organization-wide (and hence more durable) feedback systems which will allow existing competence to be heard.

Finally, with both politics and incentives in mind, M/E systems must be designed with the cooperation of the managers who will use them, or they will fail. As Deboeck and Kinsey point out (1980: 16):

Managers will undoubtedly argue that unless a monitoring program has been approved from within, it is primarily motivated by the fact that it can be used as a lever in the form of criticism...

Working against the monitoring unit doing a good job is the project manager's ignorance of what it can do for him. This may amount to a fear of the evaluation component of the unit. If such a fear exists in the project manager's mind, it will infect all the divisions of the project. In these circumstances, the monitoring unit can make a very limited contribution to the project's progress.

What Should be Monitored? The information gathered by M/E units on rural projects to date has seldom been used effectively. This is generally because it has not been both relevant and timely. The need for timeliness together with the dictates of "information economics" (often also ignored) mean that M/E information must be quickly collected and simply digested (see particularly Chambers, 1978, "Rural Poverty-Oriented Monitoring and Evaluation. Simple is Optimal?"). The purpose here is not to deal in detail with the choice of indicators (treated elsewhere) but to note that simplicity--the optimal M/E requirement from a managerial standpoint--is also the ideal from an incentives standpoint. Present reporting requirements are often not only of very little benefit to management, but so lengthy that meeting them is a

significant "local pressure" on field staff, diverting them from actual implementation activity. A small number of indicators which are carefully chosen to directly reflect essential goals both reinforces the clarity of those goals, and gives staff confidence that good performance in pursuit of them will be clearly reflected to top management. At present, what is reported may not reflect ultimate goals, and success measures therefore reward behavior which may not contribute to ultimate goals. The lack of effective performance measures makes existing non-performance-related criteria for promotion (often based on education, training and seniority) almost inevitable. Technical assistance is likely to be important in the choice of M/E indicators, since the difficulty of choosing suitable measures varies in proportion to their simplicity. Western consultancy firms are gradually becoming more proficient in this area, and their presence can be politically effective in that they carry the weight of donor support behind them. But just because this political weight guarantees formal acceptance by the implementing agency, special care must be taken to develop M/E systems with the cooperation and support of implementing managers, if the result is to be effective rather than symbolic action.

#### Some Examples of Failure and Success

Agrarian Reform in Peru: McClintock (1980) discusses the agrarian reform in Peru carried out by the Velasco regime (1968-75), in a case which clearly illustrates the incentives consequences of lack of goal clarity. The military government was divided on most major policy issues, including that of land reform. Political pressure (in the form of peasant invasions) forced agreement on the principle of a massive redistribution program, which had by 1976 affected 35 percent of agricultural land and 24 percent of farm families. Implementation problems arose in the setting up and running of the cooperatives that were to take over the redistributed land. These had their roots in the often intense conflicts over goal priorities:

The conflicts within the military leadership about the desirable degree of redistribution and the desirable degree of state and/or technocratic influence upon the peasantry were evident in the many alterations and gaps in the agrarian reform law. Indeed, it is difficult to speak of "formulation" of agrarian reform "policy" at one time because so many key points of the 1969 Law were changed, and so many other critical issues were not discussed in the law. (McClintock, 1980: 72).

As often, policy had to be framed vaguely in order to gain the formal support of different political interest groups for implementation. Implementing officials were left with unclear, conflicting and constantly changing goals. As a result, conflict within the military was reflected by a political split in the goals of the two (theoretically cooperating) implementing agencies. SINAMOS, the official reform organization, was primarily interested in redistribution and political participation for the poorest peasants excluded



from the cooperatives. The Ministry of Agriculture, on the other hand, consistent with its technocratic outlook, was more interested in the productivity of the cooperatives.

Ministry of Agriculture officials were concerned that peasants were insufficiently educated to cultivate their new holdings effectively, and feared a sharp fall in production which would discredit the entire agrarian reform program. Their reaction was to insist on official guidance, in the form of Ministry managers for each of the cooperatives. Peasants, on the other hand, having just escaped from the hands of hacienda-owner patrons, were determined not to fall into the hands of new bureaucratic patrons, and were not hesitant to exercise their right under the new law to fire managers they did not like, often within 24 hours of appointment. Peasants were also worried about the future political situation: the fact that a rightward swing might reinstate the hacienda-owners, and the fact that a leftward swing might mean the management of "their" cooperative as a state-run enterprise was a further disincentive to contribute. Significantly, "although this limited commitment to hard work and investment in the enterprise was rational from the perspective of cooperative members, it was rarely seen in this light by ministry officials, who often regarded the peasants as lazy and ignorant." Given the extremely weak position of cooperative managers, and the rational attitudes of peasants, it was inevitable that cooperative development would fail. As would be expected, given the lack of effective pressures or incentives from superiors, many managers took the line of least resistance in submitting to local pressures. In some cases, this meant resignation to impotence in preference to being fired: in others, this meant cooptation or corruption by richer peasants--an outcome encouraged by managers' small official incomes.

Cooperatives in Zambia: In the Peruvian case, political disunity and goal conflict were so great that implementation failure was inevitable. Quick (1980) discusses the case of cooperative development in Zambia under a relatively united political leadership: a case in which the introduction of an effective M/E system could perhaps have led to a clearer definition of goals and more effective performance.

No clear statement was ever provided by Kaunda as to precisely what the immediate goals of cooperative policy were to be, and yet it was made abundantly clear in a variety of public speeches made by the president that the cooperatives were supposed to do a great deal and do it very quickly. During the early months of 1965, the president spoke frequently about the cooperative movement, and in these speeches he articulated no fewer than ten specific goals that he expected the movement to achieve in the next few years. The cooperatives were expected to provide employment and stem the flow of population to the towns, increase the income of members, promote equality in the distribution of income, create

collective goods for the rural population, preserve the traditional values of the village community, increase political participation, strengthen procedures for the democratic control of elites, promote a sense of national identity, increase and diversify agricultural output, and develop a spirit of self-reliance in the local population. (Quick, 1980: 46).

In this situation, cooperative department officials knew they had only one unambiguous goal: to create as many cooperatives as possible, fast. Since the number of new coop registrations was the visible symbol of progress reported to the president, officials had every incentive to enroll prospective cooperatives without checking members' experience and suitability, and consciously did so. Since the cooperative movement was a political priority, a large budget was available to the department, and the next unambiguous measure of activity became the granting of coop loans, statistics for which were politically impressive and easily produced. Officials therefore quite rationally granted seasonal and long term loans in large quantities, with no supervision of the use to which these loans were put.

The interesting feature of this case is that although field staff had no official M/E requirements (and were not even required to visit "their" societies regularly), they became so concerned about waste that they sent regular reports of inefficiencies and problems back to head office, and actually requested closer supervision and a temporary moratorium on new registrations. There was no response from the department director until the spring of 1967, when the threat of a staff revolt forced him to halt registrations. Quick puts forward a number of (politically rational) causes of head office unresponsiveness. Kaunda had placed a politician in charge of the agency because of his distrust of the bureaucracy, and this politician, given the president's constant criticisms of caution in bureaucratic implementation, had no incentive to annoy his patron by concentrating on inefficiencies at the cost of expansion. In effect:

The feedback of field staff was directed at goals that the department had not yet defined to be of central importance. The field staff was concerned about the inefficiency of the economic performance of local societies, and although this was a part of the formal goal structure of the agency, it was not a part of its operational goal structure. (Quick, 1980: 54)

The lack of any outside criticism of departmental activities further facilitated the pursuit of informal priorities:

In the case of the Department of Agriculture, a direct rival of the Department of Cooperatives for funds and prestige, bureaucratic jealousy resulted in a conscious withholding of critical information on cooperatives. The agriculture field staff was discouraged

from reporting problems with cooperatives to the Department of Cooperatives so that the Department of Agriculture could slowly build up a case for the abolition of the whole cooperative movement.

There was no effective external criticism of the department until after 1967, when a critical report by Rene Dumont coincided with a budget crisis, and provided the incentive for a radical review of expenditure. The resulting national productivity drive was an effective goal clarification for the department, and resulted in an immediate effort to improve M/E. Implementation subsequently became more efficient and effective, but the cooperative movement was never rescued: it was too late to attract back demoralized farmers (often the most skilled) who had earlier left the movement, and at the same time political support dwindled, as politicians concluded that the program was a failure best abandoned. The case clearly demonstrates the importance of assessing before implementation whether political goals are effectively developmental or symbolic, and the need to design planning and feedback mechanisms into the initial program plan if there is to be any hope of creating a climate of incentives favorable to project success.

Rural Development in Malaysia: Esman (1972) discusses the internationally celebrated "Redbook and Operations Room" system of project monitoring developed through the 1950s and 1960s in Malaysia. The system was the child of the dynamic Prime Minister, whose influence and commitment to development ensured its continued political feasibility. The system had two major incentive elements. First, the establishment of monitoring units at all levels of government, federal, state and district. Planning and monitoring techniques centered on charting the progress of projects in red books and in visual displays, so that progress and lags in implementation could be seen at a glance by monitoring staff and senior visiting officials. Feedback was thus readily available, and provided the strongest possible performance incentive down the line. Second, the minister himself backed this formal system up with encouragement and rigorous checks which made it consistently clear to implementing officials that formal goals were the de facto political priority. His surprise visits to outlying operations rooms and to project sites to check progress against claimed results often resulted in well-publicized personal interventions, such as punishments for officials misrepresenting progress and promotion for the successful.

The system's results in the field made it an internationally known success. Esman further documents, however, the way in which the system subsequently froze and lost its adaptability as officials became convinced of its perfection. The system was aimed almost entirely at certain types of minor rural construction projects and amenities, such as mosques, wells and community halls which, however, did not always meet the production and welfare needs of potential beneficiaries. The process of development came to be seen as the monitoring of progress on this limited variety of projects, and spending the "development" budget on schedule. The system had many of the

virtues of the "planning unit" approach, without the necessary complement of participative monitoring. As a result, it lacked the responsiveness to local needs implied in the balanced control-and-feedback approach to management. Ultimately, M/E became an end in itself, with its own vested interest in survival unchanged. As a senior officer claimed: "The operations room is perfect, it is some of the people--the officers, politicians, farmers, who are at fault."

The Training and Visit System of Extension: The successful Training and Visit (T and V) System of Agricultural Extension (Benor and Harrison, 1977) illustrates the incentives effects of planning, monitoring and evaluation at the more detailed procedural level. Some of the features of the system which provide mutually reinforcing positive incentives are considered below:

Clear and realistic goals:

1. Administrative control of the VEW (Village Extension Worker) and other field staff is handled solely by the agriculture department. VEWs are concerned only with extension, and no other developmental activity.
2. There is concentration of effort on the few most important crops in the local area. For these few crops, there is concentration on the few practices which bring the best economic results.
3. Each VEW attends a weekly or fortnightly training session which is devoted almost entirely to the agricultural operations and problems faced by farmers in the next week or fortnight. VEWs can therefore be confident that their advice will be relevant and timely, and they are not overburdened with more information than they can absorb and communicate effectively.
4. The entire extension organization is built up on the basis of the number of farmers that one VEW can handle under local conditions, and the number of VEWs an Extension Officer (AEO) can handle (usually not more than eight). This ensures realism in extension workers' goals, and is expressive of the system's bottom-up planning orientation.

Coordination:

5. Representatives from coordinating input supply, etc., agencies attend VEW training sessions on a regular basis. This both builds their understanding of the system (and

hence the effectiveness of their planning), and provides a regular opportunity for extension staff to report and resolve problems in their areas.

Monitoring and evaluation:

6. Monitoring of progress is carried out by AEOs in the course of visits to field sessions in which they will participate. VEWs' field logs are inspected and signed, and progress and problems discussed. The VEW's diary shows the names of attending farmers, practices taught, and problems encountered.
7. The self-evaluation built into the system is complemented by regular monitoring by superiors. Given the realistic nature of goals, monitoring "is relatively simple: farmers can be asked if they know the name of their VEW, the day of his visit, and three or four of the recommendations made that fortnight or even during the whole season. If the farmers know these and results can also be seen in the fields, then the extension personnel are doing their main job."

Adaptability/Responsiveness:

8. The fact that training is carried out each week or fortnight means that VEWs can report and get advice on farmers' problems immediately. It also means that the latest research findings can be disseminated straight away.
9. Regular training sessions in groups give VEWs the opportunity to discuss and resolve among each other common problems encountered with farmers.

The interaction of detailed procedures for planning, control and feedback has produced effective incentives for farmers and field staff and impressive results in implementation. The system combines clear and realistic goal-setting, close supervision, and a broad framework of "standard operating procedures" with built-in "organic" planning and feedback mechanisms that emphasize adaptability to client requirements. Speed in communication, upwards, downwards and sideways, is a key feature of the system, made possible by the regular training sessions, and limited VEW goals. Concentrating on realistic priority goals and a small number of contact farmers has meant visible changes in cultivation techniques after only a few months of operation, leading to the spontaneous spread of new practices.

Settlement in South Asia: The case project described in Chapter Four illustrates the rise and fall of a Planning and Evaluation Unit. The

original project design included such a unit in the head office of the Development Board, with funding under the aid loan for a foreign Implementation Adviser to work directly with the Chairman. The Chairman carefully defined the Unit's role as that of a non-executive mirror of progress, reporting solely to him. The Unit began its work by developing a monitoring system for construction progress in the field, which it displayed in visual form on map-folders of the project area, redrawn monthly and circulated to senior staff. For the first time, managers had a coherent picture of what was happening in the field, and the Chairman welcomed this additional tool for control, and asked the Unit to extend its activities to a full critical path analysis of the 100,000 acres of the Scheme currently in development. As the monitoring system for construction progress became an operational routine, the Unit turned its attention to progress in the agricultural and community development sectors, and began to include rough proxy indicators for these in the monthly reports. These quickly began to show the imbalances in development. The absence of any significant acreage under the subsidiary food crops was a pointer to the vicious circle of marketing, water management and other problems. The very slow progress in the construction of multi-purpose cooperative stores--used as a rough proxy for attention to agricultural and community development matters--was also evident.

After three or four months of routine operation, the existence of the progress reports became more widely known, and politicians and Cabinet-level officials asked for copies. For the first time, uncensored information began to feed back to levels above the Development Board. The map form of presentation made it easy to compare progress month by month, and a rough extrapolation of current progress strengthened growing doubts about the Chairman's ability to meet his promised targets. From this point, the Chairman's attitude to the Unit became ambivalent. Previously, its feedback had come to him alone, and strengthened his control over the construction operation. Now the mirror was beginning to reflect the Board's implementation weaknesses as well as its strengths to higher authority. Ambivalence turned to hostility as a result of two specific developments. First, a senior politician asked the P and E Unit directly for a forecast of progress over the next six months. The Unit's planning work was now sufficiently far advanced for it to give rough optimistic and pessimistic forecasts which clearly indicated that targets were unattainable. Second, a routine donor agency review mission was taken on a tour of the project area by Unit staff, at the Chairman's request. The tour comprised a fair sample of project activity, and alerted donors to some of the imbalances in development, and the poor quality of some irrigation construction work. The Chairman now saw the P and E Unit as a direct threat to his control, and reacted swiftly. On the grounds that the Unit's "disclosures" to the donor had been a personal embarrassment to him, he had the P and E Unit manager transferred. In an outward show of response to the donor's requests to develop more balanced implementation based on "better" planning, the Chairman suggested that the Implementation Adviser move to a small office directly off the Chairman's so as to have his personal ear. The adviser rightly saw this as a

move instead to keep him under the Chairman's eye, and to remove him from the mainstream of information in the P and E Unit. He declined to move.

Finally, the Chairman replaced the P and E manager with a loyal engineer from his own staff. Somewhat symbolically, the direct connecting-door between the Chairman's office and the P and E Unit was for the first time unlocked.

#### The Essential Complement: Reinforcing Political Commitment

Planning and feedback techniques have tremendous under-exploited scope for reducing counter-productive informal political activity, and making official goals the rational ones to pursue. One value of such techniques is that they are presentable as technical help rather than political intervention, and therefore allow influence with a minimum of conflict. Their depoliticized nature is, however, their potential weakness as well as their strength (as the last case example shows), in that their institution and success rest ultimately on the political sanction of top management. The examples in the previous section illustrate clearly the importance of political commitment as the necessary precondition of incentives-oriented planning and feedback. In the Peruvian case, political support only really coalesced around the somewhat negative goal of defusing the political threat of peasant invasions. There was never agreement about positive policies for improving peasant welfare beyond redistribution, and hence the prospects of implementation of any coherent plan were small. In the Zambian case, support for cooperative development seems to have been commitment more to a political idea or symbol than to a serious development effort. The Malaysian case illustrates the positive effects of clear goals and clearly expressed political support. Part of the success of the "red book" system was due undoubtedly to the monitoring techniques employed. But the incentive to apply these techniques rigorously was supplied by the constant encouragement and pressure of the Deputy Prime Minister. As a former civil servant, he clearly understood that formal support at the time of institution of a new plan was not enough: and that it was necessary to follow this up with constant proof throughout the implementation process that officially declared goals were consistently the actual political priority. The South Asian settlement project case illustrates the potential weakness of the planning/feedback approach. To be successful as management and incentives tools, Planning and Evaluation Units must be non-executive and hence, on their own, politically weak. Their viability is therefore totally dependent on the political support of top management. If planning and feedback techniques come to be seen as a threat, they can no longer successfully be presented as non-political, and will only be acceptable in a watered-down and unobtrusive form which will marginally affect project performance. The fundamental criticism of the "procedural" approach to the management of rural programs, such as that developed most fully and effectively by Chambers and Belshaw in Kenya, is the assumption that top management will see it as profitable to use the new procedures in a positive fashion. If they do not, reasons can always be found why they are too cumbersome and impractical to use at all, or they will be used partially and hence (by official criteria) ineffectively.

Some significant conclusions for funding agencies can be drawn. Since the scope for agency intervention in the field of management and motivation is anyway limited--for example, the chances of significantly altering the personnel management and reward system are often nil--the agency must operate forcefully and effectively in those areas where it has legitimate access and influence. Yet "technical" help in the field of planning, monitoring and evaluation can often be circumvented if it is politically unwelcome. The agency can only counter this by facing the political question directly, and attempting to influence the attitudes and priorities of managers at the top. There are both positive and negative approaches.

Encouragement: Funding agencies could "sell" official goals to project managements much more forcefully than is the case at present. If agencies really believe in their priorities, they could be much clearer in the definition of the type of policy they support, and could institute more frequent reviews at the highest level of progress in their programs. In the case of very large integrated programs or projects, it should be possible for high-level representatives of the funding agency to meet with the recipient project director and his minister on a regular basis to review progress and problems. To the extent that budget/donor agency and politician begin to demonstrate a cooperative commitment to improvement, senior project management would begin to get the message that the official line is the real priority--and hence have every incentive, if they value their own advancement, to bring their informal priorities into line with official goals. Though the official line could be much more energetically sold by funding agencies at all levels (and especially in the field), it is at the highest (and most sensitive) levels that the effort must be concentrated if it is to be effective.

This principle could be followed in practice by using the results of incentives assessments and political analysis of bureaucracy to anticipate problems in particular areas. An incentives assessment at the project appraisal stage should indicate those points where official and informal goals are most likely to diverge and commitment to be lost. These are points on which project review should concentrate. Such problem areas may reflect incentives and pressures affecting groups and individuals that are peculiar to the project--such as the informal pressures on the Chairman in the settlement project case. But there are also problem areas, given the common incentives towards departmental autonomy and growth and the bureaucratic "coalition of indifference", which are likely to arise in all development projects: the special problems of coordination and reaching the poorest, for example. If funding agencies stress from the start that these are priorities, and constantly reiterate their priority, implementing organizations will have more incentive to follow suit. The presentation of a strong official line at the outset of a program is the best means of avoiding conflict later, when ceding to external agency pressure to revert to formal project goals may involve loss of face on the part of project management--again as in the



settlement project case. Funding agencies must show at the outset and constantly throughout implementation that they are more than symbolically committed to their goals.

Pressure: In those frequent cases where the priorities of both politicians and incentive-setting civil servants are influenced in some degree by an informal coalition of indifference to the rural poor, the limitations of a positive approach used on its own are clear. Agencies must apply carrot and stick--encouragement and pressure. It is commonly argued that the power of funding agencies is extremely limited because it rests primarily on the all-or-nothing sanction of withdrawing financial support--an extreme measure which agencies are naturally reluctant to employ. Nevertheless, there is a great deal of unexploited scope in the possibilities of conditionality. At the project level, this should mean more sequential development, with funding first of a pilot project and then of successive stages or phases of the full scheme, conditional on performance.

## LESSON 7

### THE GREEN REVOLUTION GAME

(Have not yet received game so am unable to create notes for participants)

## HOMework 7

### MANAGING FOR SOLUTIONS

1. Write:

In 3-5 pages discuss the factors you must consider in managing the solution or processes involved in your rural development case. Draw on your experience today and the readings from homework #6.

## LESSON 8

### MANAGING AMBIGUITY

#### Learning Objectives

The participants will:

1. Understand the multitude of relationships that rural development workers must strengthen and manipulate.
2. Develop guidelines for managing relationships.
3. Discuss incentives for effective rural development from the perspective of different "players."

#### Activities

1. Discussion of homework and simulation exercise (40 min)
  - a) What were the most difficult aspects of the simulation from a programmatic point of view?
  - b) Whose role did you perceive as the most difficult?
  - c) How would you have approached this role?
2. Triads to develop guidelines for approaching management problems (40 min)
3. Break (10 min)
4. Lecture by Robert Chambers (or someone else with extensive management experience in rural development (40 min)  
Management strategies for Outsiders
5. Discussion with Robert Chambers (40 min)
6. Handout Homework 8 - Organizing Management (10 min)

(There will probably be a reception if Dr. Chambers does participate in this session.)

#### Materials

1. Cups and water.
2. Flip chart and newsprint.

## HOMEWORK 8

### ORGANIZING MANAGEMENT

#### 1. Read:

1. Korten, People-Centered Development, 171-188.
2. BRAC, "Unraveling Networks of Corruption."
3. Johnston, "Redesigning Rural Development."
4. Chambers, pp.168-190.
5. Moris, 67-98.
6. Shah, "Fatima the Spinner and the Tent."

#### 2. Write:

In 3 to 5 pages describe the appropriate management strategy for your case, elaborating on what factors you had to take into consideration to make your choice. What considerations would you make given Fatima's experience?

# Community Management

Asian Experience and Perspectives

Edited  
by  
David C. Korten



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## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### Unraveling Networks of Corruption<sup>1</sup>

*Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee*

In July 1979 BRAC became concerned about the effects of a major drought in certain parts of Bangladesh and anticipated that, by September, serious food shortages might develop. To address this need, an emergency relief program was organized in three different areas of the country. The strategy called for organizing groups of landless people in each village, encouraging them to start collective agricultural activities, using their own resources initially and then expanding to more ambitious efforts using food-for-work grains supplied through BRAC to compensate participants. In addition the landless groups were assisted in obtaining use rights to land on a collective basis through private lease and share cropping arrangements and through obtaining rights to cultivate public lands.

Through this involvement with the landless poor, BRAC staff became familiar with their situation and problems. Gradually they became aware that large scale government relief operations were going on that, if successful, would have made BRAC's work largely unnecessary. But rather than reaching the people for whom they were intended, these resources were being controlled and enjoyed by a small number of powerful men who had good connections with local government officials. It also became evident that a similar pattern prevailed in the fields other than relief operation, for example in the use of public forest lands. Although the poor were not allowed to gather small bundles of fire wood, several rich and powerful men were making large profits from the illegal cutting and sale of the timber. Combinations of economic power and threats or actual force were being used to gain control over a variety of both public and private resources. But more was involved than the economic power, followings of violent and nonviolent supporters, and official positions of a few individuals. Most significant in giving these men a disproportionate share

of local power was the complex net of co-operative connections linking them into a seemingly irresistible network of corruption.

Time after time we found the landless people with whom we were working caught up helplessly in the mesh of this invisible network, only partially understanding it, and feeling powerless in dealing with it. As a result of the participatory research effort described here, they came to better understand the sources of the disparities in power between themselves and this power elite.<sup>2</sup> They became increasingly aware of the extent of the benefits intended for them: food-for-work, rations, education, etc., that were not getting through—being instead “caught in the net.” This growth in understanding spurred their efforts to organize themselves as a means of breaking its power and restoring their own means of livelihood. This was the genesis of this participatory research effort.

Our methodology was simple and can be repeated by any field worker who can read, write, and do simple arithmetic. Our main information sources were the landless people of each village, though the power elites also supplied us with considerable information about themselves and each other. Later, we obtained help from government officials, who gave up substantial time to clarify various points for us.

We started by carefully recording all the examples of oppressive, exploitative and illegal activities we could find. The search required little effort. The landless and the poor who were the principal victims came to us. As our study continued, their interest and analytical capacity increased to the point where they brought us pens and paper, insisting that we record everything. No individual incident we recorded was news to them. But generally they were not fully aware of the systemic patterns, illuminated by the recording process, that linked individual actors and incidents across villages.

Through interviews with government officials at union and *thana* levels, we were able find out the amounts and intended uses of program resources put into the area by the government and the intended outcomes of important public policies. These were then systematically checked against what we knew was actually happening. For example, we obtained exact details of food-for-work allocations, and worked with the landless to check them against the work done and the grain actually distributed. By the act of recording and discussing the oppressive activities we demonstrated that when one person adds his knowledge to that of others and then engages in analyzing and calculating everything, it is possible to see the situation clearly for the first time—and then to see the possibilities for change. This contributed to a new consciousness and militancy among those who were working with us. As a consequence they have started taking collective action on certain issues and have achieved limited success.

After checking all details with at least four separate sources (sometimes

up to fifty), we plotted all the connections involved in each incident to build up a picture of the network involved. Our charts were constantly altered and improved as our knowledge increased. Ultimately we were able to identify each of the key power brokers and their main followers. A profile was prepared on each covering their background, political and business activities, landholding and so on. By this point we limited our study to a cluster of ten villages in two unions. For each of these villages we prepared a simple village profile showing its main characteristics.

One important insight of the study is the importance of going beyond single village studies to understand how the critical linkages of the power structure extend across villages and into the different levels of government. However, in the interests of brevity and simplicity we limit ourselves here to reporting the data from just two villages, addressing the linkages between them and into union and *thana* levels of government.<sup>3</sup>

The two villages on which we report here we have chosen to call Adanpara and Kathidanga, located on either side of the border between two unions. Both are within four miles of the Indian border and three to four miles from the local *thana* headquarters. The area is generally hilly and 40 to 50 percent of the land belongs to the Forest Department. About 30 to 35 percent of the land in the region is still forested. Interspersed among the forest lands are many areas suitable for cultivation of paddy and certain winter crops.

It is normally a rice surplus area and also exports large amounts of timber and firewood to local towns and to Dhaka. Most of the people are involved in agriculture as farmers and laborers, or woodcutters—either individually or as part of larger operations. A significant number are engaged in trade, smuggling, and theft.

Until the 1940's the area was mainly inhabited by tribal people known as Adivasis. Changes began coming rapidly during the 1965 war as refugees from India poured into the area and many of the Adivasis emigrated to India. This process was given further impetus by the liberation war of 1971 and by the abortive rebellion of the “Kader Bahini” in 1976. Thus, unlike some other parts of Bangladesh, kinship relations among the Muslim households are not yet well developed and many of the power holders have only recently gained this status. This accounts in part for the high degree of lawlessness found in the area.

### THE POWER HOLDERS OF KATHIDANGA AND ADANPARA

These two villages are adjacent to one another and their power holders are linked in several ways, as we will elaborate later.<sup>4</sup>

#### Kathidanga Village

Kathidanga, with a population of 750, is much smaller than any of its immediate neighboring villages. Of its 119 households, 6.7 percent pro-

duce a surplus on their own lands beyond subsistence needs, 16.0 percent are self-sufficient, 24.4 percent are marginal (meaning their land is insufficient to provide for their subsistence), and 52.9 percent are landless. Its main power holders are as follows.

*Nazmul*, age 55 who comes from an adjacent thana and fought in the British Indian Army in Burma. He arrived in 1950, the first outside settler in this Adivasi village, and worked as a day laborer until he was able to occupy five acres of Adivasi land in 1964. When the communal riot occurred in 1964, he occupied an additional 1.5 acres of government (*khas*) land and sold off the cows and G.I. sheets belonging to the Adivasis who had fled to India. With this money he bought five acres more.

Since that time he has been heavily involved in money lending as his main occupation. During 1971 he was again involved, with many other people, in looting the possessions such as copper and brass utensils, wooden door frames and other household goods of Adivasis who fled to India. Now he has ten acres. The main clients of his money-lending business are Adivasis and he maintains good relations with several Adivasi leaders by offering them hospitality and gifts even as he takes advantage of the weaker members of their community.

*Farid*, age 50 came in 1967 from an adjacent thana and married into the same family as Nazmul. At that time he occupied one acre of khas land and started engaging in money lending activities. Like Nazmul he does not engage in politics or other activities but concentrates on making profits through money lending. His daughter is married to the son of Kamal Member who resides in Adanpara. Now he has eighteen acres.

*Matin Master*, age 35<sup>5</sup> came from an adjacent thana, where he still had land, with his family in 1976. After arriving in Kathidanga he bought four acres from refugees. He is a high school graduate and a teacher at the Kathidanga government primary school. He is also the Secretary of the union branch of the Bangladesh National Party (BNP), which was the party in power at the time of the study, and maintained good connections with the local Member of Parliament, the Chairman of the Sundorganj Union Council, a former Minister of the Cabinet, the President of the local organization of the (BNP), the Secretary of the Thana Teachers' Association, and the President of the Central Teachers' Associations in Dhaka.

*Idris Master*, age 35 arrived after 1964 from an adjacent thana and married a local girl. He received one acre as a gift from his father-in-law and bought another acre from Selim Commander. He is a gambler and has since lost all but one half acres in gambling. Previously he was a teacher in Adanpara primary school, but the school has been closed since it was damaged in 1977 by a cyclone. He contested the last Union Council election and lost. Even so he remains active politically and is powerful because of a close connection with Matin Master.

*Mostafa* arrived with his father from an adjacent thana after the communal riots of 1964. At that time his father bought six acres. Mostafa obtained two of these and latter bought an additional acre. Formerly he belonged to a violent gang led by his uncle and another leader, now both dead. The gang also included his brother-in-law, now also dead, and a cousin. Mohiuddin, a faction leader in nearby Taluqkandi Village, was another leader of the gang until he was elected in 1977 to the Shantigarh Union Council. After his election, Mohiuddin formed his own gang and in the winter of 1978 killed Mostafa's brother-in-law in a land dispute. The next day Mostafa's cousin and another relative killed Mohiuddin's father. In late 1979 the relative joined Mohiuddin's group and, at Mohiuddin's instigation, killed Mostafa's cousin. With the death of his relatives, Mostafa became the leader of the original gang. There is a case pending against him for robbery on which his family has already spent Tk. 25,000 in bribes and other expenses.

*Humayun* comes from a notorious family of thieves that has lived in the region for two generations. Following the family profession, he has been in jail once and has two cases pending against him. He maintains close links with Mohiuddin, Salehuddin, and Kamal. He has married twice and divorced his first wife. His present wife was previously Salehuddin's third wife. He has a daughter, a son, and no land.

*Factions.* There are two main factions in Kathidanga Village. The first consists of persons from nearby villages, fifty households led by Mostafa, Martin Master, and Idris, but controlled from outside by Mizan, former Chairman of the Sundorganj Union Council. The second, less dominant group consists of forty-five households of refugees from India.

### Adanpara Village

Adanpara is a larger village to the north of Katidanga that dominates the surrounding villages. It has a market and a population of 2,700 persons in 448 households. Of these households, 327 are settlers and 121 Adivasis. Broken down by landholdings, 2.2 percent are surplus, 5.8 percent self-sufficient, 30.8 percent marginal and 61.2 percent landless. Before 1950 there were no settlers. The major influx began after 1964. The main leaders and power holders are as follows.

*Huda Master*, age 60 came to the village from another part of the same District in the early 1950's and acquired five acres of khas land, of which he still has two. For about ten years he forcibly occupied khas and Adivasi land, which he in turn allocated to people coming from his former village. There were about 100 such families who came and received his "help and patronage" in return for money and services. Many of these people, however, did not actually get the land for which they paid him and became



destitute. Of the 100 such families, only about twenty remain, the others having moved elsewhere. Income from these activities allowed Huda to employ several people and to buy a number of houses, including one that is quite large, plus a shop and various luxuries such as expensive furniture.

He also involved in the timber and leaf businesses,<sup>6</sup> and in various types of forgery and other deceptions. In 1971 the local people tried to get him involved in incidents that would get him put behind bars or killed. Even so, his good education has given him prestige and helped him in his activities. He is the retired headmaster of Motihar primary school and the father-in-law of Kamal Member.

*Kamal Member*, age 45 arrived in 1960 from an adjacent thana and married Huda Master's daughter as his second wife. His eldest son married the daughter of Farid from Kathidanga. When he first arrived in the village, he took employment as a laborer for Manzur Sarkar, later becoming a supervisor for Manzur and running off with about Tk. 10,000—a part of which Manzur has since recovered. Soon after he arrived he forcibly occupied two acres of land and has since increased his holdings to seven acres.

More recently he has become heavily involved in leaf and timber businesses, which are the basis of his present wealth. He was closely connected with the former Union Council Chairman and, 1977, ran against Taher Company for a position on the Union Council, but lost. After Taher was killed by the Kader Bahini, Kamal obtained the seat in a by-election, mainly through the support of Manzur Sarkar. He is now close to Mohiuddin and other Union Council Members and has good connections with the local Member of Parliament, Matin Master, the local forester, the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR, the border patrol), and the police. He is the Secretary of the Adanpara Primary School Committee and is a member of various other committees including the Madrassa Committee. His brother, Salehuddin's status as a freedom fighter had been helpful to him at various points in his career, until Salehuddin caused a clash with the local landless people (described at the end of this report), which Kamal has since been trying to settle without success.

*Salehuddin*, age 36, the younger brother of Kamal Member, arrived in 1960 and obtained two acres of land. He has had five wives and many mistresses. Through his elder brother he is well connected with Mohiuddin and many others, and works closely with Latif. During the day he spends most of his time drinking and gambling. At night he steals cows and other things with the help of several colleagues within the region and from across the border. There are eleven cases and three warrants against him now. He has been severely beaten by the Police and members of the Bangladesh Rifles in the market and has been sent to jail several times, but usually manages to escape through payment of liberal bribes. In 1971 he was a "freedom fighter"<sup>7</sup> and extracted several thousand taka from the

poor, as well as from Razakars,<sup>8</sup> like Selim Commander of Taluqkandi Village (who was himself actively engaged in land grabbing), continuing these activities until 1973.

*Hafiz*, age 55 came from Assam in 1964 and obtained an allocation of 9 acres, 3 acres each for himself and his two sons. Ex-Union Council Member Lutfur from nearby Motihar Village helped him get the additional land for his sons, as well as money for three ploughs and three bundles of G.I. sheets. He assumed leadership of the refugees in the area. He has continued to be active in land grabbing schemes, as will be detailed later. He left the area for a year in 1976, but returned to continue his profession of land grabbing and resale with the help of Lutfur.

He works closely with Latif, his nephew, and has close connections with Salehuddin and Kamal Member as well as with Humayun of Kathidanga Village. He was involved with the leaf business for two years as a sub-agent. He has been married six times since divorcing two of his wives. Two current wives are engaged in collecting firewood from the forest and the other two live with their respective sons, Latif and Mofiz. Latif is the son of Hafiz's elder brother, but after his brother's death Hafiz married the brother's wife, so Latif is both his nephew and step-son.

*Latif*, age 35 came to the area with his uncle Hafiz and lived with him for five years until he married the first of his two wives. When Latif set up a separate household, Hafiz gave him three acres and he bought four acres of illegally occupied land from Hafiz. He has since sold off all except 3.5 acres. Latif is a heavy drinker and is closely connected with Salehuddin, Humayun, Kamal Member, Lutfur ex-Member from Motihar Village, and Mohiuddin Member of Taluqkandi Village. Also, he is a member of the Village Defense Force (VDF). He currently has six cases against him: two for robbery, others for highway robbery, attempted murder, illegal occupation of temple land, and the attempted abduction of two young women.

*Mahfuz*, age 36 arrived in 1960 from another part of the District and occupied five acres of khas land. In 1962 his father came and bought three acres. He has since bought seven acres more. In 1971 he was a freedom fighter and terrorized many people including Selim Commander from whom he extracted Tk. 900. He extracted Tk. 1,000 from another influential person and other amounts from less important people. Now he is the Secretary of Adanpara (west) primary school and has unsuccessfully campaigned for a seat on the Union Council. He is now trying to get the support of the local landless people to run for the Union Council in the next election. He was involved in the leaf business and has spent six months in jail. He used to drink, but currently does not.

*Taher Company* (now dead) was originally from Comilla where in his youth he was involved in a murder case. He fled to Assam to escape

conviction and started a business there, hence his title. In 1964 he came to Adanpara as a refugee and occupied a huge area of land temporarily abandoned by the Adivasis. By obtaining false refugee cards he got extra land allocated to him and bought a house at the thana headquarters. Later much of this land was reoccupied by the Adivasis and allocated to other refugees by the Border Magistrate.

He was deeply involved in the leaf business and bought nine acres out of the profits. As a rich and intelligent person he was often asked to give judgement at *salish*<sup>9</sup> and was very influential. Kamal called him his godfather-in-law, a fictitious relationship, to get his patronage. In 1977 he ran for a Union Council seat and won by spending Tk. 10,000 to bribe election officials. But when Kamal Member and Salehuddin found out on election night they got angry and said that Taher Company's days were numbered.

In the same year he was shot. He survived for a few hours, during which he told his relatives that he knew who was responsible, but for the safety of his family would not reveal their names. His relatives eventually learned the identity of the killers and were preparing to file a case when Kamal reached a settlement with them.<sup>10</sup> The following year Kamal was elected to the Union Council in the by-election.

*Manzur Sarkar*, age 72 is the biggest landowner in the area, with a total of 150 acres divided between several individual plots. During the British rule his family were *talukas*. He is influential throughout the thana and plays a "kingmaker" role during elections. He was previously involved in the timber business in a big way and was once a member of the Union Council in the adjacent union, when his uncle was Chairman. He was recently the major force enabling Kamal to become a member of the local Union Council. Now he is more or less retired from business and politics and has become "respectable."

*Factions.* There are three major groupings in Adanpara. The first is led by Kamal Member and consists of his own group of forty households and a group of twenty-five mainly Garo households, as well as Hafiz's small kinship group of five households, and ten households from the east *para* (neighborhood). Second is a looser grouping under several small leaders including three groups of twenty, fifteen, and thirty-seven households each, plus a group of sixty-nine Adivasi households. For certain purposes the Adivasi groups all unite under the leadership of a Garo Catholic with good connections in the Catholic Mission. Although the first faction is much smaller than the second, its tighter organization, the ruthlessness of its members, and its good connections make it the more powerful and successful.

## LAND

The history of the area during past twenty years has been a continuing

process of land occupation, primarily of Adivasi lands by Muslim refugees—actual or self-proclaimed. The land grabbing reached its peak in 1964-65 and 1971, when communal riots and wars forced many Adivasis to flee temporarily to India. At these times men like Selim Commander, Mohiuddin Member, Huda Master, Lutfur ex-Member and Mizan ex-Chairman were able to grab lands on a large scale and build up their present wealth and power, while Nazmul laid the basis for his money-lending business. This process is still going on and every year at transplanting and harvest times new disputes arise.

Clearly what has been involved has not been a simple matter of larger numbers of settlers arriving over the years and each occupying some land for himself. The large number of landless in the area itself refutes this theory. And the Adivasis have rarely sold productive land voluntarily in this area. In fact, the land occupation has been the work of a small number of men who, seizing a tragic opportunity, have used violence, trickery, deceit, bribery, and the forgery of official documents to expand their power and wealth and finance their vices.

As of 1976-77, with the Kader Bahini rebellion still going on, a new wave of land grabbing was underway. For the most part, the men who had assumed the lead in earlier episodes were now playing a more "respectable" role, providing protection, encouragement, and finance to a younger and more active generation—with notable exceptions such as Mohiuddin Member and Selim Commander who were still active.

Much land has already changed hands. The action, however, is shifting away from villages like Kathidanga, where 100 percent of the land has changed hands during this period, to villages like Adanpara and Motihar where land remains that has not yet been captured by the net. The methods of operation are illustrated in numerous examples including the following cases from Adanpara, for which we have detailed data supported by land documents and case numbers, as well as direct personal observation.

Recently Hafiz and his nephew Latif have been the most active in land grabbing in this village. In 1967 they forcibly occupied eight acres belonging to a *Koch*, member of the scheduled or untouchable caste who over two years filed nine cases against them and others in the Sub-Divisional Magistrate's Court. They were all arrested but released after seven days on bail while the case continued. When their conviction became imminent, they approached the Union Chairman who threatened the *Koch*, pressuring him to come to a compromise. As a result he kept 4.25 acres and Hafiz got 3.75. At this point the Chairman brought his influence to bear in the Court, reporting that Hafiz had never occupied any land. For his services in the case he received Tk. 1,000 from a grateful Hafiz. At the same time Hafiz was engaged in the occupation of 4.40 acres from

two more Koch for which he has been able to obtain ownership documents from the Revenue Department.

In 1971 a coalition of Selim Commander and Hafiz, with the support of Kamal Member, Lutfur ex-Member and others from outside occupied 100 to 200 acres of land belonging to Adivasis who had temporarily fled to India. Much of this land was registered in the names of relatives who had since died. Since there are no proper birth and death registers in the area, the occupiers were able to maintain that the actual owners were not dead, but still in India and therefore the land was "enemy property." Any complaints from the owners to the Court were referred to the Officer-in-Charge of Police, who had been bribed by the group and simply ignored the instructions of the court to investigate. Much of this land was sold to new arrivals. Some was recovered by its owners. Hafiz kept three acres of temple land and one acre of private land obtained in this way. Latif retained three acres.

407 The enemy property ordinance, which figures centrally in much land grabbing, was passed after the 1965 war and was intended to be used to confiscate the property of those who had defected to India and make it available for settling refugees from India on a lease basis from the government, though often in practice it was opened for occupation. In 1967-69 a census was carried out to find out who had permanently left the country for India and to confiscate their property. We were told by senior district level officials, however, that the census officials never went to the field, but rather sat in their offices and, whenever they saw land registered in the name of a person with a non-Muslim name, they classified it as enemy property. It was a system that easily lent itself to manipulation as it was a simple matter to get land so classified. One senior official of the land settlement operation told us that in checking through classifications in part of an adjacent thana, he had found that 75 percent of "enemy property" classifications were false and that even some Muslim families had been included.

A related problem was the difficulty facing the average person in finding out how a given piece of land was classified. A senior district officer told us the story of a man who came to the Magistrate's court appealing against an enemy property classification on thirteen small plots of land. It turned out that eleven of the plots were not in fact so classified. He had been deceived by the local registrar who used his control over the local records to pretend that large amounts of land had been so classified to extract bribes on the pretense of changing the records. The remaining two classifications were false and were overthrown.

In contrast to the ease with which property can be incorrectly classified, getting a false classification corrected can be a difficult and expensive process. The owner usually has to go first to the Sub-divisional

Officer and the Additional Deputy Commissioner, and finally to the Ministry in Dhaka. Not the least of his problems is how to get inside the Ministry, which is inside a guarded secretariate building with restricted access.

One measure intended to prevent much of this type of land grabbing is a ruling by the Border Magistrate that even the land allocated to refugees in the border area is given to them only on a one year share-cropping basis and does not become legally theirs even by continued occupation. This ruling is completely ignored and ineffective.

In the face of the sophisticated system of corruption that has emerged to exploit the weaknesses in these systems, the ignorant and unorganized people on the one side of it and the senior government officers on the other side seem almost helpless.

### CAPITAL

The local power elites are also able to make effective use of their near monopoly control over liquid capital, lending it out at extremely high rates of interest. Although several of the principal money lenders got their start by illegally occupying land and continue to use their power over debtors to increase their holdings at low cost, the two types of operation demand different styles, connections, and methods of operation. The case of Nazmul of Kathidanga Village, illustrates the methods of the money lender.

Nazmul built up his initial capital by land grabbing and looting. In 1966 he started lending money at the rate of 100 percent per crop season. There are two main crop seasons per year: spring and summer. In that year he lent one maund of paddy worth Tk. 20 to a Garo. The Garo was unable to repay at the end of the season, and Nazmul continued to extend the loan until 1973. By that time the debt had grown to 16,384 maunds. Nazmul offered to accept Tk. 5000 in repayment and forget the rest. In 1973 he received 0.50 acres of land worth Tk. 4,980 as a final settlement.

In 1972 he lent two maunds and Tk. 200 to another Garo, who returned Tk. 200 and five maunds after one season (the price at that time being Tk. 40-50/md.). Nazmul claimed Tk. 1800 more and his debtor had to give him the use of 0.50 acres for one year. That year the yield was fourteen maunds and the following year he received another four maunds. He still claimed Tk. 1200 more. Finally his debtor paid him another Tk. 100 after selling his cow and begged to be forgiven the rest. The matter was settled, and Nazmul's profit was approximately Tk. 2,300. His business has grown over the years. This year he expects to receive 145 maunds and has already recovered forty-five.

A client of one large money lender was watching an eclipse of the moon with us one night. "Do you know what's happened to the moon?"

he said as it began to disappear. "He took a one paisa loan from the sun...."<sup>11</sup>

### THE FOREST

Government forest covers an area of about 8,000 acres, or half the total BRAC project area. Two thirds of this is still forested, though large timber merchants are cutting it off at a rapid rate with the unofficial co-operation of the forestry officers. Every year for three months from February to May, large numbers of trucks come to the area and carry away large *sal* trees [a valuable timber species] to the towns for sale, and small trees and branches to the local markets for firewood. Possibly no other activity demonstrates so clearly the imbalance of power as the way in which officials treat the commercial loggers on the one hand and the poor who cut headloads of wood to sell for survival on the other.

The following is a description of one typical scheme for illegally harvesting trees from government land.

Many Adivasis have plots of private registered land inside the government forests which they do not use for agriculture because the soils are poor. Timber operators buy up these plots at Tk. 300 to 500 per acre and obtain permits from the District Forest Officer (DFO) to cut trees on this land. Though officially such permits are given free for cutting on private land, in fact they cost several thousand taka in bribes. Having obtained the permit, the operator then starts cutting down trees in the public forests adjacent to the plot. These are then carried to the plot and placed next to old stumps. The Forester is brought in to stamp the trees with a special hammer so they can be removed. A single stump may be "cut" in this manner as many as six or seven times.

The price of timber in the sub-divisional town is at least Tk. 80 per cubic foot (cft.) and the transport cost is Tk. 1,000/truck. One truck can carry about 200 cft. and the cost of cutting 200 cft. on government land is Tk. 1,400. Therefore, the sale price per truck is Tk. 16,000 and the costs Tk. 2,400 excluding bribes. Firewood is sold locally with no transport cost at Tk. 2,000 to 2,500 per truck with a cutting cost of Tk. 150. The profits are therefore Tk. 13,500 per truckload of timber and Tk. 2,000 per truckload of firewood. Bribes may take as much as one third or even half this amount. The amounts of timber and firewood cut are about equal. In three forested unions, including the BRAC project area, in the winter season of 1978-79 about forty large contractors were operating for five months, each employing an average of 100 laborers a day. Actual shipment out of the area occurs during a brief period at the end of the season. All trucks coming out of the area have to pass by the same point. A check revealed that at least twenty trucks passed that point each day for at least forty-five days, about half carrying timber and the other half firewood.

These large and profitable operations are in stark contrast with the activities of landless and destitute families who spend all day cutting a headload of firewood, then carry it on their heads to the local market where it fetches Tk. 5. According to the Forest Department, this work is only legal if the wood is broken and collected with bare hands (not cut with an axe) and if a permit application signed by the Union Council Chairman is submitted and a fee of Tk. 1.50 paid for each headload. Because of the difficulty of conforming to these regulations, no one does, and so poor people who have no other livelihood are often harassed by the local power elites as well as by police and forest officers. An example:

On the 18th of September 1979 at 4:00 a.m. twenty-three landless laborers went from Adanpara toward the sub-divisional town carrying firewood they had cut the previous day. There was no work available and the condition of their families was serious. Some policemen returning from patrol caught them; three ran away and twenty were arrested. They had no money to pay a bribe and so were taken to the police station. Mizan, ex-Chairman of the Sundorganj Union Council and one of the area's major timber operators, spends most of his time around thana headquarters and happened to be present at this time. He became involved and negotiated a rate of Tk. 5 per head for their release. Soon their friends and relatives and other members of the landless organization arrived. With them came Amin, a faction leader of Osmanpur Village and two-time unsuccessful candidate for the Union Council. Amin was allowed entry into the police station to negotiate together with Mizan though the rest were refused.

On his return he told the group that by now the Forest Department had become involved and so the price had gone up to Tk. 10 per head. They refused to pay and said they were prepared to take the case to higher levels if the prisoners were not released. By this stage the prisoners were hungry and the sentry who had given permission for food to be sent in now refused. Mizan and Amin interceded with the police and got permission. After showing their sympathy in this way they gave the news that the Bangladesh Rifles had been informed by telephone and the rate had now gone up to Tk. 15 per head. The friends still refused to pay, however, and the police sent a man over to the Forestry office for co-ordination.

Then Mizan, Amin, and the police began discussions with the prisoners inside and friends outside simultaneously. They hinted that the prisoners might be beaten, kept without food, and later sent to jail. Amin reminded the prisoners that their friends would find it very difficult to go to higher levels and offered to sign a bond for their release. Eventually they agreed and each had to sign two bonds, one admitting guilt and another promising to pay Tk. 20 each. By noon they were released. Later,

they paid. Out of the Tk. 400 collected, the police, BDR and Forest Department personnel each got 25 percent and the remainder was divided equally between Mizan and Amin. Although this was paid on the understanding that the case would be dropped, it has not been.

Thus the power elites are not only able to defy laws protecting the forest with impunity for their personal profit, they are also able to use the same laws to exploit and harass the poor.

### FOOD

Though our area is surplus in rice and exports substantial amounts, such a high proportion of the population is comprised of landless laborers that anything that reduces their employment opportunities results in much suffering. This happened in May/June 1979 when drought seriously affected the spring rice crop and made weeding unnecessary, thus leaving most of the laborers unemployed and on the edge of starvation. This situation was repeated in September-October. In such circumstances the almost total control enjoyed by the power elite over government food supplies disbursed by the government under food-for-work and rations programs puts them in an extremely powerful position.

#### Food-for-Work

Normally during the winter season large amounts of wheat are made available all over Bangladesh to compensate laborers for the creation of rural infrastructure such as roads, canals, and embankments, and for the raising and leveling of land. The program is administered by the Union Councils under the supervision of the government. In 1979, because of the crisis caused by the drought, much of the wheat intended for use in the dry winter season was brought forward during the monsoon.

In the four months August to November 1979, twenty-six schemes were sanctioned, and a total of 2,100 maunds (mds) of wheat were disbursed by the Government for this program.<sup>12</sup> The twenty schemes we were able to check were allocated 1,825 mds. Of this, only 425 mds. 32 seers (srs.), 23.9 percent of the total sanctioned, were really distributed. The remaining 1,392 mds. 8 srs., with a market value of Tk. 139,200, "disappeared."

According to Union Council members interviewed, 30 percent of the wheat for each scheme always goes for "expenses," transport costs and the shares of the various government officers. The transport cost is actually covered separately by the government and, from BRAC's own experience, should not in any event exceed 3 percent of the total. Several levels of government are involved, from the project implementation officer, who checks all movements and certifies completion, through the thana officer in charge of development, up to the sub-division.

In December 1979, a special scheme was sanctioned for raising and leveling the Adanpara primary school field. The school is not registered or even running though its teachers continue to draw rations. This was a special scheme transferred from some other allocation, and fifty mds. were sanctioned. It was implemented by Kamal Member, Matin Master, and Idris Master. Less than five mds. were really distributed.

But the incident of the Adanpara primary school field had begun even earlier. In early October 1979 Matin Master told three marginal farmers that he had received a delivery order for 100 mds. wheat to repair the Adanpara school field, but needed money to transport it. After bargaining, the farmers bought mds. in advance for Tk. 300. He shared the money with Idris Master and Kamal Member. When the wheat finally arrived three months later, he told them that since only fifty mds. had been sanctioned and had gone on "expenses" he could not supply any.

Control over food supplies is also an effective method of patronage. Food-for-work, for example, is usually given to the relatives and faction members of the council member. This also has the advantage of keeping the amount distributed as secret as possible. It can also be denied to any rivals or dissatisfied groups. For example, once the landless people became organized and started demanding higher wages and other benefits, the Union Council denied them any further food-for-work allocations.

### RESISTANCE

In recent years the landless poor and marginal farmers have been increasingly successful in organizing themselves and in challenging some of the activities of the "net."

In Adanpara there are 4.2 acres of temple land belonging to a Koch which had been claimed by Hafiz and his relatives and previously occupied by them. In 1979 the Koch made an arrangement to share this land with a landless group of seventy settlers and Adivasis. They all filed a case against the land grabbers, and because of their large number were able to transplant and harvest their crops successfully.

On a much larger scale, the big land occupation operations started in 1976 in a nearby village by Kamal and others have been successfully countered. For three years the occupiers were able to use about 100 acres belonging to all the Adivasis of the village. In 1979 when BRAC's food-for-work program was beginning, the victims began to discuss how to recover their land. By transplanting time they had organized a strong group including almost all the landless settlers and Adivasis in the village and had established good contacts with similar groups in the surrounding villages and with the local Member of Parliament. At that time the central government was giving special attention to the Adivasis. After careful

preparation, they transplanted and harvested in a large group of sixty people and have reoccupied almost all the land, though there is a case filed against their leader.

One of many reasons why organizing has worked to increase the power of these groups is that they have been able to agree not to hire out to work confiscated land for members of the net nor serve as their guards. When such agreements extend to neighboring villages, illegal land occupation becomes increasingly difficult to sustain.

As the landless began to get organized and take action, members of the net began to strike back. During BRAC's food-for-work program, several women's groups were organized and started joint cultivation. Salehuddin started bullying and threatening them when he was drunk. Their leader complained to the Union Council Member, who is Salehuddin's brother, but got no satisfaction and so contacted all the landless groups in the surrounding villages. They decided to organize a salish among themselves and summoned Salehuddin to attend. At the salish it became clear that he had been threatening many people with beating and murder if they spoke against him. Because of this, before taking the matter any further, the landless leaders reported these threats to the police, who were uncooperative. It was learned that they had just received a Tk. 500 bribe from Salehuddin in another case.

One leader had been particularly active in the salish and had also played a central role in resisting the land-grabbing activities of Salehuddin and friends. Two weeks after the salish they attacked him in the bazar at dusk. Though he was only slightly injured, another landless leader, Kazim, and a local rich man who had come out of the mosque to stop the fighting were wounded in the head and hand respectively.

The landless people became angry, cutting up bamboo to make *lathis* (sticks) and discussed whether to go to Salehuddin's house to kill him. They decided against it. The victims went to the Sub-Division for treatment and to the thana police station to file a case. Salehuddin also filed a counter-case against the landless leader, which was well received by the Officer-in-Charge (O.C.) of police because of their close relationship.

The following day, 600 men marched to the police station to request the O.C. to take action against Salehuddin, shouting the slogan: "Build landless organization, stop robbery!" The O.C. met them on the road. He spoke nicely and sympathetically—not his common practice with the landless—and promised to investigate. They heeded his request that they return home.

When the O.C. reached the police station he found 200 women, who had come by a different route, gathered there. He gave them promises as well and the following day came to investigate the case.

Salehuddin disappeared for some time and his assistant Latif was

arrested. Salehuddin reappeared after his brother sold 0.5 acres, mortgaged 0.5 acres and paid the O.C. Tk. 3000 to avoid arrest. He then tried to negotiate a settlement with the landless organization.

Given an understanding of the local power structure, it no longer seems surprising that resources intended for "development" rarely reach the poor. The words and plans of central government mean little. The realities of power relationships at local levels determine what actually happened.

### AN UPDATE

In early 1985, a little more than five years after the original study, a follow-up was carried out in the areas to assess the impact of efforts by the landless to shift the power balance in the two villages examined above. This follow-up revealed the substantial difficulties of the undertaking. The reader should bear in mind that, of the ten villages included in the original study, Kathidanga and Adanpara were chosen for attention in this article specifically because it was here that the net was particularly well entrenched and powerful. It should also be kept in mind that the border area in which the original ten study villages was located is one of the more inaccessible in Bangladesh, and had more than the typical level of lawless activity.

After reviewing developments in Kathidanda and Adanpara, we will look at a key indicator of the progress being made by the landless of the surrounding area and at some of the lessons which this experience generated for BRAC.

#### Kathidanga Village

In Kathidanga village the landless organization no longer exists and any impact it may have had on the village is difficult to detect. It was one of the earlier villages organized by BRAC and contributed important lessons which BRAC has since been careful to observe. When Kathidanga was being organized, BRAC had not yet instituted the practice of beginning with a comprehensive village survey which, among other things, makes it possible for BRAC workers to specifically target the landless. Nor was it considered important at that time to restrict membership to the landless class. Consequently the organization had attracted members who were not identified with the interests of the landless and who assumed a dominant role in the association. It also turned out that most of the landless in the village were refugees without established ties to the community. Unable to find employment there and having no real ties to the village, most had left the area by 1985.

Of the net members from Kathidanga, Nazmul has increased his



holdings to twenty-two acres of land and 100 head of cattle through a continuation of his money lending and land grabbing activities. His three sons are active in smuggling and black market operations. Farid has had similar success with his money lending, increasing his holdings to twenty acres. His daughter has married one of Kamal Member's sons. Matin Master is still serving as a teacher in the local primary school and has engaged in some successful land transactions, but drinks heavily and has had to sell off almost all of his property to cover drinking expenses, retaining only a one-acre homestead plot. Idris Master, having lost his land in gambling, works as a share cropper in his father's village but still remains sufficiently active politically to have been nominated to serve as a union council member. A string of additional cases were brought against him for theft following the case mentioned earlier, which had already cost him Tk. 25,000 in bribes and other expenses. To meet the expenses of these cases, he eventually was forced to sell off all his land and now lives in a deplorable financial condition. Humayun is still a prominent member of Mohiuddin's gang, maintaining good relations with Salehuddin and Kamal Member.

#### Adanpara Village

In Adanpara Village the landless organization survives as an important force in the village, though it faces continuing and difficult obstacles including corruption among its own leadership. Kazim, secretary of the central committee of the landless organization, who had suffered head injuries in the 1979 incident with Salehuddin, received Tk. 2,200 from the members of the organization to press their case with the district court. Some days later he demanded more money to spend on the case. As he refused to give the members an accounting for the previous money, his request was denied. It was later learned that he took another Tk. 2,000 from the central committee's account, which he was only willing to say he had spent on the case. In the meantime, he convinced the organization to compromise with Salehuddin on the case. He lost the support of the landless organization, but later won an election for Union Council membership with the support of elite factions which opposed the landless organization.

Later another leader, Kalam Munsu, obtained a loan of Tk. 1,000 from the group to buy land for himself but later refused to repay the money or turn over the land. When the group was unsuccessful in reclaiming the money, it disbanded and most of its members joined another of the Adanpara people's organizations. Still another leader gave over one acre of his land to the group for collective cultivation on the condition that they clean and level it. But after the work was done, he retained the land for himself and joined with Kazim in supporting political factions that opposed the people's organization.

As for the key figures mentioned in the earlier study, Huda Master involved himself as a member of the landless organization, consistently working against its interests until the members took a strong stand against him. His economic position and standing in the village subsequently deteriorated until he finally sold off his remaining property and returned to his home village where he passed away in 1982.

After Kamal Member became a Union Council member his income increased rapidly during the first half of his term through a variety of questionable activities. In early 1983 the landless organization caught him red-handed in collecting the grain from a Food for Work Project on which no work had been accomplished. They filed a case against him at both thana and sub-division levels, but no action was taken. So they took their case to the local Member of Parliament and with his help seized the wheat sanctioned for the scheme, completed the project, and distributed the wheat to the participants. Kamal's timber and leaf business started to decline. Blocked by the landless group from further illegal profiteering from his Union Council position he has turned to cattle stealing, with two cases being brought against him in the local thana during the past year. He still maintains good relations with the Bangladesh Rifles, Forestry, and Thana (Upazilla) officials. But in the last union council election he lost badly, receiving only eighty votes.

Salehuddin, with the help of Kamal Member and the local UP Chairman who maintains frequent contact with the landless leaders, was finally successful in negotiating an agreement with Kazim, the Secretary of the central committee of the landless organization, and the case brought against him by the landless was finally withdrawn. He later begged pardon for the incident from the landless people in a public gathering. He continues to serve as a member of Mohiuddin's gang, engages in cattle and timber theft, and does what he can to hinder the activities of the landless organization. He now has fifty acres of land.

Hafiz lost all of his land in gambling and in paying expenses of disputes over land taken from the Adivasis. He is now a poor old man of no importance suffering from various untreated diseases. His nephew, Latif, continues to practice cattle theft and robbery as a member of Mohiuddin's gang. With the help of Mohiuddin's connections with local officials and some small bribes, he has been successful in getting the six cases that were pending against him dropped, though he spent a total of two years in jail from 1979-83. He serves as a member of the Village Defense Force and owns two acres of land.

Mahfuz has increased his holdings to twelve acres. He has continued, without success, to win the support of the landless organization in bids for the union council. He remains an important social and political figure in the area.

Manzur Sarkar became a supporter of the landless organization, giving one acre of land to the Adanpara Landless Women's Organization for collective cultivation of cassava and giving support to the candidate sponsored by the landless organization for UP Chairman Candidate in the most recent election. He died in 1984, and his family continues to hold his 150 acres of land.

### Union Council Elections

As the members of landless organizations have become more politically aware, they have given increasing attention to winning representation on the local Union Councils. The Union Council elections held December 1983 to January 1984 were contested by forty-two candidates from the landless groups. Ten of these were from the ten villages included in the original study, and the remaining thirty-two were from neighboring villages. Though none of the candidates from the ten villages won, twelve of the candidates from the neighboring villages did. Though this was only a minority of the landless candidates, the results were taken as an important victory by the landless who felt it marked a turning point in their endeavor to gain power.

This focus on union-level elections has been accompanied by moves toward the formation by the landless of their own union-level federation of village level associations. So far two union-level committees have been formed by the landless, comprised of one representative from each of their village organizations. These committees meet once each month to discuss issues that affect their organizations and to seek common solutions. Among the accomplishments of these committees has been a successful effort to reorganize and reactivate the landless organization in one of the ten study villages which had run into difficulties.

### LESSONS

BRAC has learned numerous lessons from this experience. First is the importance of beginning involvement in a village with a comprehensive survey that clearly identifies the target population and reveals the social structure of the village. Membership in landless organizations is then limited to those who are actually members of the landless class. Mass confrontation with elites is avoided whenever possible, attempting to resolve disputes by more tactful means. Efforts are made to develop broadly based leadership to make it difficult for one person to assume a dominant role, which may be used to his personal benefit. From the very beginning, attention is given to self-managed income and employment-generating programs based on traditional skills and occupations. This contrasts with earlier BRAC programs that were oriented more to providing emergency relief to the poor and tended to create dependency.

And so the poor continue their struggle and BRAC continues to learn. There are no easy victories and each success is built on the learning from past failures. For all the set-backs the landless of the area are making progress, no longer feeling they are simply at the mercy of corrupt elites, politicians, and administrators. And as difficult as the organization-building process is, there is no evident alternative. If these people are to gain a decent livelihood and a respected place in the community, it must come through their own efforts and organization. Try as it has, it seems to be beyond the capacity of government or foreign aid agencies to achieve this for them.

### NOTES

1. With the exception of countries and capital cities all names of individuals and places mentioned in this study have been fictionalized. Any similarities to names of actual persons and places are coincidental.
2. We refer to "power" elites rather than simply elites because all members of the economic elite of the village are not members of this corrupt network. Many are indeed honest and civic minded individuals who themselves are subject to exploitation by the "net."
3. The union is the lowest political level of government and is comprised of several villages. The thana (recently named Upazilla), comprised of several unions, is the lowest administrative level of government.
4. The following report is written in the present tense to retain its sense of immediacy. The study [except for the update provided at the end] was, however, completed by the end of 1979 and the statements made apply to that point in time.
5. Titles are sometimes appended to the name in Bangladesh according to one's occupation. "Master" indicates a teacher. "Company" designates a businessman. "Member" is a member of the Union Council. "Chairman" is the Chairman of the Union Council—locally a powerful position. Member and Chairman may be prefaced by "ex" indicating they no longer hold the position.
6. This involves collection of a particular type of leaf from the forest which is used in making the local cigarettes. Marketing of these leaves is controlled by a large, government licensed monopoly through local agents such as Huda Master.
7. Some so called "freedom fighters" were little more than thugs who took advantage of the war to rob and pillage their neighbors in the name of a patriotic cause.
8. Members of the local militia who fought with the Bangladesh army in the Liberation War with Pakistan.
9. This is the village court which is formed by respected local residents to resolve a dispute. All the villagers gather to observe the proceedings.
10. They concluded that the assassination was arranged by Salehuddin, the brother of Kamal, and carried out by members of the Kader Bahini, some of whom were friends of Salehuddin.
11. A paisa is one-hundredth of a taka.
12. One maund = 40 seers. One seer = approximately one kilogram.



# PEOPLE- CENTERED DEVELOPMENT

Contributions toward Theory  
and Planning Frameworks

Edited by David C. Korten and Rudi Klauss



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The most striking thing about evolutionary history is that the operation of phylogenesis in its generalizing mode created improvements in organism adaptability until it generated learning organisms. Thus, the behavioral reprogramming of organism behavior that is phylogenesis gradually evolved a program (genotype) that provided the organism with the power to reprogram itself—to act as a true learning system at the organism level. In the human species the learning organism reached the point where learning becomes largely socialized because the dominant aspect of the individual organism's learning environment is the presence of and the sharing with other learning organisms.

In this way there emerged a process of social evolution distinct from biological evolution and a process of social learning distinct from a purely stochastic learning process. This process takes place at two levels—the level of the individual and the level of the group.

The major elements in an individual's learning and personality formation are associated with his social environment. He learns by sharing in a range of acquired information through communication and social system participation. Individual behaviors form group clusters to exploit the behavioral amplification that specialization and exchange can afford. Thus, individual learning and behavior are shaped by the nature of the group activities in which the individual participates and through which he is molded, and which in turn, are frequently molded by him.

Social learning also takes place at the level of the group, where the result is not the transformation of individual behavior but the transformation of group behavior. Either the collective membership of the group or some leadership élite undertakes to monitor the group behavior with reference to group goals. Serious deviations constitute problems which must be resolved through technological innovation and social reorganization.

Social learning subsumes both social system learning and the socialized

Excerpted from Edgar S. Dunn, Jr., *Economic and Social Development: A Process of Social Learning* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971), pp. 239–45. Published for Resources for the Future, Inc. Copyright © 1971 by The Johns Hopkins University Press.

learning of the individual. Its operation at the two levels is obviously inter-related. Since the orientation of this book is a social science one, we have been predominantly concerned with the way in which the process works to transform social systems. The essence of what we have learned about the operation of the process is as follows.

Social behavior is not identical with social learning. Two of the unique aspects of the human social process continue to operate in the absence of social learning. Behaviors directed to evaluating and organizing behavior are continuously employed in maintaining social processes that are homeostatic in character. There they operate to modify the mix and flow of established modes of behavior in response to established behavioral criteria associated with the monitoring of moderate environmental changes.

Since social systems frequently encounter situations, in which such predetermined forms of adaptation are inadequate, rarely can they long escape the necessity for social learning. Then they must display the third unique component of the social process—behavior directed to changing behavior. In this learning process both behavior-evaluating behavior and behavior-organizing behavior continue to operate, but they become transformed into aspects of behavior-changing behavior. They operate together to form a process of social learning.

This we identify as a process of evolutionary experimentation—a process that is different in important respects from the experimental process known to classical science. Social system evolution is the result of a problem solving process that is an implicit if not explicit form of hypothesis testing—but is problem solving and testing of a different order.

Classical experimental physical science takes place at two levels: analysis and system design. At the level of analysis it is concerned with understanding the operation of deterministic physical systems from the posture of an external observer. It commonly tests hypotheses about the nature of the system by observing the effect upon components of the system of changes in exogenous parameters, usually under highly controlled conditions. In this way it seeks to identify laws or universal relationships. At the level of system design, these relationships or laws are applied to the design of deterministic systems like machine systems, creating artifacts that amplify human behavior. The design of these systems is engineered from the posture of an external manipulator. To the extent that the valuation process is involved, it is concerned only with instrumental values or efficiency criteria at the design stage.

In social systems problem solving and hypothesis testing take on a different character. The basic point of departure is the fact that the social system experimenter is not exogenous to the system. He exists as an endogenous component of the system he is attempting to understand and transform. He is not dealing with the understanding and design of fully deterministic systems. He is immersed in the act of social system self-analysis and self-

transformation. He is the agent of social learning—a purposive, self-actuating, but not fully deterministic process. He is not interested to the same degree in establishing universals because the social system which engages his activity is phenomenologically unique and both its structure and function are temporary in character. He is engaged, rather, in formulating and testing developmental hypotheses. The developmental hypothesis is a presupposition that, if the organization and behavior of the social system were to be modified in a certain way, the goals of the system would be more adequately realized. This developmental hypothesis is not tested repeatedly under nearly identical or controlled conditions. Rather, it is tested by the degree to which goal convergence is realized as a result of the experimental design. Problem solving—hypothesis formulation and testing—is an iterative, sequential series of adaptations of an adaptable, goal-seeking, self-activating system. It can be characterized as evolutionary experimentation.

This process calls into play the other two unique processes in its support. Because by its nature social learning involves social reorganization, behavior-organizing behavior is involved. We have seen that an organization is defined by a set of boundary conditions. These boundary conditions are a set of social system goals and the controls imposed upon component systems to assure that their behavior supports the total system goals. Developmental hypotheses arise out of the anomalies of social organization when the social system controls do not adequately serve the social system goals. They are tested through social system reorganization designed to bring the system goals and controls into consonance.

Evolutionary experimentation can be seen to exhibit both a normal and extraordinary mode. In normal problem solving the emphasis is upon the reorganization of the system controls. It involves the reorganization of subsystem boundaries under the control of the total system goals. It does not threaten the context of the system. As we have seen, this mode of problem solving is frequently inadequate. The developmental hypotheses and the associated subsystem reorganizations are not sufficient to bring about consonance of total system goals and controls. Thus, evolutionary experimentation occasionally manifests itself as a paradigm shift or a displacement in the operating context of the total system. It comes to deal, not with the reorganization of controls, but with the reformulation of total system goals as well.

This makes plain that behavior-evaluating behavior is also an essential servant of evolutionary experimentation. In the case of normal problem solving, attention is restricted to a consideration of the adequacy of instrumental goals and criteria. Subsystem goals may come under consideration because they are in conflict with the target goals of the total system. They are either placed under additional constraints by the reorganization of control subsystems or they are directly subjected to the reorganization of their own goals and controls. In this mode, however, even the revision of subsystem

goals is undertaken under the control of total system goals. In the case of evolutionary experimentation that is manifest as a paradigm shift, it is the target goals of the total system that are subject to revision. This makes plain that the social scientist concerned with developmental problems cannot abstract from normative or value-laden issues. The process of evolutionary experimentation is essentially a normative process; one of its consequences is the evolution of social values.

Throughout social history the operation of this process of social learning has been hazardous and haphazard because its conduct has not been efficient and because it has been predominantly concerned with instrumental goals. In effect, the process of social learning has not understood itself sufficiently well to rationalize itself as an efficient process with a coherent purpose.

Because the process has not been understood and consciously applied, social change has frequently been dominated by an attempt to implement change by processes incompatible with the reality of social evolution. Acting on the basis of inadequate paradigms and metaphors, we have been inclined to practice a form of social engineering. It is presupposed that the change agents can act as though they are external to the process and have the knowledge and power to design a terminal state that will bring about consistent goals and controls in a deterministic fashion. Also acting on the basis of an inadequate paradigm of the social process, an attempt to freeze the social status quo—to create and maintain static social system boundaries—is frequently evident. Both of these impractical modes are clearly impossible, but the attempt to impose them upon social change has a tendency to exacerbate the traumatic and unpredictable consequences of the process.

The other part of the difficulty stems from the fact that social learning is being applied more efficiently in one of its modes than the other because it is only partly understood. The resulting disproportion has had serious social consequences. The conscious and efficient practice of physical science and the design of physical systems has been perfected to the point where normal social system problem solving is dominated by the reorganizations associated with new physical technology—the redesign of machine subsystems and their control. This has had the effect of accelerating the rate at which organizational crises occur—in particular, the rate of those that can only be resolved by paradigm shifts. This accelerated need for social reorganization is not matched by an appropriate understanding of social system learning. We do not yet see the implications of normal problem solving for the control of human subsystems (involving the consistency of individual and total system goals), nor do we see clearly how to engage purposively in the process of controlling paradigm shifts. This has led to an accelerating rate of painful, reactive, major social reorganizations. The revision of the target goals of social systems is as yet largely uncoordinated, fragmentary, and opportunistic.

One concludes that amelioration of many of the world's worst social

ills, if not the long-run survival of the social process itself, must hinge upon our ability to make the practice of social learning more orderly and rational.

First, we need to devote concentrated attention in social science to understanding the process. Second, at every stage and level of our understanding we need to apply what we know to conscious, orderly practice and control of the process. This implies that developmental hypotheses should be more objectively and consciously formulated by the group. The evolutionary experiment should be frankly conceived as an experiment and deliberately provided with information feedback that monitors goal convergence and sets the stage for the next round of experimentation. The seductive appeal of utopian social engineering must be put aside. Third, we need to innovate organizational forms and procedures that efficiently integrate the goals and controls of social learning itself. Fourth, we need to acknowledge that this may require an over-arching social goal or value that serves as a final test for evolutionary experiments—that guides the formulation of developmental hypotheses and passes judgment upon paradigm shifts.

We have suggested that this over-arching goal is the development of the growth motives of the human individual. If this suggests that, as a consequence, social evolution becomes teleological in a way not matched by cosmological or biological evolution, it should be pointed out that this is not a terminal state or a transcendent teleology of the kind associated with the orthogenetic fallacy; nor is it the conventional teleology of social action formed by the pursuit of instrumental goals and social maintenance. It is a process teleology. It suggests that human beings can establish the process of human development as the goal of the process of social evolution. Both the process and the goal are understood to be open to further transformation as we advance in the practice and understanding of them.

By asserting the normative priority of human development as our social goal, we add to the internal consistency of the social learning paradigm as well as to the order of the process. It provides the interface between the social learning of the individual and social system learning. It is only through establishing such a priority that group behavior and individual behavior come to be mutually reinforcing in a nonstatic world.

If this makes the social process and social science anthropocentric in character, no apology is necessary. To deny that this is appropriate would be to deny a fundamental aspect of human nature and the evolutionary process that formed it. The psychic orientation of man and his motivation to action is by nature anthropocentric just as that of the rat is rat-centric. Man happens to have the potential through social learning to create a controlled process that can support him in the realization and exercise of his highest human potential—perhaps even to enlarge that potential and the meaning and joy that accompanies its exercise.

## 18

## Rural Development Programming: The Learning Process Approach

DAVID C. KORTEN

One of the clear lessons of the 1970s has been that effective participation of the rural poor in the development process is more easily mandated in programming documents than achieved in the real world of program implementation. It is not, however, a new lesson. In earlier decades, experience with cooperatives and rural development produced similarly disappointing results in the context of high expectations and good intentions. Generally the cooperatives proved to be creations of government operated under government management—which provided little market power, produced few returns to members, and consequently enjoyed little or no popular support. Similarly community development, when implemented on a large scale, ended up as little more than one more set of centrally formulated programs and targets implemented through conventional bureaucratic structures and largely unresponsive to local preferences and/or needs.

In hindsight the results seem quite predictable. Yet in spite of the monotony with which the basic lessons thus learned have been repeated and the fairly substantial progress made in understanding the nature of the problem, it remains the rule rather than the exception to see in development programming: a) reliance, even for the planning and implementation of “participative” development, on centralized bureaucratic organizations which have little capacity to respond to diverse community-defined needs or to build on community skills and values; b) inadequate investment in the difficult process of building community problem-solving capacity; c) inadequate attention to dealing with social diversity, especially highly stratified village social structures; and d) insufficient integration of the technical and social components of development action.

From *Rural Development Participation Review* 2 (Ithaca, N.Y.: Rural Development Committee, Cornell University, Winter 1981), pp. 1–8. The research on which this paper is based is documented in detail in a much longer version: “Community Organization and Rural Development: A Learning Process Approach,” *Public Administration Review*, September–October, 1980 pp. 480–510.

Prominent among the barriers to effective participatory programs are pressures on development financing agencies to move too much money too quickly in time bounded, pre-planned projects in pursuit of short-term results; while the need is for a flexible, sustained, experimental, action-based, capacity-building style of development effort for which both donors and recipient bureaucracies are ill-equipped. Pressures for immediate results measured by goods and services delivered drive out attention to building the capacity of the responsible institutions to provide these goods and services in ways which are responsive to local needs and build the local problem-solving capacity on which sustained development depends. Programming procedures which demand detailed upfront planning coupled with rigorous adherence to fast-paced implementation schedules and pre-planned specifications all but assure that the projects will be unresponsive to subsequent popular input—or even to a growing understanding of what the real problems are on the part of the project’s professional staff.

### Three Asian Successes

Are there options? Apparently so, as there are a number of successful experiences that provide exceptions to the more typical outcomes. These bear examination in a search for useful lessons. Three cases selected for examination for Asia share several common characteristics: a) involvement of rural people in their own advancement; b) greater than average success, with results that are not dependent on uniquely favorable settings; and c) a scale of operation that places them substantially beyond the pilot project stage.

#### INDIAN NATIONAL DAIRY DEVELOPMENT BOARD

India’s National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), built up from the model of the Anand Milk Producers’ Union, is frequently cited as an example of the potentials of cooperative organization in the Third World. By the end of 1976 it was comprised of 4,530 village cooperatives with a combined membership of 2 million farmers. The cooperative collects milk from members at village collection points twice each day, transports and processes it, and markets the processed products in major urban centers. It is known for being efficient, free of corruption, and effective in providing major benefits to even the poorest members of the village communities it serves.

But it did not begin with the NDDB operating a national-scale program. Its roots go back to the mid-forties when a group of dairy farmers grew tired of cooperating with the government-sponsored milk market program which offered them low and fluctuating prices. Boycotting the government program, they formed their own cooperative under the leadership of a farmer-member. By 1947 eight village cooperatives with 432 members had

formed a cooperative union. These were difficult times for the cooperative and in 1949 they called on the assistance of Verghese Kurien whom, it seems, destiny had brought to their village. Along with the farmers, Kurien learned how the problems of milk production and marketing within a village cooperative framework could be overcome. As they learned, other cooperatives were formed and brought within the organizational umbrella. Gradually methods were refined, and the organization that was eventually to become the NDDB grew—from the bottom up—adding new layers and branches as it grew, always under the sustained leadership of Kurien. Appropriate management systems to meet the demands of the program were worked out through experience. The values of integrity, service, and commitment to the poorest member-producers were deeply imbedded in its emerging structures. Management staff were hired fresh from school, trained through experience on the job, indoctrinated in the values of the program, and advanced rapidly as the program grew.

#### BANGLADESH RURAL ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE

BRAC was formed in early 1972 under the leadership of Mr. F. H. Abed, a practicing accountant, as a modest relief effort to resettle refugees in the Sulla area of Northeast Bangladesh following the war of partition with Pakistan. Those involved soon learned that relief alone was not going to overcome the miserable conditions in which even the successfully resettled refugees were forced to live, and it was decided to reorient their efforts toward village-level development.

A multi-sectoral program was evolved which included construction of community centers, functional education, agriculture, fisheries, cooperatives, health and family planning, and vocational training for women. In each sector early failures led to program modifications. For example the teaching methods and lesson plans of the functional education program were substantially revised to make them more relevant to village life. In the health program they turned to use of paramedics, with physicians re-orienting their roles to be first trainers, second planners, and only lastly curers. But close monitoring of the villages in which they were working revealed to BRAC staff that they still were not producing the results they wanted. Too few of its programs were addressing the needs of the landless. Conflicting interests of landed and landless made it nearly impossible to address the interests of each within a single village association. Each sectoral activity tended to operate independently of the others. Village activities remained overly dependent on the presence of BRAC staff. The paramedics tended to concentrate on cures rather than prevention. The literacy program was not producing useable skills.

BRAC programs had fallen into the patterns of most sectoralized gov-

ernment sponsored rural development efforts—with similar results. Again a major review was undertaken to assimilate the lessons learned and evolve a change in strategy. The new strategy would concentrate entirely on the poorest 50% of the village population—defined operationally as those families whose livelihoods depended in part on selling labor to third parties—and program initiatives would come largely from the beneficiaries. When entering a new village, an initial survey identified members of the target group. Informal discussions at traditional gathering places served to identify the major concerns of this group and to single out those with leadership potential. Discussion groups grew until a village assembly of the poor became formalized. Leaders received training at a special BRAC center in organizing and consciousness-raising methods.

To insure against dependence on BRAC and to discourage participation by those only interested in handouts, initial activities developed by the group had to be carried out exclusively with local resources. Only when the group had proven capable in mobilizing such resources were supplemental BRAC resources offered. Education provided literacy and numeracy skills, but was designed concurrently to raise consciousness of class exploitation and to build commitment to group action. The activities dealt with truly basic needs such as demands for a rightful share in government programs; bargaining for improved wages, share cropping and landlease terms; and schemes to gain control over productive assets. Women's activities emphasized productive employment, often involving difficult physical work under a food-for-work program. All schemes were planned and implemented under the supervision of leaders from the target group.

As the strongest possible indication that BRAC's new approach was indeed responding in an effective way to strongly felt needs, the program was being self-replicated by the villages themselves. As one village set out to organize another to protect its newly negotiated gains in wages and contract terms, the landless of other villages came from miles away asking organized villages to help them achieve the same.

At about the time that BRAC moved from a sectoral to a more people-centered approach, it also established a research unit to advance the understanding of its staff of rural poverty. Questions were addressed such as: Who controls what assets in the rural village and how? How are some families able to advance themselves while others become increasingly impoverished? What is the peasant's perception of famine and credit? Participatory research techniques such as the use of peasant panels to generate data on peasant perceptions of famine and credit proved highly effective. Researchers and field workers often exchanged roles or worked jointly to insure that research was fully integrated with operations. By January 1980, 378 BRAC staff were working with some 800 villages.

### THAILAND'S COMMUNITY-BASED FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES

As an official of Thailand's development planning agency responsible for observing government programs in action from 1965 to 1971, Mechai Veravaidya reached two conclusions: 1) the government's development programs were largely failing because they were designed from the top down, involved no participation of the people, and seldom provided effective follow-up on completed projects; and 2) the few gains made were rapidly overtaken by Thailand's rapid population growth. Mechai left the planning agency in 1971 and began experimenting with the idea of bringing family planning closer to the people. He tried having a doctor offer family planning services in a local school. The people responded, but he could not get a second doctor interested. He tried using student recruiters to send potential acceptors to a clinic. The doctors liked this approach, but the people didn't. After a variety of failures he tried in 1974 a totally new approach which would not be dependent on physicians. Shopkeepers were recruited in each of five villages, given a supply of birth control pills, instructed in their use, and encouraged to sell them for a small commission. Good sales led to recruitment of seventy new distributors. Expansion continued thereafter and Mechai eventually set up a new organization specifically to service his distributors and expand the program.

As the program expanded, Mechai became preoccupied with the design and operation of strong management systems consistent with the needs of the village-level operations. Continuous testing and revision resulted in important changes in supervisory, resupply, and reporting systems. New layers of management were added as required. As top management became further and further removed from field operations he instituted a requirement that each make periodic visits to the villages with local supervisors to keep them grounded in village reality. Finding donor-mandated statistical reporting systems cumbersome and of little utility, he drastically simplified reporting requirements to gather only the most basic of performance information, directly related to program operations. Color coded graphs and monthly staff meetings were mechanisms for encouraging staff to make regular use of this data. Unimpressed with the utility of conventional impact surveys which did not relate to administrative units and produced results only after the time for action had passed, he devised his own "mini-survey" method by which his supervisors gathered data from a sample of households each month, processed the data, and put it to immediate use.

### The Common Feature: A Learning Process

The performance of a development program can be characterized as a function of the fit achieved between beneficiaries, program, and assisting organization. In more specific terms a given development program is likely to perform poorly in terms of advancing the well-being of a specific group

unless there is a close correspondence between: beneficiary needs and program output; program task requirements and the distinctive competence of the assisting organization; and the mechanisms for beneficiary demand expression and the decision processes of the assisting organization (see figure 1).

The various programs examined in the cases above each found a particular solution to the requirement for fit appropriate to its time and circumstance. If we look to these experiences for a program or an organizational blueprint for replication elsewhere we are only likely to be disappointed. It is to the *process* of their development that we must look for the most useful lessons. The nature and significance of this process is best understood by contrasting it with a more conventional approach to development programming, understood as the "blueprint" approach.

### THE BLUEPRINT APPROACH

This approach, with its emphasis on careful pre-planning, reflects the textbook version of how development programming is supposed to work. Researchers are supposed to provide data from pilot projects and other

### SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF FIT REQUIREMENTS

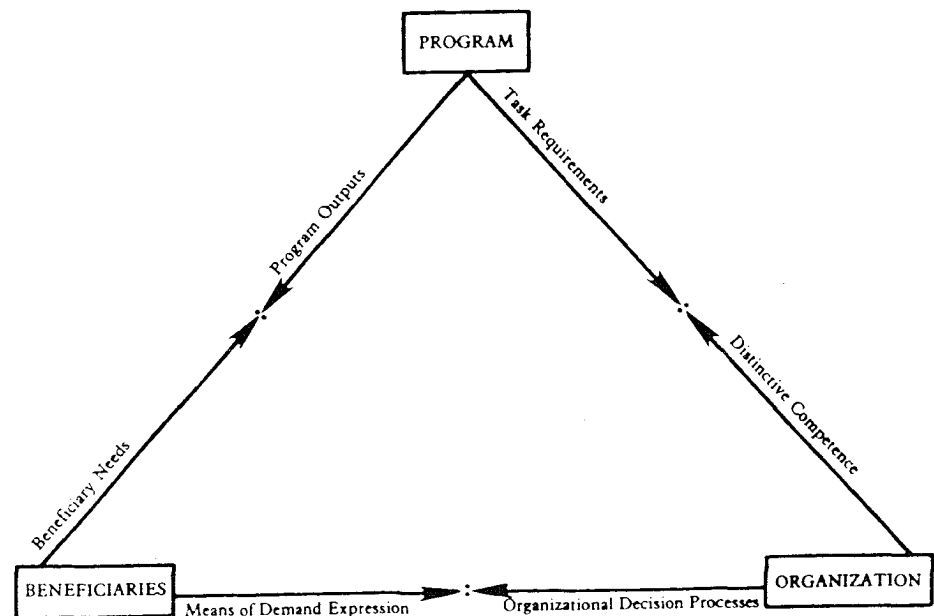


Figure 1

studies from which project designers will choose the most cost-effective designs for achieving given outcomes. Administrators of the implementing organizations are supposed to execute the project plan faithfully, much as a building contractor would follow construction blueprints, specifications, and schedules. Once implementation is complete an evaluation researcher is supposed to measure actual changes in the target population and report actual versus planned changes to the planners at the end of the project cycle so that blueprints can be revised.

Its clear-cut order, allocation of funds for precisely-stated outcomes, reliance on "hard" data and expert judgment, and the clearly-stated implementation schedules make project justification easy in budget presentations. It is a programming approach quite appropriate to certain types of development projects—most notably physical infrastructure projects—where the task and outcomes are defined, environment stable, and cost predictable. Unfortunately, however, in rural development the objectives are more often multiple, ill-defined, and subject to negotiated change; task requirements are unclear; environments are constantly changing; and costs are unpredictable. Although knowledge is severely limited, the blueprint approach calls for behaving as if it were nearly perfect. Where there is need to build institutional capacity for sustained action on unfamiliar development problems, it assumes that development actions are terminal and that hastily assembled temporary organizations will suffice. Where the need is for a close integration of knowledge-building, decision-making, and action-taking roles, it sharply differentiates the functions and even the institutional locations of the researcher, the planner and the administrator.

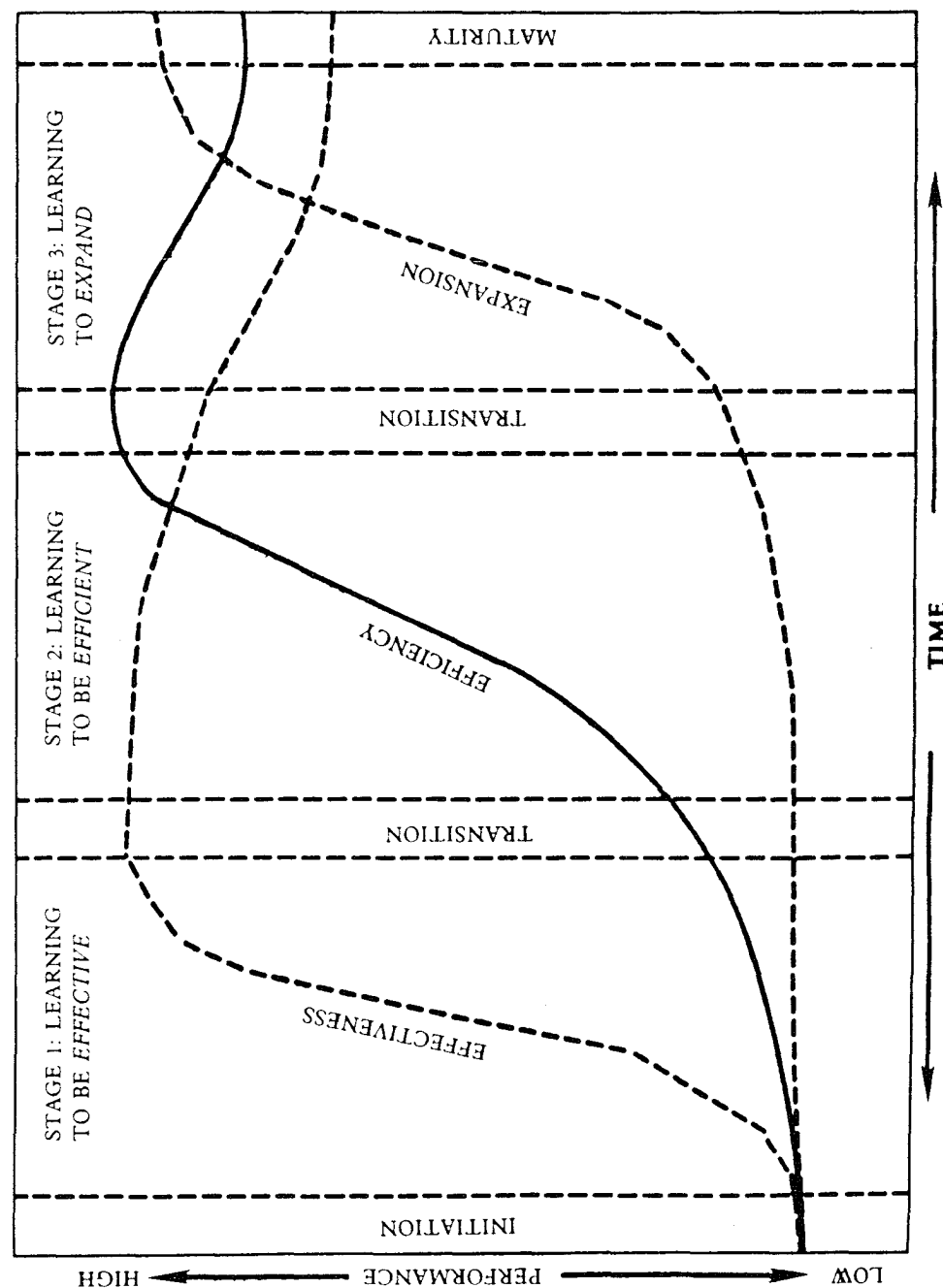
Awareness is becoming widespread that the blueprint approach is an inadequate response to the rural development problem, but its assumptions and procedures continue to dominate most rural development programming and to provide the core content of most training courses in development management. This is unlikely to change until viable options are understood and supported.

#### THE LEARNING PROCESS APPROACH

Examination of the three Asian success cases suggests that the blueprint approach never played more than an incidental role in their development. None was designed and implemented. Each emerged out of a long-term learning process in which villages and program personnel shared their knowledge and resources to create a fit between needs, actions, and the capacities of the assisting organization. Each had a leader who spent time in the villages with an idea, tried it, accepted and corrected his errors, and built a larger organization around the requirement of what he learned.

In each instance the overall process can be broken down into three stages, each with its own unique learning requirement (see figure 2). The elements of each stage can be described roughly as follows:

Figure 2 PROGRAM LEARNING CURVES



Note: There are likely to be trade-offs between effectiveness, efficiency, and expansion which will lead to some loss of effectiveness as efficiency increases, and to losses in both effectiveness and efficiency during expansion.

*Stage 1: Learning to be effective.* One or more teams of highly qualified personnel are sent to one or more villages which constitute their learning laboratory or pilot site. Here they develop a familiarity with the problem in question from the beneficiary's perspective and try out some promising approaches to addressing jointly identified needs. They may be supported by a variety of external resource persons with expertise in the social, managerial, and related technical sciences. Errors will be common and the resource inputs required will be high relative to results. It is assumed that rapid adaptive action will be taken as errors in initial assumptions are identified.

*Stage 2: Learning to be efficient.* As insights are gained into what to do, attention is redirected to learning how to do it more efficiently, eliminating activities which are relatively nonproductive and working out simplified problem-solving routines for handling critical activities within the grasp of less skilled persons. New learning laboratory sites may be selectively established to test and further refine such methods—simultaneously giving additional personnel experience in their application.

*Stage 3: Learning to expand.* Then attention is again redirected, this time to the phased development of a supporting organization geared to the requirements of carrying out the prescribed activities on a larger scale. It requires building into the organization the supporting skills, management systems, structures, and values.

The three stages as represented here are a simplified abstraction of what in reality may be a very disorderly and largely intuitive process. Yet the abstraction helps to explicate an alternative to the blueprint approach to programming.

A key point worth special note is that in the cases examined, there was no thought given to simply testing a program model in a pilot context and then leaving it to others to implement. To the contrary, each was distinguished by a *substantial continuity of personnel*. The people who had the experience of figuring out an original program design capable of doing the job were the same people who then built an organization around that model adapted to its requirements.

#### THE LEARNING ORGANIZATION

Any pre-planned intervention into a varied and constantly changing socio-technical system inevitably will be in error by some margin; the outcome will nearly always deviate from the outcome intended. It is the response to this error that tells the true character of the organization and its leadership.

In the *self-deceiving organization* those in authority treat error as synonymous with failure and seek to place blame on some guilty party. In

response, the organization's members become skilled in hiding such errors. Those in authority, thus removed from operating reality, are reassured that as a result of their "brilliant" leadership everything is going just as intended. They may impress the unwary visitors with their briefings on program accomplishments. But to more sophisticated observers the claim that a program addressed to the rural poor is working effectively exactly as originally planned is a sure indicator that mistakes are being hidden, that leadership is ineffective, and that actual program operations are probably in a state of disarray which bears little resemblance to what has been described.

In the *defeated organization* the source of error is assumed to stem from forces beyond the control of the organization's members. Thus while adverse factors may be discussed in rich detail, no action is taken. When individual members feel impotent and therefore refer all problems to their superiors for action, they render their superiors equally impotent, ultimately immobilizing the entire organization.

In the *learning organization* error is treated as an essential source of information. Since some margin of error is treated as inevitable, particularly in the early stages of the learning process, it is viewed neither as a sign of failure, nor of environment perversity. Error is discussed candidly in such organizations, but in the context of lessons learned and corrective actions being attempted. There may be no surer indicator that an organization has effective leadership.

#### NEW ROLE FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES

While the demand for greater sensitivity to the dynamics of social behavior in rural development programming is now notably high, the influence of the social sciences in programming decisions is notably low. Given the roles normally accepted by social scientists in relation to action programs, their limited influence is hardly surprising. In their role of summary evaluator they have mainly engaged in documenting failure long after the time for corrective action has passed. In doing social soundness assessments, they have most often been called in after the basic choices affecting project design have been made to certify that there will not be serious adverse social consequences. In testing the program concepts in pilot projects, they have been asked to certify program blueprints when in reality the results achieved will often reflect more the operational competence of the organization which has done the implementation than the specific validity of the program design. In carrying out baseline surveys there is seldom any real presumption that the data will be used as a substantive input to planning. More likely the survey was contracted only to meet a requirement set in some programming document for baseline evaluation data.

What is all too rare is for the social scientists to help an organization build its capacity to actually use social science knowledge and data as a



normal part of its operating routine. What the case studies suggest as needed is a willingness to experiment with new research methods by researchers committed to providing action agency personnel with simple tools to facilitate their *rapid* collection and interpretation of social data directly *relevant to action* for which they are responsible. The task is to make a demystified social science available as every person's tool, turning agency personnel, and in some instances the villagers themselves, into more effective action researchers.

This most often seems to involve disciplined observation, guided interviews and informant panels rather than formal surveys; emphasizing timeliness over rigor; employing oral more than written communication; offering informed interpretation rather than extensive statistical analysis; making narrative rather than numerical presentations; and giving attention to the processes unfolding and to intermediate outcome data required for rapid adaptation, rather than dwelling on detailed assessment of "final" outcomes. Rather than provide the static profiles found in the typical socio-economic survey, it involves a quest to understand the dynamics of the socio-technical systems that govern village life, to provide a basis for operational-level predictions of the consequences of given development interventions. It means identifying target group members and behaviors in terms relevant to program action rather than simply producing aggregated statistics.

### Application to an Established Bureaucracy

The framework of the learning process approach can be applied in either of two ways. One is by building an entirely new program and organization—from the bottom up—as illustrated in the three cases discussed earlier. The other is by introducing an analogue of this same process within an established organization which seeks to build a new capacity for effective village-level action. The methodologies for the latter application are presently being worked out by the Philippines' National Irrigation Administration (NIA) in an effort directed toward strengthening its capacity to work in effective support of small farmer owned and operated (communal) gravity-fed irrigation systems.

Concerned that the communal irrigation system it was assisting often fell into disrepair and disuse soon after rehabilitation construction was completed, NIA officials concluded that attention was needed to strengthen the water user associations concurrently with work on physical construction. They first selected for special attention two systems scheduled for assistance. Since the NIA had no community organizers of its own, a number of experienced organizers were hired on a temporary basis to work with NIA engineers on these systems. The idea was to integrate the social and technical aspects of the work—developing the social and technical capacity of the

water user association through active involvement of its members in such activities as planning system layout, obtaining water rights and rights of way, organizing volunteer labor inputs to system construction, and exerting control over project expenditures. Known as the Laur Project, the experience established that such integration was at once important and difficult to achieve.

In one community, local power struggles emerged which led to a two-year postponement of construction plans. In the second community, a high level of cohesion greatly facilitated farmer involvement, but seldom in ways which made life easier for project staff. Delays resulted from farmer demands for scheduling and design changes. The use of volunteer labor posed unfamiliar problems of supervision worked out only through lengthy meetings. The engineers did not always welcome farmer interest in monitoring purchases and limiting the staff's personal use of vehicles operated on gasoline charged to the farmers' loan account. Particularly tense was a conflict in judgment between farmers and engineers as to whether the materials chosen for dam construction would withstand the force of local floods. Farmers said no. Engineers said yes. (The farmers won a Pyrrhic victory when the dam, finally constructed to the engineers' specifications, washed out a few months after completion.)

At this stage the pilot projects were a failure from the standpoint of any normal evaluation criteria. But it was quite evident to those involved that the weakness was not in the basic concept—it was in the as-yet-limited capacity of the NIA to make it work. And the experience provided extensive insights as to what was required to develop that capacity on both the technical and institutional sides. A major commitment to further learning was implied, involving major changes in the NIA's structure and operating procedures.

A series of new pilot projects was initiated, the designs of which were carefully worked out to incorporate the lessons of the earlier Laur experience. New personnel were brought in and thoroughly trained in these lessons. A top-level national communal irrigation committee was established to coordinate the learning process under the leadership of NIA Assistant Administrator Benjamin Bagadion, a man with total dedication to the idea of independent farmer owned and operated irrigation systems. The committee included central level NIA officials, representatives of related action agencies, and senior members of collaborating academic and research institutions—each of whom had a major day-to-day commitment to the effort. A new social science research program supported by the Ford Foundation was introduced to build within the NIA the new skills, methods, and systems it would require for its new participative approach. Social scientists from the Institute of Philippine Culture developed guidelines for rapid collection and assessment by NIA field staff of "institutional profiles" which

contained social-institutional data critical to project selection and planning. They also observed field activities and produced monthly "process documentation" reports which provided non-evaluative narrative feedback on key process events.

Concurrently, management experts from the Asian Institute of Management assessed the fit between requirements of the new methods for assisting communals and the existing NIA management systems, advised on new management roles and procedures, assisted in planning the organizational change process, and coordinated workshops for NIA managers and engineers on the new methods. On the technical side, an agricultural engineering team from the International Rice Research Institute and the University of the Philippines at Los Banos was developing simplified methods for diagnosis and correction of common water management problems by farmers and NIA engineers, and designing water management systems suited to needs of small water user associations.

Once the new methods for assisting the communal projects seemed to be proving more successful in the second round of pilot projects or learning laboratories, a second set of 12 sites was chosen, one in each region of the country, to test their broader application and to begin building the basis for the expansion stage. As of mid-1980 the NIA was perhaps half way through the learning process on which it had embarked three and a half years earlier. It was likely to be a total of seven or eight years before the new capacity would be in place throughout the agency. Such a lengthy undertaking does not fit well with normal donor programming cycles and requires uncommon commitment, patience, and continuity of leadership. But it may be exactly the type of undertaking in which any major agency concerned with being effective in assisting the rural poor must become engaged.

## Conclusion

The programming methods which gained currency in the days of large-scale capital infrastructure project construction continue to dominate development action, even though they are manifestly inappropriate to the requirements of new style programming. However, a basis can be found in current experience for the formulation of alternative and more appropriate programming frameworks and methods based on a *learning process approach* which recognizes that in working with rural people, our knowledge of what is needed and our institutional capacity to do this are both limited. There should be no call for endless research. But neither should there be continuation of blind action based on inappropriate statements of the problem and ineffectual implementing organizations. The challenge is to integrate action-taking, knowledge-creation, and institution-building into a coherent learning process, as a number of relatively more successful development programs are already doing.

# REDESIGNING RURAL DEVELOPMENT A Strategic Perspective

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### Organizing the Rural Poor

We have noted the tendency of development to be done to the poor, and we have emphasized the poor's failure to benefit from much of the doing. Of the remedies which have been proposed, none have been so hotly debated as those

<sup>13</sup> Frequent shifting of field staff, and the destructive effects this had on program continuity, contributed importantly to the ineffectiveness of development programs in Dharampur, where the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, carried out a major study (Gupta 1981).

<sup>14</sup> Thus, notwithstanding the many substantive difficulties of the community-development movement, its "failure" may have been as much a result of its not being given the time to accomplish its objectives as of any fundamental inability to do so (Uphoff, Cohen, and Goldsmith 1979, p. 19).

<sup>15</sup> See Lele (1975, p. 177) for a similar approach.

dealing with organization of the poor themselves.<sup>16</sup> The basic notion is simple enough: link the poor into Brewster's "continually widening network of larger, specialized units of collection action," thus helping them better to solve local problems, to make demands on the broader system, and generally to become involved in the choice and execution of development programs. A great variety of organizational techniques have been adopted in pursuit of these goals. Interest-group organizations have linked the poor "horizontally" with other people to form units of collective action; cooperatives, self-help groups, political unions, farmers' associations, and the like are obvious examples. Numerous "vertically" linked organizations have tied poor people directly into the larger socioeconomic structure, with little emphasis on the formation of local groups: some agricultural extension efforts, health clinic and paramedic programs, and attempts to reach the poor with credit and market opportunities suggest the range of those vertically oriented activities.

In this section, we adopt a broad view encompassing both styles of organization and, indeed, including any linkage system in which poor people themselves constitute at least one end of the link.<sup>17</sup> Our goal is to analyze the performance of past efforts to organize the rural poor, and from that analysis to shape practical guidelines for the design of more effective organization policies.

#### *The Social Context*

We have argued that the perspectives of academics, analysts, and planners are often distorted by the presumption that they have a clean slate on which to write their policy recommendations. This is particularly evident in studies on organization of the rural poor: "Thus, many scholars . . . tend to treat the existing peasantries as some exotic social type characterised by a basic benevolence and by being relatively undifferentiated. But these assumptions do not obtain in actuality. Socio-economic differentiation and kinship loyalties emerge into prominence among factors affecting differential participation by individuals in . . . organization" (Migot-Adholla, as quoted in Hunter 1971, pp. 2-3). In addition, even the least developed community is likely to possess

<sup>16</sup> This and the following section draw heavily on recent work by David Korten. We are deeply indebted to him for his critical comments on our ideas and for letting us see a number of his unpublished papers. Among the published works we have drawn upon are Korten (1979a, 1979c, 1980a, and 1981). In retrospect, we wish that we had also drawn on Mancur Olson's (1971) *Logic of Collective Action*. It has much to say that is relevant to organization of the rural poor; our work is the poorer for not having utilized it.

<sup>17</sup> This is the criterion by which we separate the subject matter of this section from that of the section on "Organizing the Facilitators" (beginning on p. 199). The latter section deals with linkages relevant to the organization of staff activities within the broader context of development administration. Although (it is hoped) these staff activities are ultimately concerned with reaching the poor, the organizational problems of staffing and controlling a large marketing board or extension service are radically different from those of mobilizing a score of peasants into "reciprocally helpful behaviors." The distinction blurs, of course, at the interface where staff meets the poor, and we will discuss this critical area explicitly.

some external linkages through the activities of priests, traders, tax collectors, or agents of civil administrations (Uphoff and Esman 1974).

Efforts to organize the rural poor are in reality efforts to reorganize, to create new patterns of linkage different from the old ones which already bind them. Effective policies for reorganization begin with a recognition of what the existing linkages are, and how they affect the well-being of the rural poor. We shall not attempt to review the extensive sociological and anthropological literature on the structure of rural communities.<sup>18</sup> Restating some central themes of that literature will be appropriate, however, if for no other reason than that they are so commonly overlooked in efforts to formulate policy for rural organization.

The phrase "traditional community structure" covers such a range of specific realities that we hesitate to use it even in the strategic context of the present essay. Nonetheless, for some common organizational features of rural communities in the late-developing countries the term "traditional" remains a practical shorthand. The most important such feature for our present discussion is the dominance of immediate personal ties as a form of organizational linkage. Aid, protection, cooperation, and reciprocal obligations are looked for primarily within groups defined by extended family and kinship ties. Such groups are entered by birth, and given up, if at all, only through drastic wrenching of the social fabric. They thus stand in radical contrast to "modern" groups linked together through specific (but transient and limited) common interests.

In the early days of the cooperative and community-development movements, many argued that the traditional forms of cooperation could be smoothly taken over by cooperation within modern interest groups. Experience has been unkind to this hope. A wide consensus has emerged that interest-group organization "involves different kinds of action, for different purposes, by people in different relationships with each other, from the kinds of action, purpose and relationship enshrined in traditional co-operative activity."<sup>19</sup> The relevant questions for policy have become, When is a transition from traditional modes of organization desirable and feasible? and, How, and to what extent, is that transition to be affected?

Such questions cannot be answered, however, without reference to a second important feature of rural organization: its socioeconomic differentiation. "The rural poor" are not a homogeneous group. In this respect rural communities in the late-developing world are much like communities everywhere: a few individuals, by birth or luck or labor, are much better situated than anyone else. They have accumulated sufficient wealth, power, and skill that these re-

<sup>18</sup> Brewster (1967) and Hunter (1969) provide useful reviews of that literature. See also Friedland (1969), Epstein (1973), Migdal (1974), Scott (1976), and Victor Uchendu's discussion of "Social Determinants of Agricultural Change" in Anthony et al. (1979, chap. 6).

<sup>19</sup> See Hunter (1972, p. 193) summarizing papers by Hyden, Migot-Adholla, and others in the Uppsala seminar on "Cooperatives and Rural Development in East Africa"; Widstrand (1970); Crocombe (1971, pp. 161-98).

sources feed on one another, creating more of each. Such privileged positions nearly always come to entail disproportionate ownership of land and other scarce productive assets. Differentiation of a small group distinguished by accumulated assets virtually guarantees differentiation of a much larger group distinguished by the relative lack of such assets—in our case the small farmer and the landless laborers. Between these two extremes lie a variety of other socioeconomic strata with a range of assets, objectives, and organizational connections. The most significant for rural development are those with ties to vigorous outside structures, be they religious, economic, or political in character (Hyden 1970, pp. 61–80).

*The problem of elites.* Traditional group structures and strong patterns of social differentiation often combine to create a system of organization dominated by a few powerful local elites. The elites are linked to the poor through a variety of patronage/dependency relationships. As we noted earlier, because of the traditional group attitudes ingrained in most members of the community, people look for help to kinfolk, or at most to individuals whom they know personally. But the locally acknowledged stratification ensures that only individuals with wealth or contacts are seen as able to offer such help, especially in situations dealing with the "outside." The poor then tender support of various kinds in exchange for, and expectation of, such patronage. In general, the exchange reinforces the stratification on which it is based. Patronage further secures the privileged position of the elite, while the reciprocal dependency further undermines the position of the poor (Hunter 1969, pp. 38, 70).

Viewed through the glasses of egalitarian ideology, the power of local elites appears to be just one more unmitigated evil visited on the long-suffering rural poor. Such a perspective, however, is both narrow and distorted. The emergence of a local elite can mean many things, among them the beginning of the rural community's ability to impose itself on the outside world. As we shall see later in this chapter, local elites are also an important if imperfect source of home-grown, grass-roots leadership—a resource both scarce and invaluable for promoting the transition from traditional kin-group to modern interest-group forms of local organization.

Political and entrepreneurial elites have performed similar linkage functions throughout Western history, as well as in many of the developing countries. That they have also, and simultaneously, exploited the people they were leading constitutes one of those moral ambiguities of action which make serious debate about organizational issues so difficult and so rare.

About the exploitation itself there can be no question. The evidence from the developing countries is monotonous and depressing. Most attempts to organize the rural poor, if they survive at all, are "captured" by the local elites, who use them to enhance position, power, and wealth more effectively than before. This was the case in early efforts to build political organization at the local level (Leys 1971; Chambers 1974, p. 86). It is the fate of most functioning cooperatives (Inayatullah 1972; Hunter 1971, p. 2) and community-devel-

opment programs (Holdcroft 1978, p. 15). It almost certainly is the future of most of today's New Directions programs, cast as they are in the old community-development mold (Korten 1980a, pp. 482-85).

Experience with such exploitation has led prudent development workers to conclude that chances for effective local reorganization along interest-group lines will be greatly enhanced wherever social conditions provide a relatively unstratified population, a relatively equitable distribution of assets, or a means of holding elites at least partially accountable in their leadership. This is undoubtedly true as far as it goes; impressive quantitative support is provided by the Asian survey data of Uphoff and Esman (1974). There has been a tendency, however, for some analysts to take the argument a step further. They then suggest that "deparochialization" of the masses, radical land reform, and popular control or removal of the local elite are necessary *preconditions* for effective rural reorganization.

This is a very serious claim. A precondition, in common usage, is something you can't do anything about. Accepting the notion of preconditions therefore means abandoning as untouchable some of the most important goals of rural development, for instance, social modernization, increased equity, and greater popular control. More precisely, it means declaring that these goals are things that incremental policies of local reorganization can't do anything about; it means admitting that people wishing to obtain them should consult revolutionaries, not policymakers. As we argued in chapter 1, revolution may indeed be necessary to improve conditions of the rural poor when social conditions render incremental improvements infeasible. The historical fact that revolutions usually devastate the lives of many people (especially the poor), and that they seldom fulfill their promises, merely emphasizes the sadness and the seriousness of the choice.

In this light, it seems to us that the responsibility of the analyst—indeed his greatest challenge—is to discover and promote programs of incremental improvements which *are* feasible, within the constraints of the social context that the poor actually face. In much of the developing world, this context does include tradition, stratification, and patronage—all of which indeed make it likely that most efforts to reorganize the poor will fail. But for analysts to demand a clean slate, uncluttered by such historical constraints, as a precondition for analysis is a failure of another sort, one which we are tempted to call a failure of nerve.

Adopting a perspective that views considerations of social context as constraints on, rather than preconditions for, reorganization makes a great practical difference. Constraints, we argued in chapter 1, need not be taken as fixed but instead may be slowly relaxed through carefully implemented policies of reform and redesign. The relevant question for policymakers is how to do this gradual relaxing. In general, we concur with those development workers who see this as a two-part problem. First, it is necessary to design local organizations that link rural poor people with one another and with the larger social



system. Second, it is necessary to design higher-order support organizations that protect the local groups, help them perform their problem-solving functions, and integrate their needs with those of society at large. We discuss these two facets of the organization-design problem in the remainder of this chapter.

#### *Participation As Investment*

Why have efforts to reorganize the poor into nontraditional linkage patterns so often failed to improve rural well-being? The vested interests of local elites doubtless constitute one reason. Another is the hostility or apathy to meaningful reorganization so often displayed by central government administrations. We argued in chapter 1, however, that analysts commonly overrate the contribution of venality to policy failures and underrate the contribution of self-delusion. This is almost certainly true in the contemporary debate on rural reorganization.

There have been numerous sincere efforts to discover more effective ways of organizing the rural poor. These, however, have produced an array of apparently contradictory findings which may confuse policymakers as much as help them. Thus, some analysts conclude that a major obstacle to greater participation by the poor is the existence of strong, antiegalitarian local elites; others conclude that effective participation requires strong, grass-roots leadership, which when present at all usually emerges from the ranks of the elite. Some argue that the appropriate size of the "primary group" of local organization is the village or an even larger unit; others are adamant that only small, relatively homogeneous and "like-minded" groups work well in practice. Cogent analyses are advanced that the most successful local organizations serve multiple functions; yet single-industry institutions like the Indian National Dairy Development Board, the Kenya Tea Development Authority, and the Colombia Coffee Association are widely acknowledged to be among the brightest achievements of development. Many stress that local groups need a multiplicity of linkages with the larger socioeconomic system if they are to be effective; other respected students of local organization argue that the most important goals of local organization often are achieved as soon as a small, primary grouping has been forged. Moreover, they argue, these primary achievements are jeopardized by efforts to build larger, more efficient, more tightly integrated structures. The list of apparent contradictions could be extended indefinitely.

*Planning participation.* The sad fact is that analysts, planners, and politicians simply *do not know* what kind of local organization is actually in the poor's interests. The delusion that sufficient cogitation can overcome this ignorance—that the "newest direction" will finally be the right direction—may be a greater obstacle than ignorance itself to designing better reorganization programs.

The self-delusion of analysts and advisors manifests itself in many ways. Most obvious is the continued commitment to programs on the basis of their

professed form rather than their revealed function. Thus development planners continued to advocate cooperatives modeled on a strict English-Scandinavian Rochdale pattern long after actual performance had demonstrated that this was inappropriate for most developing countries. Why? Because everyone knew that the Rochdale plan was designed with the express intent of ensuring that maximum benefits would flow to coop members (Hunter 1971).

The policy-analysis perspective discussed in chapter 1 suggests that where intellectual cogitation has proved delusory as a problem-resolving technique, greater provision should be made for social interaction—for acting out those parts of the problem most resistant to thinking-through solutions. In particular, to avoid the pitfall of self-delusion the planner needs to supplement intellectual cogitation with interactive signals or feedback through which he can learn when a program is actually benefiting the poor. Many interactive mechanisms suggest themselves once reorganization is perceived as a problem of choosing and learning rather than one of discovering and knowing.<sup>20</sup> We shall focus on one such mechanism, somewhat akin to the concept of induced institutional innovation developed by Davis, North, Hayami, and Ruttan.<sup>21</sup> In essence, we shall propose that the poor themselves signal what is in their interests, by means of *their* decision to invest *their* scarce resource of active participation in a particular local reorganization. Let us consider the implications of this shift in perspective.

The term "participation" appears with great frequency, emotion, and looseness in the development debate. This imprecision may have rhetorical value in certain political contexts, but for purposes of analysis it serves merely to cover up fuzzy or nonexistent thinking. We shall follow Uphoff and Esman (1974, p. 81), using "participation" in its *ex ante* sense of "before-the-fact involvement in the choices and efforts producing benefits."<sup>22</sup> When we intend the economists' *ex post* sense of after-the-fact distribution of benefits, we shall say so explicitly.

*Ex ante* participation in effective organizations can greatly increase the ability of the rural poor to solve local problems and to make demands on the larger social system. In many circumstances, participation in "units of collective action" may be poor people's only organizational alternative to continued dependency on traditional or state patrons. In fact, a consensus approaching dogma has emerged throughout the development community that effective

<sup>20</sup> This is a theme that we will return to throughout the present chapter: how to design organizations not as answers to problems of calculation and control but as means of learning, through interaction, how collective social action can be more effectively promoted.

<sup>21</sup> A "theory of institutional innovation" is set forth by Davis and North (1971). This is expanded and applied to the development context in Hayami and Ruttan (1971), Ruttan (1978), and Hayami (1978). Most of this latter work has emphasized the technological component of the innovation opportunity; we stress the personal perspective of the rural "investor." The two views, we believe, are complementary.

<sup>22</sup> Additional useful perspectives on the treatment of "participation" are given in Chambers (1974, pp. 84-88); Lodge (1970); and Huntington and Nelson (1976).

participation by the poor is a *sine qua non* for development strategies seeking major improvements in rural well-being.

*The costs of participation.* Both political rhetoric and academic arguments on development strategy have tended to treat participation in local organization as a free good, desirable in unlimited quantities. This is particularly evident in the credo of New Directions planning, one of the more recent schools to hold forth on the development stage. The World Bank's sector paper on rural development policy typifies the trend, unreservedly endorsing more "participation by the rural poor in the planning and implementation processes through local government, project advisory committees, cooperatives and other forms of group organization" (World Bank 1975). Nor is the enthusiasm confined to official agencies with political clientele. A thoughtful academic review concludes that "participation should *not* be viewed as a separate program or sector for rural development, but rather as an approach to be integrated as *feasible* in all development activities" (Uphoff, Cohen, and Goldsmith 1979, p. 28; emphasis added).

There is much to support in such sentiments. Nonetheless, the policy-analysis perspective warns us that feasible participation is not necessarily useful or desirable participation. Chambers decries the pernicious influence of "those who, for ideological reasons, or because they are simple-minded, or more commonly from a combination of these causes, reify 'the people' and 'participation' and push them beyond the reach of empirical analysis" (1974, p. 109).

Whatever its cause, the "more is better" view of participation flies in the face of both experience and common sense. Anyone who has been active in a local government council, a committee of concerned citizens, or a community cooperative knows a truth virtually ignored in the current development debate: effective local organization is expensive to those who choose to participate in it.

Concerting reciprocally helpful behaviors requires that individuals join together in social problem-solving efforts. Through some combination of intellectual cogitation and social interaction, these individuals must perform all those tasks of calculation and control we discussed earlier. Linkages of understanding, mutual expectation, and trust must be built and nurtured. Goals must be agreed upon, conflicts settled, and tasks allocated, all within a shifting context of incomplete information, personal rivalries, and individual motivations. Whatever else is involved, organization therefore requires substantial and continuing investments of time, energy, and personal freedom of action on the part of participants.<sup>23</sup> This is surely one reason why, even in modernized

<sup>23</sup> There is nothing novel about our emphasis on time and energy as scarce resources (see especially March and Olsen [1976, p. 14 and *passim*] and also Becker [1965]). There has, however, been remarkably little attention given to this constraint in the burgeoning literature on community participation.

Western societies with multiple opportunities for local organization, studies show that most people choose not to participate at all.<sup>24</sup> It should not be surprising to find even lower rates of participation within the traditional societies of the developing world.

Time, energy, and freedom from unproductive obligations are among the very few resources that the rural poor possess. The notion that investment of these scarce resources in local organization is always or often a rational choice reflects the same peculiar view of reality which can't understand why rural women don't spend more time at home-economics lectures. The behavior of the poor themselves suggests that they suffer from no such delusion. On the contrary, the actual choices that poor people make concerning which local organizations to participate in, and how much participation to offer them, have much the look of rational investment decisions. In short, poor people invest their participation when they believe it will secure them valuable benefits not otherwise available at comparable cost, time, and risk.

We shall see that many of the historical failures and successes of local organization efforts begin to make sense, and many of the apparent contradictions mentioned earlier can be resolved, when viewed from this investment perspective. Moreover, the notion that the poor are investing participation in organization suggests the relevance of questions familiar from capital-investment situations: What are the opportunity costs of committing this scarce resource to a particular use? What risks do they run and what returns do they expect from the contemplated commitment? What other means do they have for achieving comparable returns? Above all, the investment perspective emphasizes that it is poor people themselves who make the investment choice, who decide whether a proposed program of local organization offers sufficient incentives to attract their personal resources of time, energy, and freedom of action away from other urgent and competing tasks.

*The poor as investors.* Our perspective of participation as investment does not "reify the people," nor is its admitted simplicity altogether simple-minded. We do not assume that the poor make smart investments. We do not argue that participation is always in everyone's—or even anyone's—best interests. We argue only that it is poor people's choices of which organizations they will participate in, not the analysts' discoveries of "correct" organizational designs, which result in action on the social front. Moreover, though the choices made by the poor may not turn out well, they can be and are made on the basis of available perceptions. The analysts' discoveries, in contrast, require data and understanding that do not exist now and are unlikely to become

<sup>24</sup> The present infatuation with participation is such that many will doubt this statement. Consider, however, that comparative studies show the United States to be among the most participatory of modernized societies (Almond and Verba 1965, chaps. 5, 10). Even in America, however, less than half the people bother to vote in local elections, less than a third are active in a single organization dealing with community problems, less than one in five has even contacted a local government official about an issue, less than one in seven has ever formed a group to resolve a local problem (Verba and Nie 1972, p. 31).

available in the foreseeable future. Moreover, what policymakers want—what they believe to be in the poor's interests, what they perceive as "meaningful" organization—is largely irrelevant. Participation is "owned" by the poor. Experience shows that the investment of effective participation cannot be commanded by policymakers but must instead be induced. The requirement of effective policymaking for local organizations is therefore not omniscience but entrepreneurship: the ability to recognize and design programs capable of mobilizing participation; the ability to abandon as unviable and ill-advised programs unable to attract that investment.

"Entrepreneurial" policymaking will be imperfect, like all its alternatives. But in a world of inevitable trial and error, it provides a relatively efficient way of learning when you have guessed wrong. As in the capital-investment analog, the self-proclaimed (or self-deluded) "goodness" of the entrepreneur's proposal is immaterial. What counts is how attractive the proposal appears to the investors, and how able and willing they are to mobilize sufficient resources for its effective support.

We next propose some entrepreneurial guidelines for the design of local organizations which should be better able to attract investment of participation from the rural poor.

#### *Attractiveness of Benefits*

One of the most obvious lessons of past experience is that the rural poor will invest active participation only in an organization that is responsive to their most intensely felt needs (Hunter 1971). More specifically, they will invest only in organizations that offer highly desirable and tangible benefits not otherwise obtainable at similar cost, time, and risk. In part this is due to the opportunity costs of participation discussed earlier. In part it is because only such needs and benefits provide sufficient force to overcome the bonds and habits of traditional organization (Lodge 1970, pp. 146-47).

Available evidence suggests that the "needs" that most readily induce the active participation of the rural poor are related to production, in particular capital formation and income enhancement. For example, the justifiably famous Anand Milk Producers' Union (later the Indian National Dairy Development Board) grew from acute dissatisfaction of local producers with low and fluctuating prices offered by existing commercial markets (Korten 1980a).

Nonetheless, sufficiently urgent consumption-related needs can also serve the mobilization function. An excellent example is Thailand's Community Based Family Planning Cooperative, another of the successful organizations cited by Korten (1980a). In this case, a centrally organized operation identified a strongly felt need—the desire of rural women for a reliable means of birth control—and set out to help provide access to the required technology. Little "selling" of the benefits was necessary, though innovative means of enhancing the acceptability of those benefits obviously enhanced the program's success. That success has been substantial: by 1979 women from more than sixteen

thousand villages were participating through the regular purchase and use of birth control pills.

The requirement for intensely felt local needs to mobilize active participation is all the more evident when we consider the many experiments in organization where local perceptions of need (or changes in those perceptions) have been ignored. The latter situation occurred in many previously colonial countries during their time of independence. Active local groups had been organized around intensely felt needs to be rid of colonial administration. Once independence was obtained, participation in these groups waned or fractured into smaller conflicting factions built around new, less unifying priorities. Another example is the cooperatives that have failed to attract the active participation of landless laborers or subsistence farmers because the services they offered were confined to production loans and marketing aid (Korten 1980a, p. 481). Many "cooperatives" have not even pretended a concern with responding to local needs, seeking instead to exercise control over distribution and sale of goods and to promote government directives. The pitfalls of such organizational designs appear obvious but are nonetheless still widely ignored. Korten summarizes a number of critical studies when he decries New Directions programs for their continued "reliance for the planning and implementation of 'participative' development on centralized bureaucratic organizations which have little capacity to respond to diverse community-defined needs" (1980a, p. 483).

Ironically, a consequence of the emphasis in U.S. aid programs on New Directions and "basic human needs" has been a tendency to restrict allocations for irrigation, roads, bridges, and other infrastructure projects that often rank high among the felt needs of people in rural areas. Moreover, a very significant role of local organizations or other participatory mechanisms is to enable local groups to influence decisions about the design and location of roads, irrigation works, and other infrastructure projects in the light of local knowledge and priorities.<sup>25</sup>

*Planning benefits.* Many analysts have come to identify the problem of designing participative organizations in terms of "bottom-up" versus "top-down" initiatives. Needless to say, "bottom-up" is good, reflecting the needs of the people, while "top-down" is bad, reflecting the needs of the bureaucrats. There is just enough truth in this view to make it rhetorically attractive. Once again, however, the willingness to let ideology masquerade as analysis has hindered rather than helped the policy debate.

Organizing from below, as we shall see later on, often results in both ineffi-

<sup>25</sup> Two recent papers by Tendler are pertinent to these issues. One of the papers notes that "New-Directions critics say that infrastructure projects do not have a direct impact on the rural poor, in comparison to projects in the areas of rural health, nutrition and agriculture" (Tendler 1979b, p. v). The other paper emphasizes that an additional advantage of decentralized management of rural roads projects is that it facilitates the adoption of labor-using construction methods (Tendler 1979a, pp. 42-59).

## 175 Organization Programs

clencies and grave inequities; the organizers, after all, are more likely to be the local elite than the poor. Conversely, initiatives from above have produced some of the most successful and participative local organizations in development history.

To return to a theme we broached at the beginning of this chapter, effective design of organizations is more complex than the dichotomous isms of popular debate allow. The critical issue is not from where the initiative comes but whether it in fact promotes the "fit" of locally felt needs, available technology, and organizational means. Sometimes, as in our dairy example, that initiative will come from "below" as a spontaneous outpouring of realized need and recognized potential. Other times, as Chambers (1974) has emphasized, a community-development or other "top-down" initiative will be required to help local groups identify and articulate their needs.

Our earlier discussion of means-ends relationships in action programs puts this particular experience of development into a larger perspective. The "intensely felt needs" we refer to in this chapter, like the general "preferences" we referred to in chapter 1, are not tangible and immutable entities waiting to serve as passive guides to action. Rather, they are the product of a continuing interaction between what people believe they want and what they believe they can get. Belief and perception are key elements here. The high-yield varieties of wheat and rice made available in the Green Revolution powerfully altered farmers' perceptions of what they might get from research and from their fields. In this context, it has become fashionable among certain analysts to bemoan the conservatism of the rural poor and the aversity to risk of the peasant farmer. In other words, poor people have been known to act as though when things get worse you starve or lose your land or get shaken down by the big men, while when things get better it is only a matter of time until they get worse again.<sup>26</sup> It is in this context that the notion of "an intensely felt need" must be perceived. If the poor do not look on an organization proposal or a new technological gadget with great enthusiasm, their "conservatism" may well have some justification. At a minimum, it is a reality with which a successful effort to induce the poor's participation must cope. The challenge of designing local organization—from top or bottom—is to understand how risks and uncertainties color perceptions of needs and how opportunities can be made more tangible. Thus we shall emphasize shortly the important role that convincing and realistic demonstration projects have to play in mobilizing participation in all manner of local organizations. More generally, the changing and relative nature of "intensely felt needs" suggests that perceptions of feasibility as well as desirability are relevant to the individual investing in participation, and therefore to the design of organizations seeking to call forth that participa-

<sup>26</sup> This view of life is not unique to poor people in today's developing countries. Leys reminds us of Stendhal's view that an average Frenchman's hierarchy of needs in the days before the Revolution was "(a) not to be killed; and (b) for a good warm coat" (Leys 1971, p. 110).

tion from the rural poor. One of the most important of these feasibility considerations turns out to involve the creation of harmony concerning the objectives the proposed organization will pursue.

#### *Harmony of Objectives*

Organizations of the rural poor promote collective social action by, among other things, surfacing and settling conflicts among potential participants. When this capability is lacking or underdeveloped, as is too often the case, "local organizations can become overpoliticized, immobilized by factionalism, with rural development objectives displaced by struggles for local power and control" (Uphoff and Esmen 1974, p. 82). Our investment perspective emphasizes the costs that the surfacing and settling of conflicts imposes on an organization's prospective participants: if too much conflict requires too much time, energy, or commitment to resolve, then active participation is unlikely to be mobilized. In this section, we argue that the rural poor are more inclined to make sustained investments of participation in organizations that embody a relative harmony of objectives, that is, organizations in which most participants agree on what the organization should be doing. We focus on the specific choices of organization design which promote this harmony through effective and efficient resolution of potential conflicts.

A first step towards understanding the nature of conflict and harmony in rural organizations is to recognize that different people have different needs and priorities. We noted earlier how often this truism is rejected by a rhetoric of development planning which portrays the rural poor as a homogeneous group with undifferentiated objectives.<sup>27</sup> Even within the broad socioeconomic groups we described in our discussion of social conduct, however, the reality is that individual people will share some interests but not others. Two landless laborers, to take a common developing-world example, may agree on goals of land reform but support different political factions. Two small farmers may agree on matters of access to credit but disagree over access to water because one has it and the other needs it. Two women may stand united on the need for markets in which to sell their household produce but, especially if they belong to different age groups, may have radically different views on the need for family-planning support. The list obviously could be continued. In general, any effort to link people into units of collective action will carry with it the potential for conflict as individual members seek to bend the organization to their own interests and to resist the corresponding activities of other members.

*Choice of membership and function.* Two design choices are particu-

<sup>27</sup> One of the most important and obvious differences, of course, is that between elites and nonelites. We will defer consideration of the role played by elites in the creation and resolution of conflict until later (p. 193). This is not because we underestimate the significance of that role; rather, we wish to emphasize that the problems and costs of conflict resolution must be borne by an organization even when there are no elites complicating the local picture. The ubiquitous need to build harmony of objectives among participants who differ in their interests, if not their socioeconomic status, is often overlooked when elites are viewed as the essence of the conflict problem.



larly important determinants of the kind and degree of conflict which actually arises over a particular organization's activities. The first is the choice of membership: Who will be included in, and who excluded from, the organization? The second is the choice of function: What benefits will be pursued by the organization, and what benefits will be left to other organizations or to individual pursuit? These choices are interrelated. Effective conflict resolution does not require that all members of a particular organization share a common view of what should be done in the world at large. Rather, members need only to reach reasonably harmonious agreement on who should do what within the limited range of activities which the organization that links them chooses to pursue. If the who and the what of organization design are carefully matched, the amount of conflict with which participants must contend can be kept within tolerable bounds. This relationship is sketched as a hypothetical example in figure 5.2, which can be used to follow the historical evidence that follows.

|                             |   | Function (What is done) |    |     |    |   |     |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------|----|-----|----|---|-----|
|                             |   | i                       | ii | iii | iv | v | ... |
| Membership<br>(Who belongs) | A | +                       | +  | +   | +  | - | ... |
|                             | B | +                       | +  | +   | -  | - | ... |
|                             | C | +                       | -  | +   | +  | + | ... |
|                             | D | +                       | -  | -   | -  | - | ... |
|                             | : | :                       | :  | :   | :  | : | ... |
|                             | : | :                       | :  | :   | :  | : | ... |

Figure 5.2. Harmony of Objectives.

*Note:* This portrays the range of people (or of relatively homogeneous groups) present in a given community, and in range of activities, functions, or benefits about which at least one of them feels sufficiently strongly to invest participation in an organization committed to its attainment. In a particular instance the "people," who we have labeled "A, B, C, D, . . ." might include (groups of) small farmers, landless laborers, local merchants, unmarried women, and so on. The "functions," which we have labeled "i, ii, iii, iv, v, . . ." might include building a tubewell, providing family planning services, providing access to markets, and so forth. In this simple illustration, the entries in the matrix indicate merely whether a particular person (or group) does (+), or does not (-), desire the benefits sought through a potential function sufficiently intensely to consider investing participation in an organization that adopted that function. A particular organization can be described (or designed) in terms of which rows and which columns—which members and which functions—it includes. This in turn defines the organization in terms of which cells of the matrix it encompasses. Where functions and members are chosen so that all cells encompassed by the organization contain "+" marks, everyone in the organization wants it to do exactly the same things and total harmony over the organization's objectives will prevail. On the other hand, where functions and members are chosen so that some cells encompassed by the organization contain "-" marks, at least some members may be asked to support the pursuit of benefits they do not particularly desire. Other things being equal, we would expect the latter kind of organization to embody more conflict and less harmony over its objectives, to require more onerous investments in calculation and control of its collective actions, and to be a less effective mobilizer of sustained participation by the rural poor.

## 178 Organization Programs

Conflict problems can arise, as we have said, when more different kinds of people and more different kinds of functions are encompassed within the same organization. Not surprisingly, organizations that are successful in attracting the participation of the rural poor have often limited conflicts over objectives by limiting membership to relatively homogeneous groups sharing both common identity and common needs.<sup>28</sup> The limited internal conflict of such homogeneous groups was a key characteristic of the few successful organizations identified by a United Nations survey of cooperative efforts in Asia (UNRISD 1975; see also Hunter 1978b, chap. 4). The Cornell Committee on Rural Development reached a similar conclusion from its broader survey of a variety of Asian organizations (Uphoff and Esman 1974, p. 68); evidence from East Africa points in the same direction (Hunter 1971, p. 10).

A particularly illuminating example is that of the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC).<sup>29</sup> Initial attempts to include both the landed and the landless poor within one organization were counterproductive; efforts to create a single community center foundered on underlying factionalisms unperceived by program designers. Having learned from these mistakes, BRAC changed its approach and is now enjoying heightened success with organization policies which restrict membership to specific target groups defined in terms of common needs.<sup>30</sup>

Conflict can also be limited by restriction of the organization's functions to pursuit of a single, narrowly defined benefit. This in fact has been the design strategy in some of the most spectacularly successful local organizations in the history of development: the single-industry, vertically integrated cooperatives. The Malaysian Rubber Association, the Kenya Tea Development Authority, the Colombia Coffee Association, and the Indian National Dairy Development Board are illustrative of the range of locations and activities to which the single-function design has been successfully applied. Significantly, Korten (1980a) points out in his analysis of the Indian dairy cooperatives that the membership of such organizations often includes individuals from different social (caste) and economic backgrounds who represent a variety of different, even conflicting interests. Their cooperative organization operates effectively precisely because members have agreed that it shall function only in pursuit of that one benefit they all desire (good, steady prices for their milk) and shall not attempt the difficult calculations and controls which would be required to resolve conflicts on other matters.<sup>31</sup> The large single-industry organizations are only the most obvious example of this phenomenon; as Hunter (1971) reminds us, there are undoubtedly thousands of less well-known or unreported instances of a few community members banding together through informal

<sup>28</sup> In table 5.2, this means confining membership to a single row, such as A.

<sup>29</sup> This account of BRAC is from Korten (1980a).

<sup>30</sup> For example, those who sell their labor to third parties.

<sup>31</sup> In table 5.2, an example of such an organization would be one including groups A, B, and C in its membership, and function iii as its only activity.

bargaining to install a tubewell or to build a cattle dip, despite their inability to agree on a wider range of community issues.

*Two caveats.* Adopting a single function or a homogeneous membership admittedly represents an extreme (and extremely successful) solution to the problem of harmonious organization design. Indeed, Uphoff and Esman conclude from their survey of Asian experience that the adoption of multiple functions often can help organizations "to insure their viability and capacity to integrate diverse services" (1974, p. xix).<sup>32</sup> Moreover, Uphoff and Esman suggest that if circumstances temporarily stop the organization from performing one of these functions, it might persist by continuing to attract participation through its continuing performance of its other functions. These arguments do not necessarily conflict with our view of the importance of harmony in organizational objectives. Again, it is not limitation of membership or function *per se* which is needed to reduce conflict. What is needed is a "fit" between the two that produces no more conflict than the organization is currently able to resolve in an efficient manner.

Two caveats should be borne in mind when considering the evidence cited to demonstrate the feasibility of multiple-function organizations. First, on closer inspection many such organizations turn out to be composed of relatively small "suborganizations" of restricted membership and function. It is within these latter classically harmonious designs that most of the actual collective activity takes place. To cite just one example, in the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka, "the preferred village level organization includes individual groups for youth, mothers, farmers, children, pre-school, elders, and for persons with special education and skills" (Korten 1980a, p. 486). Only at higher levels—with access to professional administrative support for the required calculation and control—are these groups integrated into a multiple-function, relatively open-membership organization.

The second caveat is an essentially methodological one. Scholars who, like Uphoff and Esman, conduct large-scale, "cross-sectional" surveys necessarily sacrifice a temporal perspective on the dynamics of specific organizations for a comparative perspective on the many different kinds of organization that exist at the time of the survey. The two perspectives can be complementary. But it is important to realize that most of the organizations observed in a cross-sectional analysis will be relatively mature and established ones rather than those that have lost (or are still fighting) their battles to attract and hold participants. We will argue later on that many mature organizations have sensibly and naturally diversified their functional base after getting started and gaining experience from a narrow—and often single-function—beginning. In contrast, scholars who follow the birth, evolution, and survival or demise of par-

<sup>32</sup> In terms of table 5.2, they are suggesting that the individuals or groups represented by A and C could build an organization around functions iii and iv without, in principle, producing any conflict at all.

ticular local organizations are often able to identify the design features responsible for early failures, which the cross-sectional-survey people hardly ever see.

There seems little doubt that one of the most common causes of such early demise is too much unresolved conflict caused by too many different groups trying to accomplish too many different things under a single organizational roof. On the other hand, detailed studies which are able to observe particular local organizations in their infancy are not likely to know what kind of functional diversification is eventually undertaken by the few that grow to maturity. Those who study the evolutionary dynamics of particular organizations are therefore least likely to observe the "facts" that the cross-sectional scholars are most likely to observe, and vice versa. No wonder they seem to disagree.

Common to both sorts of scholarship, however, is the basic finding that pursuit of multiple functions carries potential benefits *and* potential liabilities for an organization. Although historical experience with local organizations does not let us resolve the implied trade-off unambiguously, it strongly suggests that the success of multiple-function organizations depends on their relative sophistication or experience in resolving conflict *and* on their ability to restrict membership sufficiently that the total conflict encompassed by the organization does not overly tax whatever conflict-resolving capability it has been able to build.

*The design of harmonious organizations.* The view we have just advanced suggests that attempts to start local organizations that simultaneously encompass a broad base of membership and a wide variety of functions are likely to fail. This expectation is confirmed by, and sheds light on, the previously mentioned failures of the community-development movement. Many factors were surely at work in this failure, but community development was precisely an attempt to build an organization that included all members of the community, and functioned in pursuit of all of their needs. It is hardly surprising that the organizations were unable to perform the monumental tasks of calculation and control which their choice of membership and function forced on them, or that so many of them disintegrated in the face of conflicts they were unable to resolve. That so much was expected of community-development organizations and that so little time was allowed for them to build up the necessary organizational skills and attitudes no doubt also contributed to the movement's demise.<sup>33</sup>

The need for time to learn conflict-resolving (and other) skills and attitudes is a theme which we will consider at the end of this chapter. The difficulty—the virtual impossibility—of moving the rural poor away from their traditional kin-group organizations by means of open membership, multiple-function designs is clearest, however, when we consider the history of local political organ-

<sup>33</sup> In fact, many of the activities have continued with new labels. In the Philippines a Department of Local Government and Community Development continues to operate. In addition, many of the rural trainers and community organizers who are performing effectively in other programs in the Philippines acquired their skills as community-development field workers.

izations in the developing world. Here, the ideological commitment to open membership and comprehensive functions runs directly counter to the practical need for effective and efficient conflict resolution. Local political organizations did indeed enjoy a certain amount of success in the previously colonial developing countries during their transitions to independence. In these cases, however, it was precisely because a single, universally desired function (replacing foreign rule) temporarily dominated all others that the organizations could temporarily function.<sup>34</sup> Typically, once this function was no longer necessary, its unifying influence dissipated, and the latent conflicts of an open-membership, multiple-function organization began to surface. Factions broke away, ineffectiveness was rampant, and the local political organization declined in importance as a technique of collective social action throughout much of the previously colonial developing world (Chambers 1974, pp. 86-88).<sup>35</sup>

#### *Simplicity of Technique*

However harmonious the objectives of an organization, there remains the problem of designing means by which those objectives can be realized. Marx saw this as a problem of taking "from each according to his abilities" and giving "to each according to his needs." Others, from the author of Psalm 62 to Adam Smith to Mao Tse-tung, saw it in much the same way but substituted *work* for *needs*.

Regardless of ideology, resolving questions of who gives and who gets what in a social group requires effective organizational techniques for calculation and control. The specific techniques employed may involve exchange, hierarchy, polyarchy, or bargaining, combined to provide all manner of mixes of social interaction and intellectual cogitation. Once again, however, our perspective of participation as investment suggests that calculation and control—whatever their form—will be more or less expensive activities for an organization's members. We therefore expect—and find—that people are more inclined to invest their participation in organizations with relatively simple demands for calculation and control.

Two related features of organization militate against simplicity of calculation and control. The first and more obvious is large size: the more people

<sup>34</sup> For example, function i in table 5.2.

<sup>35</sup> We shall have more to say on the reasons for this decline in subsequent sections. The Tanzanian *ujamaa* movement is frequently cited as an exception or even a counter-example to the kind of argument we have advanced here. We hope this is true, though if so, it will be the exception which proves the rule. The planners of *ujamaa* explicitly staked its hopes for success on (1) an ability to redistribute access to basic resources and benefits in such a way that all members of the village "family" do have identical interests and minimal occasion for conflict over the *ujamaa*'s objectives, and (2) a gradual process through which individual villagers learn the admittedly difficult tasks of calculating and controlling communal activities in a manner satisfactory to all participants (Tanzania 1969). No one will disagree that achieving these goals, if possible at all, has been an exceedingly difficult, time-consuming, risky, and expensive endeavor. Whether *ujamaa*'s highly politicized and ambitious attempt at reorganization has actually succeeded in bringing increased benefits to a large fraction of the rural poor is a question we leave to others.

engaged in a social enterprise, the more complex is the problem of assigning, coordinating, monitoring, and legitimating their individual responsibilities and rewards. The second is what might be called "communality": when participants contribute their labor and other resources to a common productive activity, calculation and control are more complex than when each individual's contribution is immediately and directly reflected in his own individual reward. Different techniques of organization impose different costs on, and yield different benefits to, participants as size and communality increase. The challenge for designers of reorganization programs is to design combinations of techniques which fit effectively with the size, communality, and other requirements of a particular local situation.

*Small and selfish organizations.* Calculation and control obviously pose their simplest demands within the simplest form of organization: the individual acting alone and in his own self-interest. Whole philosophies have been based on this theme, and some improvements in rural well-being can indeed be accomplished with such minimal formal organization. This, of course, is the great practical advantage of the family farm. We noted in chapter 3 that because of the distinctive characteristics of the agricultural production process, hard work, initiative, and the "on-the-spot supervisory decisions" so pervasive in farming are generally performed better when the farm unit's work force has a direct interest in the outcome. It has also been emphasized that in agriculture "the small proprietary or family firm" tends to promote more efficient and more rapid capital formation and technological change (Raup 1967, pp. 273-77, 293-97).

Frequently, however, the gadgets and activities that can improve the well-being of the rural poor exhibit some degree of increasing returns to scale; agricultural research, crop processing, irrigation systems, and political power are only a few of the benefits not accessible to the individual acting alone.<sup>36</sup> The challenge of organization design is to balance the benefits that can be obtained through larger, more complicated organizations against the costs of calculation and control which such complexity tends to impose.

Organizations comprising only a few members have in fact been reasonably successful when they have designed their function to require little communal activity. Joint use of a small tubewell or a low-lift pump is a good example. Even in such cases, however, problems arise, especially with respect to ensuring satisfactory maintenance.

When participants' contributions and benefits take on a significant communal character, even small groups face serious problems in seeking to form and sustain an effective organization. There are instances in which a few people have organized for the communal purchase and use of a tractor, a boat, or

<sup>36</sup> We do not imply that potential benefits continue to increase with increasing scale of social enterprise; in most cases, there is in fact a size above which further growth yields little but trouble. This does not change the fact that technical and other factors militate in favor of groups large enough to incur significant costs of calculation and control.

a thresher and thereby radically improved their own well-being. Our impression, however, is that for every such success there have been many failures—many instances in which the available techniques for calculating and controlling proved inadequate to the task at hand. This does not suggest that small communal organizations should be discouraged in the future, but only that such organizations are in general marginally viable and more likely than not to fail. Less organizationally expensive means of improving rural well-being should also be considered. The emergence of commercial tractor contractors in many developing countries is a notable example of a simple commercial solution to sharing the use of a “lumpy” piece of equipment.

*Large and selfish organizations.* Tractor contractors typically remain small, but frequently the commercial operations carried out by private firms are characterized by significant economies of scale. We note shortly that large-scale public enterprises created to perform essentially commercial functions such as marketing of agricultural products or the distribution of credit or inputs commonly resort to a “multi-tier” form of organization. In many countries, however, this type of commercial operation is often performed by large private firms engaged in the marketing and processing of agricultural products or the manufacture and distribution of farm inputs. In these instances, calculation and control are accomplished by exchange techniques, specifically market and price mechanisms. The internal control and management of these private firms is hierarchical, thus simplifying problems of coordination. Private profit-maximizing firms of this nature have significant advantages in being relatively flexible and capable of making decisions promptly in response to changing conditions affecting costs of inputs or product prices.

In discussing the role of markets and prices in chapter 6, we note that the results obtained by relying on a market system as a means of calculation and control are often criticized, especially in relation to the equity goal of social policy. A major justification offered for promoting some of the “multi-tier” cooperative and public organizations discussed in later sections is that they protect small farmers from exploitation by large private organizations. There are, however, some important practical arguments for utilizing the organizational capacity and technical and entrepreneurial skills that are often available in private firms. Even in late-developing countries, competition among private firms frequently limits their monopoly power. Lele reports, for example, that “most price exploitation that has been observed in Ethiopian markets is covert, through false weights and measures, rather than overt”; and this implies that farmers “have the potential to enjoy real bargaining power” (1975, p. 114).<sup>37</sup> Therefore, the most appropriate government action may be to facilitate more effective performance of a market system and to reduce the scope for

<sup>37</sup> Lele (1974, p. 430) cites 15 marketing studies carried out in Africa, Asia, and Latin America “which indicate that, contrary to general belief, the private marketing systems in L.D.C.s are, by and large, highly competitive and operate efficiently given the conditions in which they function.”

exploitation by measures such as the introduction of standard weights and measures, dissemination of adequate and reliable price information at all levels of the marketing system, and improving means of communication and transportation. There are two cogent arguments for governments to emphasize facilitative and regulatory actions rather than to attempt to replace private firms in carrying out essentially commercial operations. First, government organizations such as a grain marketing board tend to be relatively inefficient, in part because of the need for bureaucratic regulations to limit graft and corruption. Such regulations increase administrative costs and reduce flexibility. The second and more general argument is that in a situation in which administrative manpower is in short supply, government programs should be concentrated on those types of activities "which are not likely to be undertaken without public intervention" (Lele 1975, p. 191).

Most controversial of all is the role of large transnational (multinational) corporations (TNCs). Such corporations are, of course, very large. They possess significant economies of scale because of the resources that they can devote to R&D, their market connections and experience in advertising and other techniques of market promotion, and their easy access to international capital markets. In the case of technologies that are inherently large-scale and complex, such as the manufacture of nitrogen fertilizers, TNCs can play a very useful role in the design and construction of efficient, low-cost plants.<sup>38</sup> Particularly in the case of a perishable commodity such as bananas, TNCs have been highly successful in organizing the assembly, packaging, transportation, marketing, and quality-control functions involved in exporting to overseas markets. (We defer consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of agricultural exports for developing countries until chapter 6.)

Several significant arguments against the role of TNCs need to be emphasized. Such firms often transfer technologies that are inappropriate to the factor proportions prevailing in less developed countries. However, this is often in response to economic policies and price distortions which also encourage domestic firms to choose inappropriately capital-intensive technologies. Perhaps equally important is the tendency on the part of a number of TNCs to promote inappropriate products.<sup>39</sup> Finally, the sheer size and "multinationality" of many TNCs poses problems because of their economic and political power.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup> It is noteworthy that in recent years the People's Republic of China has contracted with several TNCs to build very large nitrogen-fertilizer factories to take advantage of the dramatic cost-reducing developments that have occurred since 1963, when the centrifugal compressor was introduced. There are, of course, instances in which companies have persuaded governments to contract for the construction of relatively small, inefficient factories. For example, a 50-percent subsidy on fertilizer in Tanzania simply offsets the high cost of producing fertilizer in the uneconomic plant built to supply the country's limited market for nitrogen fertilizer (ILO 1978, p. 70).

<sup>39</sup> A favorite example is the virtually worldwide spread of Coca Cola. The most unfortunate example, however, is the vigorous promotion of infant formulas for bottle-feeding, which has contributed to the decline of breast-feeding in many areas, with the adverse consequences that we noted in chapter 4.

<sup>40</sup> For more extended discussion of transnational corporations, see Vernon (1977) and Lall and Streeten (1977).



*Large and communal organizations.* What happens to local organizations which are not only large but also communal? We would expect such organizations to impose even higher costs of calculation and control on potential participants and to run even higher risks of failure. From the few hard data available, this indeed seems to be the case. Uphoff and Esman, for example, point out that successful communal organizations in Asia comprise few enough people that an informal "bargaining" through shared knowledge of performance and special circumstances suffices as a technique for calculation and control. Their survey data suggest that within groups of thirty to fifty families there is often an effective trade-off between the increasing returns to scale of organized communal action and the rising costs of organization which larger groups entail (Uphoff and Esman 1974, p. 68).

A similar result emerges from China's experiments with different scales of farm organization. Early efforts to build communal groups at the commune and brigade level experienced crippling problems of performance and incentive. This experience led to the present, apparently more satisfactory design, in which production teams of thirty to forty families carry most of the burden of calculating and controlling who gets and gives what.<sup>41</sup> Above this scale, organizational functions are carried out by more formal arrangements which do not impose direct costs on local participants.

Additional relevant evidence comes from a survey of successful irrigation communes in the Philippines conducted by de los Reyes and her colleagues (1979, as cited in Bagadion and Korten 1980). Communal organizations of water users have existed for centuries in the Philippines, uniting people in complex social functions which serve from less than ten to as many as four thousand hectares. Most organizations, however, cover an area of less than one hundred hectares and involve fewer than fifty families. The studies show that irrigation organizations in this small size range often prosper without much in the way of formal administrative structure; again, informal personal knowledge of individual performance and circumstance appears sufficient to perform the relatively simple tasks of calculation and control required. This was not the case for groups with an area of more than one hundred hectares or involving more than fifty families. These groups generally had to subdivide into smaller local groups and to develop formal hierarchical structures in order to perform their more complex tasks of calculation and control without imposing an unacceptable burden of organization on participants.<sup>42</sup>

The examples just cited suggest that one practical means of making and

<sup>41</sup> For a masterful account of the theory and practice of rural organization by China's Communist party, see Schurmann (1968, chap. 7 and esp. pp. 471-92). For more recent summary accounts, see Timmer (1976), Chinn (1978), and Schran (1980).

<sup>42</sup> Of successful irrigation organizations covering more than one hundred hectares, 90 percent have formal organization structures and 60 percent have also subdivided into smaller groups; of organizations covering fewer than fifty hectares, less than 25 percent have formal structures and less than 5 percent have subdivided (Bagadion and Korten 1980, table 2, citing de los Reyes et al 1979).

keeping organizations attractive to potential investors is to keep them small. This is not as academic a notion as it may at first appear. Hunter (1972), for example, argues that the greatest return *to the poor* on their participation investment often comes as a result of forming interest groups of a few cooperating individuals, linked through informal bargaining procedures. Further increases in size beyond the initial primary group often benefit leaders and administrators performing support functions more than they benefit the poor themselves.

It remains true, however, that technological or political factors often force an organization to grow beyond the size at which calculation and control can be handled by techniques relying on shared knowledge and bilateral bargaining between individual participants. What design alternatives then remain?

*Design alternatives: polyarchy and hierarchy.* One common response to this situation has been to adopt polyarchical techniques of organization, in which formal leadership by a few accountable individuals is used to simplify participants' problems of calculation and control. Though this approach has worked on a limited scale, we noted earlier that in much of the developing world, local political organizations have not provided a particularly effective means of organizing the interests of the poor. Almost everywhere that local political organizations have survived, their original polyarchical relationships have drifted towards exchange, hierarchy, and thinly disguised recapitulation of the patronage/dependency design of traditional organization (Chambers 1974, pp. 86-88). Such techniques work to the extent that relatively inexpensive participation—for instance in the form of voting—can be exchanged for benefits desired by the individual participants, and available to the local elite. But the superficiality of the resulting "organization" is clearly revealed when the political leadership can no longer provide the accustomed benefits—perhaps because a centrally administered aid program no longer provides the resources that had been used for this purpose. Time after time, in country after country, as the dole dries up, the "participation" in the local organization disappears, leaving little but dependency in its wake.

A more commonly effective design for large-scale enterprises invokes "multi-tier" organization (Uphoff and Esman 1974, p. 69; Korten 1979a). The lowest tier comprises the same like-minded groups of poor people to which we have been referring. These "primary" groups are characterized by members' predominant commitment to activities other than organizing and by their consequent preference for those techniques of calculation and control which entail a minimum investment of their time and effort: informal shared knowledge and bilateral bargaining. Above this primary level, one or more hierarchical tiers may be added to handle inter-group tasks of calculation and control. The design and management of these upper-tier organizations is discussed at length in the last section of this chapter (p. 199ff.). The upper tiers are distinguished from the primary, or lowest, tier by their participants' commitment to careers as professional organizers and their (consequent?) preference for effi-

cient and effective techniques of organizing large numbers of people. Hierarchical and, more rarely, political techniques are their preferred means of calculation and control.

The problems of multi-tier support structures are many, and we will discuss them in a moment. Nonetheless, multi-tier support structures can perform important functions, not the least of which is relieving participants in the primary groups of the burden of directly negotiating responsibilities, rights, and obligations with all other members of the organization. When the multi-tier, hierarchical structure can also actually deliver attractive benefits to the primary-group members, and when it can achieve a suitable harmony of objectives, it therefore has real attractions as a means of inducing participation of the poor in inherently large and potentially complex organizations.

*Design alternatives: limited communal obligations.* The costs of participation in local organization can be mitigated not only by limiting the size of the primary group but also by adopting functions and designs which reduce the amount of explicit calculation and control required for allocating communal tasks and benefits. Once again, this is an area in which ideologically grounded self-delusion of advisors and planners has often clashed with the practical self-interest of the poor themselves. Reporting on another aspect of the Philippine irrigation studies referred to earlier, Alfonso (1981) describes a typical example of such a futile misunderstanding. Engineers working with the local farmer group knew that one irrigation turnout from the main system per every forty to fifty hectares was the most efficient design in a resource-scarce world. They were therefore bewildered and unsympathetic to the "wasteful" farmers' demands for a much more expensive design providing one turnout per farmer. The engineers did not recognize that for the farmers the most significant costs were not those of construction. Rather they were the costs of calculation and control which would be incurred if each individual had to negotiate with one or two dozen neighbors over access to, and control of, a single communal turnout. Neither we nor Alfonso suggests whether the engineers or the farmers are right in this particular instance. Our general point is that the poor often attach great significance to limiting the communal content of local organizations. So long as advisors remain unaware of and insensitive to such concerns, they will continue to design technically efficient, elegant, and otherwise admirable organizations which fail to produce the anticipated benefits because the poor inexplicably refuse to participate in them.

It is worth pointing out that some of the most successful local organizations have recognized the importance of limiting communal obligations. The cooperatives of the Indian National Dairy Development Board, to which we referred earlier, are a case in point. In his summary of the conditions that led to the outstanding performance of this organization, Korten emphasizes that "the basic functions of the village milk cooperatives . . . plac[e] few demands . . . for communal labor, or for complex decisions that might favor one group over another" (1980a, p. 485). The same story could be repeated for

a number of the single-industry cooperatives we have mentioned elsewhere in this essay.

The design feature that makes possible organization with limited communal obligation was spelled out long ago by Chayanov (1966) in his concept of "vertical" cooperation: local outputs and needs are handled by major commercial (exchange) or administrative (hierarchical) organizations at a regional or higher level, without requiring any "horizontal" grouping of the poor with each other.<sup>43</sup> Individual poor people thus can obtain many of the benefits of organization without incurring substantially more costs than they would by remaining in their tradition-bound, individualist state.

Vertical organization of this extreme form is anathema to many advisors and policymakers. These people are correct in recognizing that vertical organization does little, at least in any direct way, to develop the indigenous problem-solving capabilities of the rural poor. They are mistaken, however, in letting this lack of comprehensive intent blind them to the limited but important practical accomplishments of vertical organization, especially when it is employed in the context of a pluralistic approach to organizational design. Health-related activities such as malaria control are built on an essentially vertical pattern of organization, as are the single-industry cooperatives noted above. Perhaps most impressive, however, is the performance of certain agricultural extension efforts which we discussed in chapter 3. These efforts typically do not involve much in the way of horizontal organization and communal problem-solving.<sup>44</sup> The essential need is for organizational techniques that tap the local knowledge, experience, and judgment of individual farmers in order to ensure that the technologies recommended by extension workers are feasible and rewarding for those farmers, given the constraints and opportunities that they face. Equally important is that agricultural research workers should be linked with these information flows so that their decisions concerning research priorities take account of conditions and perceptions at the farm level. How such techniques can be structured and administered will be discussed below.

In summarizing this argument, we must again emphasize that we have not recommended forsaking horizontally structured groups employing bargaining or polyarchical techniques in favor of organizations emphasizing vertically structured, hierarchical or exchange techniques. We have only suggested that—measured by poor people's willingness to invest participation rather than policymakers' preconceived biases—more local problem-solving obligations are not always what the poor want; furthermore they are sometimes not

<sup>43</sup> In the terminology of figure 5.1, hierarchical and exchange techniques have been substituted for those of bargaining. In the process, the individual poor people have lost their status as co-leaders.

<sup>44</sup> Korten (1981) argues that this is an interesting aspect of the methodology evolved in Guatemala for making research and extension more useful for small farmers, a methodology which we discussed in chapter 3 (see Hildebrand 1976).

## 189 Organization Programs

even what the poor need. Problem-solving is expensive to problem-solvers, who are often acting with good appreciation of their own limited abilities for calculation and control when they opt for a smaller problem and simpler techniques than their advisors might have them adopt. The proper goal of analysis is to understand the trade-offs involved in this behavior, to articulate the alternative organizational techniques available, and so to help design pluralistic patterns of linkage which can better serve the needs of the rural poor. We next advance some thoughts on how such designs can be promoted.

### *Guidelines for Design*

Our argument and evidence to this point are summarized in figure 5.3, which portrays the three design features that we have identified as major determinants of local participation: attractiveness of benefits, harmony of objectives, and simplicity of technique. Each feature is shown as one axis of a three-dimensional volume. Note that each axis is oriented such that low values occur at the periphery of the figure, and high values towards the center. Within this volume, we have suggested relative "locations" of some specific organiza-

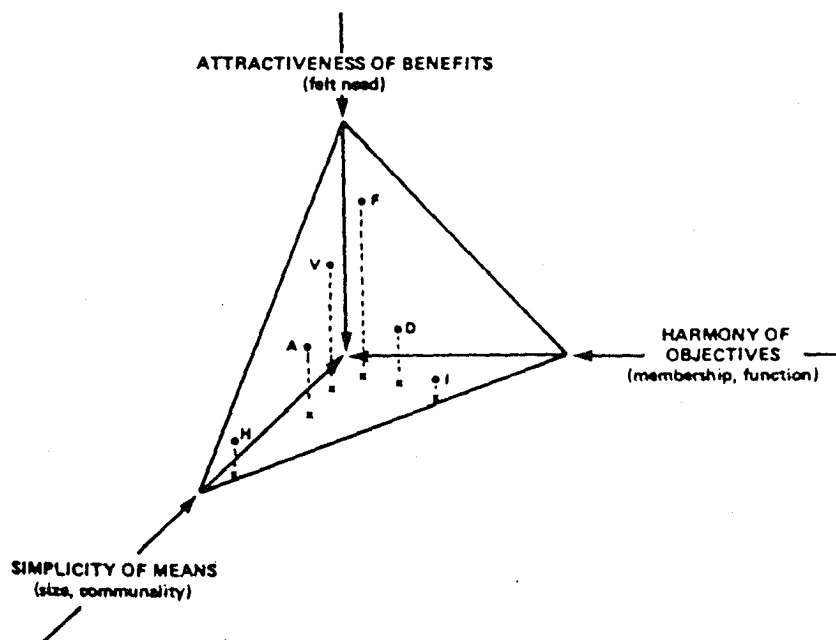


Figure 5.3. Design Features of Participatory Organizations.

*Note:* Some specific organizational programs that have been historically successful in attracting the participation of the rural poor are given: *F* represents family planning organizations; *A*, agricultural extension; *I*, irrigation projects at the community level; *V*, vaccination programs; *D*, dairy cooperatives; and *H*, household task allocation.

tional programs which historically have been successful in attracting the participation of the rural poor. The assigned locations are highly impressionistic—it is not by accident that no scales are given on the axes.

It would be silly to take any such figure too literally: we intend only to suggest certain qualitative relationships between design and historical performance in organizations of the rural poor. The figure reflects our finding that such organizations have tended to attract and retain active participation to the extent that they score "high" on the three design features portrayed. Such organizations lie towards the figure's center. Conversely, the rural poor have generally been less willing to invest participation in organizations scoring low on these design features and therefore lying towards the periphery of the figure.

Figure 5.3 also reflects the limited trade-offs of organization design implicit in our argument. Organizations with sufficiently high ratings on any two of the three design features have often competed successfully for the poor's participation, even when their rating on the third was relatively low. We have not, however, found a single instance of successful participation in an organization that rated low on more than one of the design features.<sup>45</sup> The implied constraint leads to the "organizational opportunity" surface we have sketched in the figure. Historically speaking, locations lying inside this surface have represented the most feasible designs for participatory local organization, in the narrow but operational sense that the rural poor have been more willing to invest participation in them.

It remains to be seen whether the historical relationships suggested in figure 5.3 can help to prescribe specific interventions for future programs of local reorganization. If they can, it will be by functioning not as a finished blueprint but rather as an incomplete guide to what must ultimately be an interactive process of trial-and-error learning. Put somewhat differently, though our analysis does not say how to build a particular organization in a specific context, it may suggest some good ways to start the sequence of construction. Equally important, our analysis highlights some major pitfalls of past experience in a way that should help contemporary development workers to avoid them.

*Local field studies.* Our analysis suggests that the most important interventions are local field studies to support reorganization efforts. Effective designs for reorganization require intimate knowledge of certain local conditions: what the poor want, where potential conflicts lie, and how much capacity for calculation and control exists. This knowledge cannot be deduced by planners, analysts, or ideologues sitting in central offices. Instead, it requires the creation of trained assessment teams and their placement in the local community. There they can tap "common" knowledge and observe for them-

<sup>45</sup> Such organizations surely exist; we suggest only that they are relatively rare and that their design is relatively risky.

selves the particular circumstances which set the constraints and opportunities for specific organizational interventions. We will have more to say on the conduct and management of such field assessments below. Suffice it for the moment to note that neither the one-day, hit-and-run visits so popular with some development agencies nor the exquisitely detailed surveys of some academic analysts are what is needed.<sup>46</sup> Later, we shall cite studies which lead us to suspect that a couple of weeks' work by an experienced team, focused on a few specific questions, will often be sufficient to get the interactive design process off to a good start.

The first and most important job of the local field study is to identify one or more intensely felt local needs which can serve as the core of a reorganization program. Unless such a need is identified, the program will almost certainly fail to attract any meaningful participation from the local people. It cannot be overemphasized that local perceptions, not national priorities or overall efficiencies, are of ultimate importance here. Local desirability lies at the heart of organizational feasibility and thus is an essential component of any effective development program. Some development workers have recognized this explicitly.<sup>47</sup> More frequently, however, the debate on development priorities proceeds with blithe disregard for whether the programs that planners select are programs in which the poor will participate. This sort of mismatch helps no one; and it is one of the reasons why we insist upon the interdependence of production, consumption, *and* organization programs throughout our discussion of development strategies in chapter 6.

The next important issue for study by the local field team concerns the interaction of benefits, membership, and organization function. The goal, we have argued, is to achieve sufficient harmony of objectives that the organization can cope with its tasks of surfacing and settling conflicts. Although good sociological analysis probably can be of some help here, the chances of arriving at a "correct" answer through cogitation alone are bleak. We suspect that the best bet is for a reorganization program to start with a relatively narrow function and membership in order to maximize the chances that it will survive at all. If it does survive, additional functions and member groups can be added as necessary or appropriate.

We are equally skeptical that even the best of field studies can identify in advance the optimal means of calculation and control for a particular organi-

<sup>46</sup> Recent discussions of "rapid rural appraisal" are relevant (see, for example, Chambers [1980]).

<sup>47</sup> Korten, for example, advances the "radical proposition" that "having the local people identify a need around which popular interest can be aroused may be more important than selecting a program that will deliver the most units of service at the lowest cost" (1979a, p. 27). And a foreign advisor working with the UNICEF Village Technology Unit in Kenya provides a refreshing view: "Our approach to the generation of interest in technologies which may be appropriate for use at village level amongst very poor people, is based on the fact that we do not know what is, or is not, appropriate, and neither do our government counterparts. The only people who can really decide what is, or is not, appropriate are the people, themselves" (McDowell 1978, p. 75).

zational situation. Our analysis has identified some of the factors that such a study might profitably consider, but a good deal of subsequent trial-and-error learning will almost certainly be necessary. Again, we will explore how this learning might be carried out and supported in a later section (beginning on p. 199). Our general recommendation, however, is that a first attempt to redesign a traditional organization should begin with one of the simpler techniques we discussed in the last section. Communal efforts should generally be avoided, and the opportunities for shedding some of the required calculation and control onto existing commercial or support organizations should be seriously considered.

*Inadequacies of local participation.* In the preceding pages we have discussed the design of basic starting points from which a trial-and-error process of local reorganization might profitably begin. We have been reasonably explicit about what we think such designs will offer the rural poor. It remains to be equally explicit about what they will not.

Nothing we have said in our discussion of local reorganization should be taken as an endorsement of the naive, ideologically distorted view that the poor are uniformly wise and goodly people, thwarted in their development efforts only by evil elites and callous bureaucrats. Rather, we believe that although effective local participation is a necessary component of development organization, it is rarely sufficient to handle all the organizational tasks on which effective programs of social action depend. These tasks, to recapitulate our argument in the first section of this chapter, include choice, allocation, mobilization, distribution, and productive utilization of resources. The dimensions of local organization's insufficiencies are well known, if for no other reason than that they have been displayed so frequently in past efforts at local reorganization. It should be sufficient to recall some of the most serious.

An obvious problem is the inability of autonomous local groups to obtain high productivity from their local resources. The common sight of two cattle dips built next to each other by rival clans is representative of a great number of similarly inefficient practices (Oyugi 1973).

An ability to mobilize local resources of knowledge, material, and labor has justifiably been hailed as one of the strong points of participative local organization. Even here, however, the frequent failure to link local resource mobilization to a broader social perspective leads to wasted effort and disillusionment. For example, local initiatives started under the ill-informed belief that the central government would supply operating budgets and staffing have left a trail of unused schools and clinic buildings throughout the developing world (Chambers 1974, p. 102).

A further shortcoming of local organization is its inability to cope with the tasks of resource distribution among competing objectives. A bias for short-term programs over long-term programs is understandable in rural communities, but it clearly blocks access to many important benefits. We mentioned earlier the predilection of local governments for consumption-oriented rather



than production-oriented programs (see also Chambers 1974, p. 86; Lele 1975, p. 159).

At a more fundamental level, the widespread advocacy of local autonomy has been counterproductive in terms of local groups' abilities to perform the organizational tasks of surfacing and settling conflicts, signaling group choices, and securing allocation of resources appropriate to those choices. The community-development movement failed in part because it treated the traditional village as a self-contained development unit which would carry out most organizational tasks without the aid of external intervention (Heginbotham 1975; Sussman 1980). We showed above why this rarely works, and outlined conditions under which smaller, more specialized local groups linked through broader support structures were more likely to perform the required tasks.

In general, an informal group offering attractive benefits to a few like-minded individuals is a good point from which to start a program for redesigning local organizations. It is only a start, however, and a very imperfect one at that. To realize its potential—perhaps even to survive—the initial local group will almost always have to begin reaching out to form linkages with the broader social system. There are dangers in such linkages, especially if attempts are made to forge them too ambitiously or too soon. Nonetheless, the dangers of pursuing a mythical local autonomy are even greater; the goal is not isolation but rather an ability to build *reciprocally* helpful linkages with the national, regional, and local communities which form each local group's social environment. The need for resolutely pursuing this goal is particularly clear when we consider the special design problems posed by rural elites.

#### *Coping with the Elite*

Skilled assessment teams often will be able to identify more than one design around which a local reorganization program might be built. We have argued that one of the central failings of past efforts to build local organizations is that so frequently the design chosen is one which could be bent to the benefit of the relatively well-off local elite. There is no sure way to avoid such failures. Nonetheless, a growing body of practical experience suggests that a few fundamental design choices each reflecting detailed knowledge of local circumstances can substantially improve the chances for success. We shall outline four such choices, proceeding from simpler to more complex organizational designs and following the general design framework we developed in figure 5.2.<sup>48</sup>

*Passive exclusion.* The most direct way to keep the local elite from taking over or unduly influencing an organization is to define the function of the organization in such a way that the elite do not want to participate at all. In our general discussion of harmony and conflict, we showed how choice of

<sup>48</sup> Discussions with David Leonard have contributed substantially to this section. Throughout the remainder of this section, we will frequently use the succinct term "elites" as an admittedly approximate shorthand for the more awkward but more inclusive phrase "relatively well-off and influential."

organizational function can influence membership. A typical constructive use of this influence was gradually evolved by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), described earlier. By defining their organization's function in a manner that simultaneously required inputs of manual labor from participants and eliminated handouts to them, the BRAC organizers discovered that they could lose the interest of the relatively well-off villagers and restrict the willingness to invest active participation to their target group of the very poor (Korten 1980a, pp. 488-90).

The benefits of this approach to organizational design are obvious. The potential disadvantages, however, are not insignificant. First of all, restricting an organization to functions that are *not* attractive to the local elite means forgoing a large number of functions that *are* attractive to the poor. In addition, as we have already pointed out (and will discuss in more detail below), local skills of leadership and management tend to reside disproportionately with the elite members of the community. A local organization explicitly cutting itself off from those skills must either seek comparable skills from outside (for example, from a professionalized supporting organization, as was the case in BRAC) or adopt techniques of linkage which do not require them. As noted earlier, one solution is to build around existing commercial institutions, if suitable ones exist. More likely, the solution will be to remain sufficiently small or noncommunal that informal bargaining techniques are sufficient for the required tasks of calculation and control. This small-group solution should not be lightly dismissed. As Hunter has so frequently pointed out (1969, 1970, 1978a), such groups can accomplish many of the primary goals of local reorganization. Moreover, they have frequently provided the initial experience in interest-group cooperation from which more ambitious programs later grow.

*Active exclusion.* When the benefits of local organization desired by the poor are also desired by the elite, several design alternatives remain. The most extreme is explicitly to exclude the elite from membership in the organization. But this is at best a risky choice. Competent, committed external organization will be required to support and protect the poor people's organization if it is to have any chance of success. A good example of the potential and limitations of such a design is India's Small Farmer Development Administration as described by Hunter (1976). We discuss some of the substantial problems of organizing the required external support in a later section. Nothing we say there, however, gives us reason to believe that efforts to exclude the elite from organizational benefits which they strongly desire can be successful in any but the most exceptional circumstances. More often, if the interests of the poor are to be protected, organization redesigners will have to look beyond the choice of membership to the character of the benefits pursued and the choice of particular techniques for calculation and control.

*Willingly shared benefits.* One class of organizational designs which has been particularly effective in advancing the interests of the poor is that which pursues benefits that the elite desire for themselves but cannot—or do

not want to—keep the poor from sharing with them. Somewhat surprisingly, at least for those who see the world as a constant struggle between the haves and have-nots, a number of such benefits are of great importance to poor people in the developing world.

For one thing, elites have been known to be more altruistic than rapacious. Cynicism and habit should not blind social reorganizers to the opportunities inherent in altruistic circumstances such as those exemplified by the previously mentioned Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka. In another group of programs accrual of benefits to the elite is in part contingent on the program's effectiveness in reaching the poor members of the community. Sanitation and immunization programs are typical examples. Only slightly different are programs such as family planning, in which little is to be gained by the elite in denying or controlling access to an organization's benefits.

Consumption-related benefits are generally more likely than are production-oriented ones to be willingly shared by elites. Nonetheless, when productive benefits are characterized by substantial externalities, the elite may not be able to limit use by the poor whether they want to or not. The road-building programs we remarked on earlier provide one example of how production-related benefits with high externalities can be successfully pursued by organizations including both elite and poor segments of a rural community.

Obviously, only a small proportion of the benefits desired by both poor and elite will be shared due to altruism, common interest, or externalities. But the few benefits which are conducive to such willing sharing constitute an invaluable resource for social reorganizers trying to design programs which will reach the poor in an elite-ridden world.

*Zero-sum contests.* If some program benefits are willingly shared by the elite and the poor, others are essentially the prizes of a contest in which winners take from losers. Land, water, and local political power are only the most obvious benefits which may be at stake in such "zero-sum" situations. Conditions precipitating head-on battles between the poor and the elite over these benefits are not nearly so ubiquitous as some writers suggest. They are nonetheless latent and significant in many rural-development situations. And the chances of the poor emerging as victors in such battles are virtually nil. We therefore cannot overemphasize the desirability of discovering policies and organizational designs which mitigate the need for fighting them at all. One reason why we have emphasized our preference for unimodal production programs is the organizational difficulty of securing benefits for the poor within the structure of directly conflicting interests so often encountered in bimodally structured societies.

Frequently, however, bimodal or other conflict-laden social structures will be the reality with which the social organizer must work. In some such cases it may be feasible to design an organization that provides alternative benefits more attractive for the elite, thus moving them out of competition with the poor. We discussed one such case in chapter 3 while reviewing the prospects of

providing nonagricultural sources of income and status for the most well-to-do and progressive members of rural communities, thus mitigating the contest for scarce land and related assets. Realistically speaking, however, in most cases of direct conflict between the poor and the elite, there are few direct and effective cures to be had through mere tactical modifications of existing organizational structures. The tricks we have suggested may be worth a try, but it would be naive to pretend that revolutionary change or strong and sustained intervention from outside will not usually be required before the poor have much hope of bettering their condition.

*Getting a fairer share.* Between the extremes of willingly shared benefits and zero-sum conflict, there exists a large, fertile, and relatively unexplored ground for innovative organizational designs which help the poor to obtain some share, if not always a fair share, of development's benefits. Here we are concerned with the variety of programs that are capable of providing more benefits for everyone. The question is not whether the poor will receive any share of these benefits but rather how close they can come to receiving a fair share. How can specific techniques of organization be used to increase the magnitude of the benefits which the poor actually receive? Of the basic organizational techniques which we discussed in the first section of this chapter, bargaining is unlikely to play a dominant role in such designs: neither the size constraint nor the implicit requirement of negotiation among equals is likely to be met. Polyarchical techniques, in contrast, have often been applied to such situations. They have not met with outstanding success. In fact, experience suggests that it will usually be most useful to the poor if reorganization programs designed to effect immediate improvements in their well-being are kept entirely separate from local organizational structures dealing in political power. This is neither defeatism nor a contradiction in terms. First of all, political forms of organization are particularly ill-suited to attaining benefits for the rural poor. A principal goal of elective and even single-party political organizations is to achieve as large a membership as possible. Typically, this is done by providing (or at least promising) something for everyone. Indeed, the very legitimacy of the political organization often rests on its commitment to open membership and its pledge to pursue the interests of all its members. As we argued earlier, however, this sort of open-membership, multiple-function design almost guarantees a dangerous amount of conflict over organizational goals. Moreover, where local political organizations have survived at all in the developing world, they have done so largely in terms of traditional patronage/dependency linkages functioning to enhance the status of the local elite. New social functions, when added to such organizations, are likely either to threaten the status of the elite or to be taken over by them. In either case, the poor will fail to benefit. Lele (1974, p. 74) describes such a situation in the context of East African agricultural development. Pyle (1979, p. 17) provides a similar story from his work on Indian health programs. In the latter case, the popular village health workers were explicitly instructed to avoid any political involvement because this might alienate an otherwise cooperative or indifferent elite.

Exchange techniques, especially when embodied in a well-developed commercial structure which is relatively immune to the pressures of local elites, are often more effective than political organizations in promoting fairer shares for the poor. We noted in chapter 3, for example, that small farmers are more likely to have access to credit and inputs if these benefits are provided at competitive, market-clearing prices. When artificially low prices create an excess demand and necessitate reliance on bureaucratic or political rationing, the local elites generally can be expected to capture a greater share of the benefits.

How great that share will be may be influenced by auditing and other regulatory controls imposed through specific (and usually hierarchical) techniques of organization. In cases like that of the Indian dairy cooperatives, this control derives in part from a heavy reliance on publicly visible techniques of exchange: justice is seen to be done. Elsewhere, periodic elections may conceivably keep elites accountable for their excesses. In general, however, the need is for what Dore (1971) has called "institutionalized suspicion": a formal, probably hierarchical auditing system visibly insulated from the traditional kin and patronage obligations of the local community. Such auditing systems cannot, of course, guarantee equitable distribution of benefits among poor and elite participants. To be even reasonably effective they require a truly extraordinary commitment of senior officials in supporting organizations. Nonetheless, it remains one of the truisms of development that in organizations of the sort we describe here, a failure to provide and to diligently pursue such institutionalized suspicion virtually guarantees that the poor will suffer.

*Prospects for progress.* What can the poor realistically expect to gain from the various technical reorganizations we have discussed here? Not everything they need, not a fair share of benefits, and quite possibly nothing but increased exploitation. Nonetheless, it is important to emphasize that the poor *can* and have extracted substantial improvements in their well-being from organizations that include members of the elite.

By joining with the elite in local organizations such as those we have described here, poor people gain leadership talents and initiative which they would be less likely to find within their own ranks. They also gain the tangible benefits of effective organizations. Furthermore, the opportunity for some small amount of mutually beneficial interaction between different strata of society is also an opportunity for initiating more ambitious organization-building programs.

The potential for coincident interests of poor and elite, and for beneficial interaction between them, seems to require that elite and poor members of the community both have access to the resources or assets on which the functions of the organization are based. This condition of common access has been identified as one of the key factors underlying the success of single-industry, vertically integrated organizations such as the Indian National Dairy Development Board, described earlier. A similar case can be made for some of the more prosperous East African cooperatives described by Hyden (1970). More broadly, it is a condition intimately associated with a unimodal rather than a

bimodal approach to rural development. In contrast, failures of programs like the much-touted CADU Project, in Ethiopia, can be ascribed in large part to the mistake of trying to join landed elites and landless tenants together under an organizational design which can actually benefit only those with access to land.<sup>49</sup> The operative word is *access*. As we noted in chapter 3, the patterns of agricultural development in Japan and Taiwan were unimodal long before the post-World War II land reforms. But because landlords rented out their land in small operational units, tenants had access to land; owners and tenants had a shared interest in yield-increasing innovations even though a large fraction of the incremental output accrued to the landlord. It is therefore not surprising that the prewar agricultural associations in both countries functioned reasonably well even though typically they were dominated by elite landlords.

Even when the poor have access to the basic resources required for participation in the benefits of an organization, even when a credible auditing system exists, it remains true that the elite will more than likely sequester the greater share of an organization's benefits for themselves. This is regrettable, unjust, and inevitable. We believe, however, that it will be in poor people's best interest to accept even substantial disparities in benefits. In order to get on with the urgent job of securing absolute improvements, even substantial disparities in benefits should not, in general, disqualify development programs which can secure absolute improvements in the well-being of the rural poor. One important exception to this general recommendation has been pointed out to us by David Leonard. This exception applies under conditions where allowing a disproportionate share of benefits to accrue to the elite will increase their ability to exploit the poor in the future. It may be particularly relevant to programs dealing with agricultural and other productive enterprises. In such cases an increase in the relative productivity of the elite could, unless otherwise controlled, bring them into a position where they were increasingly able to purchase the productive assets of the poor. If at all possible, social reorganizers should avoid designs with this sort of potential.

*In summary.* We have argued that programs to reorganize the rural poor must be based upon intimate knowledge of local conditions obtained by firsthand, village-level assessments. Such assessments should seek to discover what benefits of organization are desired by the poor, what sorts of potential conflict exist in the community, and what techniques and experience relevant to organization are available. Knowledge of these factors as they pertain at a particular place and time should help substantially in identifying those initial interventions most likely to lead to a sequence of reorganization programs which actually benefit the poor. Other things being equal, it would seem best to start with an intensely desired benefit which can be shared with (or is not desired by) the elite, a combination of membership criteria and organizational functions which assures a reasonable harmony of objectives among partici-

<sup>49</sup> The CADU (Chilalo Agricultural Development Unit) Project, its ostensible goals, and its actual impact are discussed in Cohen and Uphoff (1977).

pants, and a commitment to extremely simple techniques of calculation and control. The evidence we have reviewed suggests that more difficult or complex organizations should be undertaken very cautiously—if at all—in the early stages of the reorganization effort. In particular, it seems unwise to pressure small informal groups to include more members or more functions, at least until they have evolved a substantial amount of confidence and experience. Even then, designers should always ask what interest *of the poor* will be served by expanding a small organization and thereby incurring the risks of overextension and overexposure.

Our analysis also suggests that social-service and productive programs should be separately pursued in the early stages of an organization's growth. The risks and liabilities of organizing productive functions are so different from, and generally so much greater than, those of organizing service activities, that combinations will succeed only rarely. It is much more likely that organizationally feasible social-service programs will become the pawns and victims of a much rougher contest over control of productive activities.

Finally, every effort should be made to separate all other organizational activities from those which unavoidably involve a conflict of interest between poor and elite. Such halting progress as can be made in social reorganization may even require a willingness to set aside irresolvable equity issues in order to get on with the many beneficial activities which can be pursued within the existing social context. Trite but true: the poor do not benefit when social reformers let an ideological or personal predilection for the best stand in the way of the good.

### Organizing the Facilitators

In chapters 3 and 4 we considered some of the development initiatives which a national or regional government might wish to pursue. So far in chapter 5 we have considered prospects for reorganizing the rural poor to better recognize and exploit their own opportunities for development. There remains the problem of linking the two levels, of fusing national plans and unique local opportunities into effective programs of rural development.

#### *The Needs for Facilitation*

The missing links in this framework of development organization are the "facilitator" people: the administrators and field staff, managers and entrepreneurs who are neither villagers nor policymakers but nonetheless serve an essential organizational function by facilitating reciprocally helpful interactions between those two groups.

Any attempt to redesign the functions and functioning of facilitator organizations must be based on an appreciation of their inherently schizoid nature. Facilitator organizations are constantly and simultaneously called upon to serve the needs of three radically different clients: the rural poor and their local

## *Fatima the Spinner and the Tent*

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ONCE in a city in the Farthest West there lived a girl called Fatima. She was the daughter of a prosperous spinner. One day her father said to her: 'Come, daughter; we are going on a journey, for I have business in the islands of the Middle Sea. Perhaps you may find some handsome youth in a good situation whom you could take as husband.'

They set off and travelled from island to island, the father doing his trading while Fatima dreamt of the husband who might soon be hers. One day, however, they were on the way to Crete when a storm blew up, and the ship was wrecked. Fatima, only half-conscious, was cast up on the seashore near Alexandria. Her father was dead, and she was utterly destitute.

She could only remember dimly her life until then, for her experience of the shipwreck, and her exposure in the sea, had utterly exhausted her.

While she was wandering on the sands, a family of cloth-makers found her. Although they were poor, they took her into their humble home and taught her their craft. Thus it was that she made a second life for herself, and within a year or two she was happy and reconciled to her lot. But one day, when she was on the seashore for some reason, a band of slave-traders landed and carried her, along with other captives, away with them.

Although she bitterly lamented her lot, Fatima found no sympathy from the slavers, who took her to Istanbul and sold her as a slave.

Her world had collapsed for the second time. Now it chanced that there were few buyers at the market. One of them was a man who was looking for slaves to work in his woodyard, where he made masts for ships. When he saw the dejection of the unfortunate Fatima, he decided to buy her, thinking that in this way, at

FATIMA THE SPINNER AND THE TENT

least, he might be able to give her a slightly better life than if she were bought by someone else.

He took Fatima to his home, intending to make her a serving-maid for his wife. When he arrived at the house, however, he found that he had lost all his money in a cargo which had been captured by pirates. He could not afford workers, so he, Fatima and his wife were left alone to work at the heavy labour of making masts.

Fatima, grateful to her employer for rescuing her, worked so hard and so well that he gave her her freedom, and she became his trusted helper. Thus it was that she became comparatively happy in her third career.

One day he said to her: 'Fatima, I want you to go with a cargo of ships' masts to Java, as my agent, and be sure that you sell them at a profit.'

She set off, but when the ship was off the coast of China a typhoon wrecked it, and Fatima found herself again cast up on the seashore of a strange land. Once again she wept bitterly, for she felt that nothing in her life was working in accordance with expectation. Whenever things seemed to be going well, something came and destroyed all her hopes.

'Why is it', she cried out, for the third time, 'that whenever I try to do something it comes to grief? Why should so many unfortunate things happen to me?' But there was no answer. So she picked herself up from the sand, and started to walk inland.

Now it so happened that nobody in China had heard of Fatima, or knew anything about her troubles. But there was a legend that a certain stranger, a woman, would one day arrive there, and that she would be able to make a tent for the Emperor. And, since there was as yet nobody in China who could make tents, everyone looked upon the fulfilment of this prediction with the liveliest anticipation.

In order to make sure that this stranger, when she arrived, would not be missed, successive Emperors of China had followed the custom of sending heralds, once a year, to all the towns and villages of the land, asking for any foreign woman to be produced at Court.

TALES OF THE DERVISHES

When Fatima stumbled into a town by the Chinese seashore, it was one such occasion. The people spoke to her through an interpreter, and explained that she would have to go to see the Emperor.

'Lady,' said the Emperor, when Fatima was brought before him, 'can you make a tent?'

'I think so,' said Fatima.

She asked for rope, but there was none to be had. So, remembering her time as a spinner, she collected flax and made ropes. Then she asked for stout cloth, but the Chinese had none of the kind which she needed. So, drawing on her experience with the weavers of Alexandria, she made some stout tentcloth. Then she found that she needed tent-poles, but there were none in China. So Fatima, remembering how she had been trained by the wood-fashioner of Istanbul, cunningly made stout tent-poles. When these were ready, she racked her brains for the memory of all the tents she had seen in her travels: and lo, a tent was made.

When this wonder was revealed to the Emperor of China, he offered Fatima the fulfilment of any wish she cared to name. She chose to settle in China, where she married a handsome prince, and where she remained in happiness, surrounded by her children, until the end of her days.

It was through these adventures that Fatima realized that what had appeared to be an unpleasant experience at the time, turned out to be an essential part of the making of her ultimate happiness.

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This story is well known in Greek folklore, many of whose contemporary motifs feature dervishes and their legends. The version cited here is attributed to the Sheikh Mohamed Jamaludin of Adrianople. He founded the Jamalial Order ('The Beautiful'), and died in 1750.

The Gates of Paradise

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THERE was once a good man. He had spent his whole life in cultivating the qualities enjoined upon those who would reach Paradise. He gave freely to the poor, he loved his fellow creatures and he served them. Remembering the need to have patience, he endured great and unexpected hardships, often for the sake of others. He made journeys in search of knowledge. His humility and exemplary behaviour were such that his repute as a wise man and good citizen resounded from the East to the West, and from the North to the South.

All these qualities he did indeed exercise—whenever he remembered to do so. But he had one shortcoming, and that was heedlessness. This tendency was not strong in him, and he considered that, balanced against the other things which he did practise, it could only be regarded as a small fault. There were some poor people whom he did not help, because from time to time he was insensitive to their needs. Love and service, too, were sometimes forgotten when what he thought to be personal needs, or at least desires, welled up in him.

He was fond of sleep; and sometimes when he was asleep, opportunities to seek knowledge, or to understand it, or to practise real humility, or to add to the sum total of good behaviour—such opportunities passed by, and they did not return.

Just as the good qualities left their impress upon his essential self, so did the characteristic of heedlessness.

And then he died. Finding himself beyond this life, and making his way towards the doors of the Walled Garden, the man paused, to examine his conscience. And he felt that his opportunity of entering the High Portals was enough.

The gates, he saw, were shut; and then a voice addressed him, saying: 'Be watchful; for the gates will open only once in every

## LESSON 9

### EMPOWERING YOURSELF

#### Learning Objectives

The participants will:

1. Solidify their understanding of managing ambiguity.
2. Discover the factors surrounding the issue of empowerment.
3. Begin to grasp how they can empower and disempower themselves.

#### Activities

1. Read case, "The Road to Hell" and discuss in two groups. (90 min)
  - a) What are the barriers present in this situation?
  - b) How can they be overcome or can they be overcome?
  - c) Who is to blame?
  - d) What other issues are at risk?
  - e) Relate issues in case to readings.
2. Break (15 min)
3. Triads - What are the characteristics of an "empowered person?" (30 min)
4. Large Group Discussion of characteristics of empowerment and how they can be acquired for oneself. (35 min)
5. Handout Homework 9 - Empowering Others. (10 min)

#### Materials

1. Cup and water.
2. Copies of case.
3. Flip Chart and newsprint.



Interpersonal Behavior: Communication and Understanding  
in Relationships by Anthony E. Atkos / John J. Edgemo  
Prentice-Hall, 1978

## The Road to Hell

John Baker, chief engineer of the Caribbean Bauxite Company of Barracania in the West Indies, was making his final preparations to leave the island. His promotion to production manager of Keso Mining Corporation near Winnipeg—one of Continental Ore's fast-expanding Canadian enterprises—had been announced a month before, and now everything had been tidied up except the last vital interview with his successor, the able young Barracanian, Matthew Rennalls. It was vital that this interview be a success and that Rennalls should leave his office uplifted and encouraged to face the challenge of his new job. A touch on the bell would have brought Rennalls into the room, but Baker delayed the moment and gazed thoughtfully through the window, considering just exactly what he was going to say and, more particularly, how he was going to say it.

This case was prepared by Mr. Gareth Evans for Shell-BP of Nigeria, Limited, as a basis for class discussion in an executive training program, and is used with permission.

John Baker, an English expatriate, was 45 years old and had served his 23 years with Continental Ore in many different places: in the Far East, several countries of Africa, Europe, and for the last two years, in the West Indies. He hadn't cared much for his previous assignment in Hamburg and was delighted when the West Indian appointment came through. Climate was not the only attraction. Baker had always preferred working overseas in what were termed the developing countries, because he felt he had an innate knack—better than most other expatriates working for Continental Ore—of knowing just how to get on with regional staff. Twenty-four hours in Barracania, however, had made him realize that he would need all this "innate knack" if he was to deal effectively with the problems in this field that awaited him.

At his first interview with Hutchins, the production manager, the whole problem of Rennalls and his future was discussed. There and then, it was made quite clear to Baker that one of his most

important tasks would be the grooming of Rennalls as his successor. Hutchins pointed out that not only was Rennalls one of the brightest Barracanian prospects on the staff of Caribbean Bauxite—at London University, he had taken first-class honours in the B.Sc. Engineering Degree—but, being the son of the Minister of Finance and Economic Planning, he also had no small political pull.

The company had been particularly pleased when Rennalls decided to work for them rather than for the government in which his father had such a prominent post. They ascribed his action to the effect of their vigorous and liberal regionalization program, which, since the Second World War, had placed 18 Barracanians at midmanagement level and given Caribbean Bauxite a good lead in this respect over all other international concerns operating in Barracania. The success of this timely regionalization policy had led to excellent relations with the government. And this relationship had been given an added importance when Barracania, three years later, became independent—an occasion that encouraged a critical and challenging attitude toward the role foreign interests would have to play in the new Barracania. Hutchins had therefore little difficulty in convincing Baker that the successful career development of Rennalls was of the first importance.

The interview with Hutchins was now two years past, and Baker, leaning back in his office chair, reviewed just how successful he had been in the "grooming" of Rennalls. What aspects of the latter's character had helped and what had hindered? What about his own personality? How had that helped or hindered? The first item to go on the credit side would, without question, be the ability of Rennalls to master the technical aspects of his job. From the start, he had shown keenness and enthusiasm and had often impressed Baker with his ability in tackling new assignments and the constructive

comments he invariably made in departmental discussions. He was popular with all ranks of Barracanian staff and had an ease of manner that stood him in good stead when dealing with his expatriate seniors. These were all assets, but what about the debit side?

First and foremost, there was his racial consciousness. His four years at London University had accentuated this feeling and made him sensitive to any sign of condescension on the part of expatriates. It may have been to give expression to this sentiment that, as soon as he returned home from London, he threw himself into politics on behalf of the United Action Party, which was later to win the preindependence elections and provide the country with its first prime minister.

The ambitions of Rennalls—and he certainly was ambitious—did not, however, lie in politics, for, staunch nationalist that he was, he saw that he could serve himself and his country best—for was not bauxite responsible for nearly half the value of Barracania's export trade?—by putting his engineering talent to the best use possible. On this account, Hutchins found that he had an unexpectedly easy task in persuading Rennalls to give up his political work before entering the production department as an assistant engineer.

It was, Baker knew, Rennalls's well-repressed sense of race consciousness that had prevented their relationship from being as close as it should have been. On the surface, nothing could have seemed more agreeable. Formality between the two men was at a minimum; Baker was delighted to find that his assistant shared his own peculiar "shaggy dog" sense of humor, so that jokes were continually being exchanged; they entertained each other at their houses and often played tennis together—and yet the barrier remained invisible, indefinable, but ever present. The existence of this "screen" between them was a constant

source of frustration to Baker, since it indicated a weakness he was loath to accept. If he had been successful with all other nationalities, why not with Rennalls?

But at least he had managed to break through to Rennalls more successfully than any other expatriate had. In fact, it was the young Barracanian's attitude—sometimes overbearing, sometimes cynical—toward other company expatriates that had been one of the subjects Baker had raised last year when he discussed Rennalls's staff report with him. He knew, too, that he would have to raise the same subject again in the forthcoming interview, because Jackson, the senior draftsman, had complained only yesterday about Rennalls's rudeness. With this thought in mind, Baker leaned forward and spoke into the intercom. "Would you come in, Matt, please? I'd like a word with you," and later, "Do sit down." He offered the box, "Have a cigarette," paused while he held out his lighter, and then went on.

"As you know, Matt, I'll be off to Canada in a few days' time, and before I go, I thought it would be useful if we could have a final chat together. It is indeed with some deference that I suggest I can be of help. You will shortly be sitting in this chair doing the job I am now doing, but I, on the other hand, am ten years older, so perhaps you can accept the idea that I may be able to give you the benefit of my longer experience."

Baker saw Rennalls stiffen slightly in his chair as he made this point, so he added in explanation, "You and I have attended enough company courses to remember those repeated requests by the personnel manager to tell people how they are getting on as often as the convenient moment arises, and not just the automatic once a year when, by regulation, staff reports have to be discussed."

Rennalls nodded his agreement, so

Baker went on. "I shall always remember the last job performance discussion I had with my previous boss back in Germany. He used what he called the 'plus and minus' technique. His firm belief was that when a senior, by discussion, seeks to improve the work performance of his staff, his prime objective should be to make sure that the latter leaves the interview encouraged and inspired to improve. Any criticism must, therefore, be constructive and helpful. He said that one very good way to encourage a man—and I fully agree with him—is to tell him about his good points—the plus factors—as well as his weak ones—the minus factors; so I thought, Matt, it would be a good idea to run our discussion along these lines."

Rennalls offered no comment, so Baker continued. "Let me say, therefore, right away, that as far as your own work performance is concerned, the plus far outweighs the minus. I have, for instance, been most impressed with the way you have adapted your considerable theoretical knowledge to master the practical techniques of your job—that ingenious method you used to get air down to the fifth-shaft level is a sufficient case in point—and at departmental meetings, I have invariably found your comments well taken and helpful. In fact, you will be interested to know that only last week I reported to Mr. Hutchins that, from the technical point of view, he could not wish for a more able man to succeed to the position of chief engineer."

"That's very good indeed of you, John," cut in Rennalls with a smile of thanks. "My only worry now is how to live up to such a high recommendation."

"Of that I am quite sure," returned Baker, "especially if you can overcome the minus factor, which I would like now to discuss with you. It is one that I have talked about before, so I'll come straight to the point. I have noticed that you are

more friendly and get on better with your fellow Barracanian than you do with Europeans. In point of fact, I had a complaint only yesterday from Mr. Jackson, who said you had been rude to him—and not for the first time either.

"There is, Matt, I am sure, no need for me to tell you how necessary it will be for you to get on well with expatriates, because until the company has trained up sufficient men of your caliber, Europeans are bound to occupy senior positions here in Barracania. All this is vital to your future interests, so can I help you in any way?"

While Baker was speaking on this theme, Rennalls had sat tensed in his chair, and it was some seconds before he replied. "It is quite extraordinary, isn't it, how one can convey an impression to others so at variance with what one intends? I can only assure you once again that my disputes with Jackson—and you may remember also Godson—have had nothing at all to do with the color of their skins. I promise you that if a Barracanian had behaved in an equally peremptory manner, I would have reacted in precisely the same way. And again, if I may say it within these four walls, I am sure I am not the only one who has found Jackson and Godson difficult. I could mention the names of several expatriates who have felt the same. However, I am really sorry to have created this impression of not being able to get on with Europeans; it is an entirely false one, and I quite realize that I must do all I can to correct it as quickly as possible. On your last point, regarding Europeans holding senior positions in the company for some time to come, I quite accept the situation. I know that Caribbean Bauxite—as they have been doing for many years now—will promote Barracnians as soon as their experience warrants it. And, finally, I would like to assure you, John—and my father thinks

the same, too—that I am very happy in my work here and hope to stay with the company for many years to come."

Rennalls had spoken earnestly, and, although not convinced by what he had heard, Baker did not think he could pursue the matter further except to say, "All right, Matt, my impression *may* be wrong, but I would like to remind you about the truth of that old saying, 'What is important is not what is true but what is believed.' Let it rest at that."

But suddenly Baker knew that he didn't want to "let it rest at that." He was disappointed once again at not being able to break through to Rennalls and having yet again to listen to his bland denial that there was any racial prejudice in his makeup. Baker, who had intended ending the interview at this point, decided to try another tack.

"To return for a moment to the 'plus and minus technique' I was telling you about just now, there is another plus factor I forgot to mention. I would like to congratulate you not only on the caliber of your work but also on the ability you have shown in overcoming a challenge that I, as a European, have never had to meet.

"Continental Ore is, as you know, a typical commercial enterprise—admittedly a big one—which is a product of the economic and social environment of the United States and Western Europe. My ancestors have all been brought up in this environment for the past two or three hundred years, and I have, therefore, been able to live in a world in which commerce as we know it today has been part and parcel of my being. It has not been something revolutionary and new that has suddenly entered my life. In your case, the situation is different, because you and your forebears have had only some fifty or sixty years' experience of this commercial environment. You have had to face the challenge of bridg-

ing the gap between fifty and two or three hundred years. Again, Matt, let me congratulate you—and people like you—once again on having so successfully overcome this particular hurdle. It is for this very reason that I think the outlook for Barracania—and particularly Caribbean Bauxite—is so bright.”

Rennalls had listened intently and when Baker finished, replied, “Well, once again, John, I have to thank you for what you have said, and for my part, I can only say that it is gratifying to know that my own personal effort has been so much appreciated. I hope that more people will soon come to think as you do.”

There was a pause, and for a moment, Baker thought hopefully that he was about to achieve his long awaited “break-through,” but Rennalls merely smiled back. The barrier remained unbreached. There remained some five minutes’ cheerful conversation about the contrast between the Caribbean and Canadian climate and whether the West Indies had any hope of beating England in the Fifth Test, before Baker drew the interview to a close. Although he was as far as ever from knowing the real Rennalls, he was nevertheless glad that the interview had run along in this friendly manner and, particularly, that it had ended on such a cheerful note.

This feeling, however, lasted only until the following morning. Baker had some farewells to make, so he arrived at the office considerably later than usual. He had no sooner sat down at his desk than his secretary walked into the room with a worried frown on her face. Her words came fast. “When I arrived this morning I found Mr. Rennalls already waiting at my door. He seemed very angry and told me in quite a peremptory manner that he had a vital letter to dictate which must be sent off without any delay. He was so worked up that he couldn’t keep still and kept pacing about the room, which is most unlike him. He wouldn’t even wait

to read what he had dictated. Just signed the page where he thought the letter would end. It has been distributed, and your copy is in your “in-tray.”

Puzzled and feeling vaguely uneasy, Baker opened the “Confidential” envelope and read the following letter:

*From:* Assistant Engineer

*To:* The Chief Engineer, Caribbean Bauxite Limited

14th August

*ASSESSMENT OF INTERVIEW  
BETWEEN MESSRS. BAKER AND  
RENNALLS*

It has always been my practice to respect the advice given me by seniors, so after our interview, I decided to give careful thought once again to its main points and so make sure that I had understood all that had been said. As I promised you at the time, I had every intention of putting your advice to the best effect.

It was not, therefore, until I had sat down quietly in my home yesterday evening to consider the interview objectively that its main purport became clear. Only then did the full enormity of what you had said dawn on me. The more I thought about it, the more convinced I was that I had hit upon the real truth—and the more furious I became. With a facility in the English language which I—a poor Barracanian—cannot hope to match, you had the audacity to insult me (and through me, every Barracanian worth his salt) by claiming that our knowledge of modern living is only a paltry fifty years old whilst yours goes back 200-300 years. As if your materialistic commercial environment could possibly be compared with the spiritual values of our culture. I’ll have you know that if much of what I saw in London is representative of your most boasted culture, I hope fervently that it will never come to Barracania. By what right do you have the effrontery to condescend to us? At heart, all you Europeans think us barbarians, or, as you say amongst yourselves, we are “just down from the trees.”

Far into the night I discussed this matter



with my father, and he is as disgusted as I. He agrees with me that any company whose senior staff think as you do is no place for any Barracanian proud of his culture and race—so much for all the company "claptrap" and specious propaganda about regionalization and Barracania for the Barracanians.

I feel ashamed and betrayed. Please accept this letter as my resignation, which I wish to become effective immediately.

cc Production Manager  
Managing Director

## HOMEWORK 9

### EMPOWERING OTHERS

#### 1. Read:

1. Alfonso, "Empowering Rural Communities."
2. Hall, Beyond Culture.
3. De Franco, "Strategies of Household Subsistence and Interdependency in Nicaragua."
4. Hyden, chapter 9.
5. Chambers, chapter 8.
6. Moris, chapter 10.

#### 2. Write:

In 3 to 5 pages describe what you would do to empower the people in your case. What differences exist in the ways we empower ourselves compared with how we empower others?

This is the last writing piece. You may want to think about how you will revise your final case due on the last day of classes.

## CHAPTER THREE

# Empowering Rural Communities

Felipe B. Alfonso

472 Development programs were criticized in the sixties and seventies for concentrating on increasing production but ignoring issues of equity. While they yielded dramatic short-term benefits, these appeared of dubious sustainability. They transferred technologies and assistance resources to the poor, but made the poor more and more dependent on central bureaucracies for the satisfaction of their needs. These development programs have been labeled as *production-centered*.

The growing disenchantment with production-centered strategies has gradually led to greater emphasis on "growth with equity" and on more *people-centered* processes. The underlying assumption behind this new thrust can be summarized by the ancient saying: "Give people fish, and they can eat that day. Teach people to fish, and they can eat for the rest of their lives." Advocates of this new strategy argue that development has to be self-sustaining and must necessarily be seen as a capacity-building process.<sup>1</sup>

Experience with the people-centered processes in development over the past decade has made it clear that bureaucracies must use new methods of intervention which allow client communities to build up their capacity to take care of themselves and to manage their resources.<sup>2</sup> The new strategy also requires that rural communities be mobilized to enable them to participate more meaningfully in their own development.

This paper summarizes some of the major insights that the Rural Development Management Program (RDMP) group at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) has learned about community mobilization. The concepts laid out in this paper, particularly on the objectives and the methods of mobilization, are based on a number of case studies and on actual involvement with development programs where mobilization of the community was a major component.

The first part provides a summary of three case studies dealing with the mobilization of three rural communities undertaken by non-government organizations (NGO) in the Philippines. The second part identifies some general patterns emerging from the case studies.

## THREE CASE STUDIES

Failures far outnumber the successes in attempts at mobilizing rural communities. The following case studies document relatively successful attempts at community mobilization. They also offer some interesting contrasts in the methods used to organize the target communities.

### Kagawasan<sup>3</sup>

Sometime in 1974, three villages in the town of Kagawasan were threatened with eviction from the land they had farmed for five decades. The town mayor had informed them that the land would be used for a Boy Scout Jamboree site and the development of a watershed for the town's water system. Feeling that this was just a ploy by parties who wanted to acquire the land they were cultivating, the residents sought the help of the Roman Catholic priests in the town. The priests invited community organizers to come and help the residents of these three villages.

After a series of meetings with the organizers, a group of residents decided to go to the provincial capital to obtain information on the status of their land. For many, it was the first time they had set foot in a government office. They discovered that their land was classified as forest land and that only a presidential decree could change its classification. Shortly thereafter, 300 residents confronted the mayor and demanded that he stop harassing them with eviction threats. Subsequently, the residents engaged in a number of activities to get their land reclassified and titled. Committees were formed which engaged the regional director of the Bureau of Forestry and other government officials in a series of confrontations. Although the people failed to obtain title to their land, they effectively repelled efforts by the mayor and other entities to take the land from them.

Many minor and major disputes arose among the people of Kagawasan over the four years that they worked on the land issues. One of the major disputes surfaced in the course of the survey of landholdings, undertaken as a first step in acquiring land under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Forestry. Many of the traditional boundaries, often consisting of bushes and trees, had disappeared. Rather than settling boundary problems in court, the people constituted a "Justice and Peace" committee, whose

sior: re n ted ery

While the men focused on the land issues, the women were organized for community activities. They obtained food from the Catholic Relief Services and distributed this among the schoolchildren. They formed health committees, underwent paramedic training, and arranged for the visits of the rural health doctors. They discovered that the rural health midwife was selling medicine that should have been dispensed free. They successfully demanded that she stop collecting payment and that she apologize to the community. The women refused the offer of higher authorities to transfer the midwife to another area. They feared that another community might not be able to prevent her from engaging in the same practice.

They negotiated the tenure of a teacher critical to the area. They obtained assistance from UNICEF and from the Catholic Bishop. The entire community put pressure on a bus company to give just compensation to the family of a teacher who had been killed in an accident involving one of the company's buses.

*Organizing Process.* The organizers in Kagawasan all had experience in organizing squatters in the urban areas in Manila to secure title to the lands they were occupying. The work in Kagawasan was their first attempt to organize rural groups. The original organizers were all college graduates, mostly from the Institute of Social Work and Community Development at the University of the Philippines. In the course of the organizing work in Kagawasan, they trained other organizers. The majority of these trainees were also college graduates: 20-30% were college drop-outs. Most of them came from the neighboring municipalities and provinces.

The organizing methods used in Kagawasan were based on the belief that the people could learn organization not by listening to lectures but by organizing. The basic aim was to give the people a voice and a sense of power so that they could interact with the rest of society on an equal basis. The organizers were reluctant to use economic issues as a starting point. Such issues, they felt, tended to be divisive and thus did not serve the objective of developing a sense of community and unity.

The organizing process used in Kagawasan had a number of characteristics. First, the people were mobilized around "gut" issues, such as land rights. The organizers sought to move the people so they could begin acting on these issues. They assisted them in analyzing constraints against effective action and in developing strategies for reducing and eliminating those constraints. The first stage of the strategy was to obtain information as a group regarding, for instance, the status of their land. After each group mobilization, the organizers held reflection sessions during which the people were asked to abstract lessons or principles from the action. The fundamental process used was a cycle of diagnosis and planning, mass educa-

tion, and evaluation-reflection. Each of the mobilizations served as a learning process for the people. Through a series of mass actions, the community was expected to realize its own power.

Second, the cycle of planning-action-reflection moved from simple to more complex tasks. In Kagawasan, the people started off with the simple task of gathering information before the more complex and risky task of confronting the mayor, the regional director of the Bureau of Lands, and other powerful elites, such as the owner of the bus company and, even, the Roman Catholic Bishop of the area. The women in the area moved from simple requests for medicine to developing an entire health system for the community.

Third, the mobilization provoked a high degree of conflict and confrontation. The mobilizations were aimed at particular targets against whom the people were agitated to make demands. The demands were usually presented in an aggressive but legal manner. This resulted in tense encounters between the community representatives and the bureaucrat against whom the demands were being made. The director of the Bureau of Lands in the province, who had been avoiding a meeting with the community's delegation, one day found a group of over 100 persons headed for his office. When he tried to slip through the back door, he found another group there waiting. Though angry at this affront to his dignity, he eventually agreed to begin the proceedings for land reclassification.

Finally, the organizers in Kagawasan did not limit themselves to the land issue. They assisted the community in pursuing other issues, such as health and education, which the people felt strongly about. The more issues there were, the greater the opportunity for mass actions and for the development of leaders within the community.

The Kagawasan organizer served as a teacher-facilitator. Rather than classroom lectures on simulated problems, the organizers used live cases, where the stakes were high, and built the learning process around these problems. They mobilized people to plan, implement, evaluate, and reflect. They did not impose their views on the people, but neither were they passive spectators. Although they let people find their own direction, they initiated and led the entire process.

*Results.* The people, due to legal constraints, did not acquire title to the land. On the other hand, they were not forced to leave their land-holdings. When the organizers left the area at the end of four years, they estimated that 100 leaders had been developed within the community. No formal structures of organization were developed, but the people organized themselves into groups as issues that needed attention arose. The organizers did not initiate any economic activities, although subsequently, the people themselves started to organize consumer cooperatives to purchase supplies in bulk. They also got the National Grains Authority

to set up a buying station in the townsite so they could obtain better prices for their rice crops.

#### Gatong<sup>4</sup>

With a community of 183 families and a total population of 1,000, Gatong was the first target area in the Philippines of a United States-based Private Voluntary Organization, Indigenous Affairs Council (IAC). IAC sought to achieve the following objectives in Gatong:

- 1) an increase in income and the improvement of the quality of life of the residents;
- 2) the improvement of the health and education of the residents; and
- 3) a widely-felt sense of identity and integrity among the community residents.

After the IAC was invited into Gatong, it conducted a five-day "consult" to develop a comprehensive strategy for the community. A total of 100 nonresident consultants were involved. Representing a wide spectrum of skills, experience, and expertise, they came from various locations of the Philippines and from ten other countries. From the community, 550 were involved. During this period, the participants were grouped into teams according to expertise and interest. Field data were gathered through interviews, and the data collected were later processed in workshops and plenary sessions. The consult had five tasks leading to five outputs. One day was spent on each of the following tasks:

- 1) to ascertain the *operating vision* of the community, or its hopes and dreams for the future;
- 2) to discern the community's *underlying contradictions*, which prevented the people from achieving their aspirations;
- 3) to identify *practical proposals*, or the general areas to be taken up in order to eliminate the obstacles created by the underlying contradictions;
- 4) to determine the *tactical systems*, or the concrete steps by which the practical proposals would be realized;
- 5) to identify *actuating programs*, or the specific projects to allow the practical application of the tactical systems.

Immediately after the consult, three general assemblies and several purok meetings (puroks are geographic divisions of the village) were held to discuss the consult's findings and recommendations and to develop strategies for implementing them. These area meetings were initiated and led by the ten full-time IAC staff.

Following the ratification of the results of the consult, the community proceeded to implement the projects under the leadership and guidance of the IAC staff. People interested in particular projects were organized into working groups called guilds. To provide direction and coordina-

tion for the efforts of the various guilds, two commissions were established, the Social Commission and the Economic Commission. The resources needed to implement the projects came from donations of funds and goods secured by the IAC from business establishments and foundations.

During the third year of the project, the Gatong community, with the aid of the IAC, set up a corporate body called the Gatong Human Development Association. While official membership was limited to village residents who were 16 years old and above, the organization included practically everybody in the community. The commissions were based on functions or projects, while the puroks were residence-based.

The IAC was in Gatong for a period of four years. After this period, the management of the development of the community was turned over to the community's corporate body. During the first two years, the IAC had ten full-time international staff in the project, mostly Americans. By 1979, the number had risen to twenty-two, with the presence of other visiting foreign staff. The IAC used Gatong as a pilot and a training ground for other projects. By the time of the turnover, the staff had been reduced to an all-Filipino group of ten.

*Organizing Process.* The organizing process in Gatong was characterized by a very definite sequence of activities. It started off with the "consult," which identified the different projects needed for the community's development. Once these were ratified by the general assembly, groups were assembled to implement the projects. All planning followed a pattern determined by the IAC. It started with the identification of the "implementaries," or the concrete steps to be taken in implementing the proposals or plans. Once determined, these steps were placed on a daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly time-line or timetable. This was followed by the process called "lay-outing," or the identification and assignment of people who would execute the time-lined operational details. Finally, the time-lined plans were posted in a conspicuous place in the community under the heading "Victories." This served not only as a guide to what was to be done, but, more importantly, challenged and pressured the community or groups to actualize what it had proclaimed in public as a victory, even if it was merely a plan. This sequence of activities is often referred to in other management literature as programming.

Second, formal training and seminars also held an important place in the IAC strategy. Projects that were activated required specific skills for which those who showed an interest were trained. Craft production and design skills were improved by the introduction of technical expertise. In order to insure the viability of projects, some guild members were taught bookkeeping and financial management. Even the social projects had educational components. Potential leaders were developed through intensive seminars, and those which showed promise were further trained by the IAC through an "apprenticeship" system.

A third characteristic of the IAC process was the direct attempt to change people's perceived inability to do anything about their own development. The IAC addressed this problem in a number of ways. At the start, projects that were visible, such as road-building and beautification campaigns, were undertaken so people would feel that things were moving. This, in fact, motivated people to proceed with other projects. The IAC also integrated the use of rituals, symbols, and community singing into a lot of the community activities. For example, the week when they were moving a huge boulder was called the Week of the Great Rock. People were encouraged to write songs embodying their ideals, their hopes, and their vision. One original composition was their song entitled, "Gatong: Hope." Another spoke of their roots and history. Mother's Day, trade fairs, a sports contest, cleanliness and beautification campaigns, were elaborately celebrated. Gatong had a monthly raffle where the winner's house received a facelift, which included minor repairs, painting, and a cleaning of the surroundings by the community. Different teams took turns doing volunteer work one day a week. During these days, they performed tasks, such as road repairs, that the community as a whole needed.

Throughout the organizing process in Gatong, the IAC played a dominant role. Prior to its phasing out, the ultimate decision-making rested on the IAC staff or on the leaders the IAC appointed. The IAC secured resources for the community but also exercised sole responsibility in allocating and accounting for these resources. The conflicts that arose regarding the allocation of resources were worked out by the IAC. Ultimate decision-making was transferred to local leaders only upon the turnover of the project and the total phase-out of the IAC from Gatong.

*Results.* In the four years that the IAC was in Gatong, annual family income, based on three industries only, went up by 350%. Infant malnutrition decreased from 85% to 24% and infant mortality also dropped significantly. The birth rate also decreased from 49 to 30, while elementary school enrollment increased from 10 to 116. A total of 19 infrastructure projects were completed.

On the skills side, the IAC developed community skills functional for the implementation and management of economic projects. The formal and on-the-job training used heightened the people's skills to deal with the technical aspects of the projects chosen. The sequential steps followed in carrying out various activities also developed the skills required for programming and implementing economic projects. These were further reinforced through the establishment of structures (commissions and guilds) supportive of continuing functions. All these, plus the rituals and symbols integrated into their activities, resulted in a heightened sense of community identification and pride.

After the turn-over to local leaders, mismanagement and fraudulent practices became evident. For example, when the craft and guild manager failed to give the 20% contribution to the community funds out of the profits of the business, the others made no protest because they were afraid of the manager.

### San Miguel<sup>5</sup>

Barrio San Miguel had a population of 3,000. Two hundred twenty-four of San Miguel's 337 families derived their income from rice farming. The average farm size was 2.5 hectares. Fishing, poultry, duck-raising, basket-weaving, swine-raising, and tricycle-driving provided other sources of income. Most of the farmers in the area were former Huks, members of a socialist/communist radical movement in the fifties. In 1967, they formed themselves into the San Miguel Farmers' Association to confront a farm overseer. An irrigation pump, given by the government, had fallen into the hands of this overseer, who exacted exorbitant fees for its use and loaned money at usurious interest. Nothing came out of the confrontation.

In 1972, after suffering from typhoons and rampaging floods, the leaders of the association sought the assistance of the Mother Rosa Memorial Foundation (MRMF). The MRMF was a foundation established by friends and alumnae of a girls' college in Manila, run by a religious group. At the time, the MRMF was running a technical school in the town where San Miguel was located.

The MRMF immediately took several steps to assist the community. It made arrangements so the farmers could get access to credit through a neighboring rural bank. A prominent businessman, who was a board member of MRMF, negotiated the purchase of the irrigation pump from the overseer. He advanced the money for the purchase. The rural bank advanced the expenses for the rehabilitation and operation of the pump. The association operated the pump and charged fees among its members to defray expenses and to amortize the pump. The fees were, however, lower than those charged by the overseer. In 1975, the pump was replaced by a larger one, secured from the National Irrigation Administration with the assistance of the MRMF.

After the initial assistance given to San Miguel, the MRMF felt that it would be necessary to put together a more comprehensive development program, not only for San Miguel, but for all the fourteen villages in the town. Hence, it launched an integrated development program with six major concerns: community education, rice production and irrigation management, agribusiness development, health and nutrition, research and monitoring, and Christian formation.

In 1976, another flash flood hit Luzon, leaving behind submerged rice

fields and damaged crops. Since the farmers of San Miguel anticipated that they would be unable to pay their loans, they were certain that they would not be able to obtain additional loans from the rural bank for the subsequent cropping season. Accordingly, they again sought the assistance of the MRMF, which then approached some friends in the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP). Established by the Philippine business community, the PBSP lent out funds for rural development. For four successive years, the San Miguel Farmers' Association obtained production loans from PBSP.

One of the conditions imposed by PBSP was the development by the MRMF of a community education program for San Miguel. The MRMF hired and fielded community organizers to organize the educational activities before, during, and after the rice production cycle. Team-building sessions were conducted, as well as sessions on various topics like leadership, financial management, water management, and rice production. A number of non-formal education activities were also undertaken.

In 1979, the MRMF pulled out its community organizers and left behind a core of trained leaders and community organization volunteers who took on the task of further development in the area.

*Organizing Process.* The organizing methods used in San Miguel contained features noted in both Kagawasan and Gatong. MRMF focused on both long-term and short-term concerns. The short-term concerns were undertaken in the context of a framework for the comprehensive development of the community. Its methods included non-formal, action-oriented processes, as well as formal training programs. The organizing strategy of MRMF had two major objectives. The first was the organization of viable, indigenous groups with attitudes and skills for planning, implementing, and evaluating socio-economic activities. The second was the development of trained leaders with the capabilities for management and leadership responsibility on a self-reliant and sustained basis. Although MRMF had been helping San Miguel since 1972, it was not until 1976 that this focused strategy was evolved and implemented.

MRMF believed that there were six requirements for the development of viable and self-sustained communities:

- 1) developing group building and basic communication skills to develop cohesive group identity;
- 2) developing organizational objectives and structures;
- 3) developing leadership;
- 4) developing project development and management skills while projects were being implemented;
- 5) developing group linkages, and the building of a council composed of different groups and organizations; and

- 6) developing volunteerism so that organizations produced their own indigenous para-professional workers, and the role of the community organizer became that of a consultant.

At the start, a survey was used to determine the tasks the community had to address. The community organizers then proceeded to help the community develop the other skills it needed. The methods used included formal seminars covering a variety of subjects, focused mainly on technical and economic management skills. The attendance in most cases was limited to a few people. Apart from the formal training sessions, the community undertook a number of group activities on its own. Although it acted as broker for the community to gain access to resources, MRMF left it to the association to manage and administer these. For example, the production loans secured from PBSP were released to the association. The Finance Committee released the needed funds in staggered amounts to group leaders, who, in turn, distributed the money to their members. The farmers were also left very much to themselves to work out their conflicts. They disciplined erring members, ran sessions to reflect on their experiences, and assessed the performance of their leaders. They even developed performance criteria for their leaders. When a member failed to pay his loan to the association, the association's board authorized the group to which he belonged to take over the management of his farm.

Although the erring farmer continued to work on his farm, decisions on when to undertake farming activities, such as planting and harvesting, were made by the group. The association also decided how to dispose of the farmer's harvest.

To insure continuity, MRMF assisted San Miguel in developing a structure for their association in 1976. The general assembly elected the officers who constituted the executive board. The chairman headed the executive board, while the rest of the officers headed the different committees. Committee members, ranging from three to five in number, were appointed by the committee chairman and approved by the board. The *damayans*, the smallest unit of the organization, consisted of five to six farmers tilling contiguous farms. These were established to ensure maximum participation from members and to inculcate in the farmers the importance of collective undertaking and mutual assistance. A *damayan* leader was elected by the members.

Aside from establishing a structure within San Miguel, the MRMF also federated it with other neighboring communities that were receiving help from the MRMF. Volunteer workers from within the community were also trained to take over many of the functions performed by the MRMF. When the MRMF pulled out its community workers in 1979, it left behind a core group of leaders and community organizing volunteers.

*Results.* Average rice yield per hectare increased from 80-90 cavans to 120-130 cavans.<sup>6</sup> Repayment of production loans from 1976 to 1981 was 100%, except for the year 1979-80, when it was 75%. In the same period, the association generated savings of P113,971.80. These came out of forced savings, patronage rebates from fertilizer and chemical purchases, and from commission fees charged to owners of threshing machines operating within the area. From these savings, the association bought a truck for hauling and a piece of land, where they planned to put up a warehouse and a rice mill.

These gains invited the attention of "outsiders." At times, the community succumbed to external threats. For example, the association acceded, because of fear, to a Barangay (Village) captain's demand for one-third of the commission fee paid to the community funds by the thresher owners operating within San Miguel.

#### CAPACITIES OF A SELF-RELIANT COMMUNITY

In none of the three communities did the NGO involved intend to stay permanently. Although they differed in their specific objectives and methods, each of them was mobilizing its target community to become self-reliant and self-sustaining. Self-reliance implies the freedom and the ability of a community to carry out activities needed for its growth and development. Mobilization can be viewed as a process for developing these skills and capacities. It will, therefore, be instructive to review the cases and see if the required skills for self-reliance were developed.

As shown in Table 1, the organizing effort in each of the cases cited had different specific objectives. In Kagawasan, the focus was to develop the community so it could demand its rights and defend them from encroachment by outsiders. By using mass mobilizations and an iterative cycle of planning-action-reflection, the organizers helped the community to develop a capacity for group decision-making and action. To implement its plans, the community had to mobilize the resources it needed. The interaction with external bodies, such as the government, provided ample opportunities to develop negotiating skills. A felt sense of unity, reinforced by the ability of the members to manage their internal relations and conflicts, enhanced the ability of the community to act as a body.

The organizing objectives in Gatong were quite different. Priority was placed on improving the economic well-being of the community and on improving the health and education of its members. In order to attain these objectives, the IAC relied heavily on project management. The organizers initiated numerous economic projects, both to generate income and to give the members of the community the opportunity to use these programming concepts in actual situations. To insure some continuity in the management of these projects, they developed a formal organizational structure for the community.

TABLE 1

| Objectives                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Processes/Methods                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Structures                                                                                                                            | Role of Organizers                                          | Outcome                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>San Miguel</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                       |                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Integrated development of community covering:<br>agri-business<br>rice production<br>irrigation<br>health & nutrition<br>research & monitoring<br>Christian formation<br>Education & training of the community                                                 | Team-building sessions<br>Formal training<br>Action reflection<br>Organization of groups with planning and implementing skills for socio-economic projects<br>Training of leaders<br>Articulated stages for development of community | Formal association with officers & committees<br>Damayans, 5-6 farmers with contiguous farms (self-managed & mutual liability groups) | - Enablers<br>- Facilitators<br>- Trainers<br>- Negotiators | Increased rice yields<br>Repayment of loans<br>Savings<br>Skills:<br>Ability to manage economic activities<br>Ability to make decisions<br>Ability to generate and manage resources<br>Ability to manage conflict<br>Ability to discipline members & leaders                  |
| <i>Kagawasan</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                       |                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Obtain what is due them and protect their rights<br>Give people a voice and a sense of power<br>To withstand external pressures<br>To give people a "voice" to demand their rights<br>To give people power to protect their rights from encroachment by others | Planning-Action-Reflection<br>Mass mobilizations<br>Formation of committees                                                                                                                                                          | Ad-hoc depending on needs e.g. committees.<br>Once function is fulfilled, committee is disbanded                                      | - Enablers<br>- Facilitators                                | Protect right to stay in land<br>Obtained assistance from agencies e.g., UNICEF & CRS<br>Skills:<br>Capacity for group action<br>Ability to make group decisions<br>Ability to manage conflicts<br>Ability to negotiate with external bodies<br>Ability to mobilize resources |
| <i>Gatong</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                       |                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| To increase income and quality of life<br>Improve health and education<br>To develop a sense of identity and integrity as a community                                                                                                                          | Formal training and seminars<br>On the job application<br>Use of symbols<br>Formation of commissions<br>Training of leaders                                                                                                          | Formal community structure based on functions and residence                                                                           | Decision-makers<br>Initiators<br>Teachers                   | Increased income<br>Improved health & education<br>Decreased infant mortality<br>Heightened sense of community<br>Skills for implementing and managing economic projects e.g., programming                                                                                    |



The San Miguel case showed features of the other two cases. While the organizers helped the community to improve its economic well-being, they also paid attention to enabling its members to manage their internal relations. Formal training sessions and "on the job" applications were used to impart technical and economic management skills for income-generating activities. In addition, team building and reflection sessions were employed to enable the members to make group decisions, manage conflict, and discipline themselves and their leaders.

A review of the three cases shows that the organizers assisted each community to develop at least some of the skills needed for the primary objectives of the mobilization efforts. However, the results tend to show that each set of skills, though necessary, was not sufficient to enable a community to become self-reliant over a long period of time. A community which could combine all of the skills developed in each of the three communities would have a good start towards self-reliance. It would be able to manage its internal affairs, its economic activities, and its relations with their external environment. Each of these sets of skills deserves fuller discussion.

### Organizational Management Skills

This group of skills refers to the capacities required to manage the internal organizational relationships among the individual members of the community. The cases show that a community needs to do two things. The first is to develop unity and cohesion among the members. This follows from the very nature of rural groups. Controlling very little in the way of economic resources, their major advantage is their numbers. To capitalize on this advantage, they need to be able to act together as a group. To develop and enhance this unity, they need:

- the ability to identify and establish the collective needs, objectives, and priorities;
- the ability to arrive at group decisions;
- the ability to plan and develop structures to achieve goals with reasonable means;
- the ability to resolve internal conflicts.

The development of these skills was apparent in the cases of Kagawasan and San Miguel, but we see very little evidence of them in the case of Gatong.

The need for these skills is borne out by other experiences. UNICEF has for a long time promoted and supported popular participation in the areas of education, health, nutrition, and water supply and sanitation in underprivileged rural and urban settings. From these experiences, UNICEF has derived guidelines for its field workers. Two of these guidelines emphasize the development of the skills we have discussed:

- To help poor people go through the process of identifying their own priority concerns, organize for action around those concerns, and develop solutions to pre-identified problems.
- To train members of existing groups—formal and non-formal—in the skills of simple problem identification, data collection, and analysis leading to their own project development, based on local resources or a combination of their own and outside assistance.<sup>7</sup>

Similarly, Goldsmith identifies participation in decision-making as one of the differentiating factors of the more prosperous and successful villages in Korea's Saemaul Undong Movement.<sup>8</sup>

The other major task for managing the internal relationships among the community members is to sustain and maintain the unity and cohesion that has been established. Self-reliance implies a stability of relationships over a long period. External change agents who organize and mobilize communities will need to leave at some point. The Gatong case demonstrates that unless those who are left behind are able to sustain the relationships that have been developed with the assistance of the organizers, the community will not be able to grow any further. In fact, it will quickly retrogress, and the initial benefits obtained will rapidly dissipate. Insuring the ability to carry on requires:

- the ability to provide incentives for individual involvement and to monitor, control, and evaluate individual and group performance;
- the ability to develop leaders who are responsive to community needs;
- the ability to hold leaders accountable and to enforce discipline among members;
- the ability to develop and modify structures to institutionalize relationships among the members;
- the capacity for problem-solving.

The rationale for these skills is quite self-evident. No organization can continue to exist without the support of its members. Hence, it will have to sustain the continuing involvement of its members by ensuring through its leaders that the organization is relevant to the satisfaction of members' needs. Furthermore, when deviations occur, mechanisms for dealing with erring members and leaders should be in place. Korten's review of member-controlled cooperatives showed that the successful ones had "internal structures (that) allowed members to hold leaders accountable and enforced member discipline."<sup>9</sup> Leader control is a key concern because rural communities, no matter how poor, are generally not homogeneous. They are characterized by some kind of socio-economic differentiation. This has usually resulted in structures where a few elites tend to dominate others w' re d' dent hem

The development of structures is also essential. In order to provide for the stability of the community, it is necessary to provide a framework and a tool for managing on-going relations and functions. Such a structure was missing in Kagawasan, since the organizers did not mobilize for a continuing function. It was a critical element in Gatong and San Miguel because economic activities need to be sustained over a long period. While structures provide some degree of stability, care must be exercised that they do not become permanent. As the community goes into new ventures and activities, required changes in structures and processes need to be adopted.

Problem-solving skills are also important. Sustained growth will depend on the community's ability to cope with new situations. One of the insights emerging out of the development experiences of the past few decades is the inadequacy of the blueprint approach as a response to the needs of rural development. Such an approach is inflexible and is not able to respond to unanticipated developments and problems. Because development is a dynamic process, one must be able to deal with unexpected outcomes and difficulties. Social systems need to adapt to changing conditions and requirements. As Dunn points out, "social system evolution is the result of a problem-solving process..."<sup>10</sup>

### Economic Resources Management Skills

The acquisition and management of economic resources are important requirements for self-reliance. Communities need goods and services to feed their members and to sustain a rising standard of living. But the emphasis on the economic aspects of development should not lead to ignoring other sets of skills. We saw this in the case of Gatong where the thrust toward the attainment of economic benefits was so dominant that not enough attention was paid to the capacity for self-management and for dealing with external pressures. The same was true with the San Miguel case, though to a lesser extent. On the other hand, in Kagawasan there was a total absence of any organized effort to develop economic resources management skills. Although the organizers realized that these were needed, they preferred not to get involved with economic issues, partly because they felt that economic issues had a divisive effect, and partly because they did not possess the necessary skills to deal with them.

The experiences of many development institutions and research and consulting organizations have amply demonstrated the necessity of developing economic resource management skills. Notable among these groups is Development Alternatives, Inc., which has been involved in various rural development programs funded by USAID. Summarizing their experiences, Honadle says:<sup>11</sup>

In fact, it can be hypothesized that when dealing with non-dominant groups, an essential element of successful capacity-building is likely to be the acquisition of control over a central set of natural resources. Thus, capacity-building efforts, based only on providing social services or improving management practices and procedures, are unlikely to be sustainable. Success commonly requires a link to income-producing activity and sufficient control over the disposition of that income.

Economic resources management skills, then, should enable the community to deal with two important issues: the acquisition and management of resources, and the distribution of the benefits among the members of the community.

Even the poorest among communities tend to have some form of indigenous resources. A sustained pattern of development will require a capacity to renew and multiply these resources. A community will have to balance the use of its resources to meet both its current needs and its needs for growth. To fulfill this function, the relevant skills are:

- the ability to tap outside resources or support when local resources are insufficient to achieve targets and objectives;
- the ability to generate economic benefits for the community;
- the ability to sustain activities over the long term;
- the ability to allocate resources according to set priorities;
- the ability to maintain records and to keep track of resources.

As seen from the San Miguel and Gatong cases, it is not enough to acquire resources, manage them, and generate benefits. The long-term viability of the community requires that it also deal with the issue of the distribution of these benefits. One of the constant disappointments with development programs is their inability to channel benefits to the poorer sectors of society. The differentiation that exists even in rural societies often results in structures that allow elites to capture the benefits from development programs. What is needed is not equal but, rather, equitable distribution of these benefits. This can further reinforce the cohesion built within the community and the continuing commitment of the members. The relevant skills to fulfill this function are:

- the ability to distribute economic benefits in a manner that is fair and equitable to all;
- the ability to ensure a decent standard of living for the members of the community.

### Political Skills

These skills refer to the capacity of an organization to deal with external institutions and persons. A rural community cannot remain viable for long unless it is able to deal effectively with its environment. Economically,

the rural community usually does not have all the resources it needs to satisfy the needs of its members. Similarly, it needs external markets for the excess goods and services that it produces. Politically, many policies and actions of other institutions often threaten the freedom and the rights of communities to make decisions regarding their own development, as shown especially in the case of Kagawasan. The structure of society is such that the imbalance in resource bases of different groups has resulted in the emergence of local elites who have exploited the poor. Strong patterns of social differentiation have also resulted in structures that reinforce the dominance of a few powerful elites. Consequently, the poor are frequently inhibited from making decisions regarding their own development.

In order to manage these relations with their respective environment, communities need to develop a sense of power to demand and protect their right to have a say in things that affect them. Due to lack of resources, they are often unable to influence events as individuals. What they need to do is to capitalize on their numbers by acting together as an organized unit. The establishment of an organization, however, does not in itself lead to the power to influence the course of events. Communities need to acquire skills to build coalitions with other groups with similar interests and to effectively negotiate with others. The set of skills needed to manage the environment includes:

- the ability to negotiate with external groups;
- the ability to establish external sources of power and support and to use these for the benefit of the community;
- the ability to develop and build productive linkages with groups that share similar interests and objectives;
- the ability to resolve conflicts with other groups, individuals or institutions;
- the ability to protect community resources and gains from external threats.

### Technical Skills

Technical skills refer to those capacities needed in order to carry out certain activities, such as farming, stone-cutting, and the like. One class of technical skills relates to economic and other livelihood programs. These skills are not developed in a vacuum, but within the context of certain activities. In Kagawasan, the community needed reliable information on the applicable forestry laws and procedures in order to develop their strategy to address the land issue. Specific weaving and stone-cutting skills were essential ingredients for the success of the economic livelihood projects in Gatong. The repayment rates in San Miguel would have been very different if the farmers had not used the appropriate farming technologies to cultivate their rice fields.

There is another area of technical knowledge implied in the capacity-building process. This area focuses more on the nature of the capacity-building process itself. For example, knowledge of the nature, dynamics, and structure of groups is critical to enable the community to adjust its internal structure and relations to its evolving needs. Some knowledge about the dynamics of change is also going to be very useful. This knowledge may not initially reside in the community, but in order to develop self-reliance, a community needs to acquire the skill to search for such knowledge. Having acquired the knowledge, it must learn to use it. Knowledge in itself does not lead to action, and action is what leads to growth and development.

Although we have dealt with each set of skills separately, in practice there is a lot of overlap among them. Not only are they very closely inter-related, but they also mutually reinforce one another. Organizational management skills affect the community's ability to manage its economic resources, and the way economic activities are managed, in turn, can either reinforce or destroy the sense of cohesion and unity among the members. Similarly, political skills can enhance the ability to gain access to resources, while the extent of a community's resources has tremendous impact on its ability to influence outsiders and outside entities.

### PROCESS FOR MOBILIZATION

#### Starting Point

Our discussion has shown that in order to be self-reliant, a community has to develop four sets of skills. Where does one start? Is there a natural starting point among the different capacities we have described from which one can logically progress to develop the other elements of self-reliance?

Theoretically, one can argue that a logical starting point is to develop the capacity to manage internal relations among the different members of the community. Unless they are able to act as a group, there is very little that they can do. In practice, however, the cases we examined indicate different beginning points. The initial focus in Kagawasan was political. The first mobilizations were aimed at getting the government to recognize the rights of the people to secure title over the lands they were cultivating. The two other programs started off with addressing economic issues. In Gatong, efforts were concentrated on developing livelihood projects to generate resources for the sustenance of the community. The initial concern in San Miguel was the need for credit. What was common in the starting points of the three cases, however, was that they were all based on the "felt needs" of the people. This appears to be a most logical starting point because any attempt at organizing the rural poor must respond to their articulated concerns and problems. Their participation involves investment of time and other resources and they must see such investment as beneficial.

Most mobilizations of rural communities involve the intervention of external change agents. From the start, it is therefore crucial to identify the real felt needs of the community and to insure that there is a fit between them and the capacities and mandate of the change agent.

The cases show that felt needs can be established either through informal or formal means. In Kagawasan, the primary method used was informal. As the organizers began to live in the community, they gathered information regarding prevailing power and leadership structures and the people's perception of their own problems. In Gatong, the organizers started off with a formal and elaborate five-day "consult." In San Miguel, a formal, but less structured, approach for assessing needs was used. The organizers conducted survey-feedback research by carrying out interviews among a sizeable sample of the community members.

In addition to determining the felt needs of the community, it is important to ascertain that there is a fit between these felt needs and the mandate and the capacities of the change agent. Some change agents, like the private voluntary organizations in our cases, have very broad mandates so that they can deal with almost any community need. Others, like government agencies, tend to have much narrower mandates. Should there be a lack of fit between the mandate of the change agent and the felt needs of the community, there exists a real danger for the intervening agency "to force" its way through to the community. As a result, there will be a reduction, or even a total absence, of community participation. Another possible result of such a lack of congruence is that the change agent could unconsciously lead the community to address issues with which the change agent is more comfortable, but which may not be of great concern to the members of the community.

In summary, there are three screens that finally determine the starting point of mobilization: the community's felt needs, the mandate of the change agent, and the latter's capacity and skills. For a successful beginning, it is necessary to achieve a fit among these three.

### Progression from the Starting Point

After a mobilization has gotten off to a successful start, what further directions should it take? An examination of the field data is again instructive. In both San Miguel and Gatong, the initial mobilization was around economic issues. As the communities managed their income-generating projects, certain powerful individuals became interested in taking advantage of the benefits generated at the expense of the community members. When this became apparent, it was time to address the enhancement of the community's political skills and capacity to address the potential threat. In contrast, Kagawasan initially concentrated on developing political skills. The community's eventual felt need and interest in developing some

income-generating projects was the trigger for a greater emphasis on economic resources management skills. The evidence from the three cases seems to show that it will be difficult to pre-plan and predetermine the exact time and direction of the required shift in focus from one set of capacities to another. What the change agent needs to be aware of is that there is more than one set of skills needed for self-reliance and that a shift of emphasis from one set of skills to another most likely needs to be accompanied by a change in the methods used for capacity-building.

### Mobilization Methods

The methods used to develop community capacities are described in the cases and are summarized in Table 1. The two principal methods used were the planning-action-reflection mode, or, simply, action-reflection and formal training. The former was the principal method used in Kagawasan, and the latter in Gatong. In San Miguel the organizers used a combination of both.

*Action-Reflection.* The action-reflection method used in Kagawasan was very conflict-oriented. The people were mobilized against a common enemy, the regional director of the Bureau of Forestry. The underlying assumption is that people are more easily mobilized to unite themselves and to develop a sense of power in dealing with their environment when they have a common enemy. Hence, this method could be a powerful tool for developing political skills. However, there can be very serious consequences in the use of this method. The conflict-confrontation mode possess the characteristics of what management scientists call a "zero-sum game." Game theory tells us that when a zero-sum game is played, the total value of the benefits is reduced. Furthermore, succeeding games tend to be zero-sum. Finally, zero-sum games lead to inflexibility in defining the problems that are the subject of the game. Development is not just transferring resources from one pocket to another. Development means insuring that the growth in the total amount of benefits is equitably distributed among the different segments of society. It requires continuous collaborative effort among different segments so that problems are creatively solved.

There is another form of the action-reflection method—the negotiation mode. This was used in the communals program of the National Irrigation Administration of the Philippine government, discussed in Chapter 11 of this volume. Instead of focusing on a common enemy or oppressor, this process seeks to create a climate of cooperation so that the parties are able to combine their expertise and resources and channel them to the solution of community problems. The result is an enhanced capacity on the part not only of the community but also of the other agencies or

institutions that the community is negotiating with. The collaborative climate allows both to learn from each other. In the communals program of NIA, major decisions on the design of the system, for example, were the outcome of negotiations between the irrigators group and NIA technical staff. Each party learned from the other. The synergy resulted in more functional designs which each party working on its own could not have accomplished. This climate, however, presupposes a certain level of maturity of the parties involved. It assumes a focus on a common set of objectives.

In choosing between the conflict-confrontation method and the negotiation mode, one needs to be reminded by the principal objective of mobilization. We can organize people to tackle specific issues and problems, such as land tenure or access to credit. We do this not only to achieve specific results on these issues, but also as part of a series of building blocks that will enhance community capacity to carry out functions that are essential to the community's survival and growth. The need for a continuing relationship and interaction between the community and its environment poses serious questions about the use of the conflict-confrontation mode. This approach can do potentially long-term damage to the relationship between the community and other elements in the environment. However, experience has shown that situations do exist where certain institutions and agencies cannot be "awakened" except through confrontation. Where the use of the confrontation method is deemed essential, the organizers and the community must keep in mind its potential risks so that these can be managed.

*Formal Training.* A considerable amount of formal training was used in Gatong and San Miguel. This mode is functional for imparting knowledge and can build up a community's capacity for technical self-reliance. To enhance its value, it is important to ensure that the subjects of the lectures are within the experience of the community. The additional formal training merely serves to sharpen the instinctive wisdom acquired by people through experience. One of the principal shortcomings of formal training, however, is that knowledge does not necessarily lead to action.

For sure, there are methods other than those that were used in the cases we discussed. One does not need to be married to a particular method to the exclusion of the others. What is critical is to ensure that the methods used are functional for the development of community capacities. The data from the three cases does seem to indicate that community capacities are enhanced more through action and active involvement than through formal training, whose primary object is to pass on knowledge. Therefore, the emphasis on mobilization should be directed towards having the people themselves undertake the required activities.

This implies that the organizers or the change agents should be enablers rather than implementors. The function of the organizer is to develop community capacity. He manages the learning process rather than the outcome of the project. He leaves the latter task to the community.

### SUMMARY

We have examined three cases where external change agents have tried to mobilize rural communities. Our discussion has focused on the major objective of mobilization—the building of community capacity to address its own needs. We have identified four sets of critical skills that a community must possess before it can become self-reliant. We also discussed some of the processes and methods used to develop these skills. However, we have tried to relate our discussion of the processes and methods to the development of the needed community capacities. There is at times a great temptation for one to be dogmatic about his methods. Ultimately, these methods will have to be judged on the basis of the major objective of mobilization: Do they result in developing skills that empower rural communities to address their own needs?

### NOTES

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# BEYOND CULTURE

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## *Introduction*

There are two related crises in today's world. The first and most visible is the **population/environment** crisis. The second, more subtle but equally lethal, is **humankind's relationships to its extensions, institutions, ideas**, as well as the relationships among the many individuals and groups that inhabit the globe.

If both crises are not resolved, neither will be. Despite our faith in technology and our reliance on technological solutions, **there are no technical solutions to most of the problems confronting human beings**. Furthermore, even those technical solutions that can be applied to environmental problems can't be applied rationally until mankind transcends the intellectual limitations imposed by our institutions, our philosophies, and our cultures. Compounding all of this is the reality of politics.

Politics is a major part of life—beginning in the home and becoming more and more visible as power is manifest in the larger institutions on the local, national, and international levels. We should not be fooled by the façade of either politics or political institutions. What we are talking about is **power and its use**. Certainly there is more to life than either disguised or raw power; at least one hopes that in time the power motive will combine with more rational, more humane ways of proceeding. Apart from power, culture still plays a prominent visible role in the relations between Russians and the West, for example. Culture has always been an issue, not only between Europe and Russia,



but among the European states as well. The Germans, the French, the Italians, the Spanish, Portuguese, and English, as well as the Scandinavian and Balkan cultures, all have their own identity, language, systems of nonverbal communication, material culture, history, and *ways of doing things*. The frequently heard argument that cultures are not unique is one of the irrationalities discussed in the chapters to follow. At this moment, Europe is prosperous, temporarily calm, and causing few problems. But what about the clash of cultures in the Middle East that threatens to involve all countries that are high consumers of oil? And what about the emergence of China and Japan? Any Westerner who was raised outside the Far East and claims he really understands and can communicate with either the Chinese or the Japanese is deluding himself.<sup>1</sup> On the horizon are the multiple cultures of Africa and the emerging nations of Latin America demanding to be recognized in their own right. In all these crises, the future depends on man's being able to transcend the limits of individual cultures. To do so, however, he must first recognize and accept the multiple hidden dimensions of unconscious culture, because every culture has its own hidden, unique form of unconscious culture.

Exacerbating the world's political and cultural problems are environmental and economic crises. As Hardin<sup>2</sup> showed with wisdom and insight in his article entitled, "The Tragedy of the Commons,"<sup>3</sup> mankind cannot continue to increase the consumption of the world's finite resources. The classical English pattern of using the village commons (that communally owned and used land which was available for pasturing *private* livestock) did not involve a conflict between public and private welfare *as long as there was enough land*. However, as herds increased, the overgrazed land became less productive so that herdsmen had to increase their stocks in order to stay even, and thus the commons were destroyed. The tragedy was that profits accrued to the opportunistic herdsmen who exploited the

commons the most, while losses were shared by *all* the users. Those who exercised restraint were doubly penalized. Not only did they suffer losses from the overgrazing of neighbors, but they were unable to exploit the market by means of their own production.

Today, the sea, the air, the waterways, the earth, the land and what it produces have all become our commons, and all are being overused. It is clear that appeals to altruism are futile and in a sense foolhardy. Technology will not resolve this dilemma either because these are human problems. Hardin argues that the single-track, Newtonian approach will satisfy only the politicians and the big exploiters of the commons who stand to gain from oversimplification of issues. What is needed, he feels, is a more comprehensive, Darwinian (Dionysian) approach that can be used as a basis for ~~establishing priorities, alternatives, and options~~. In a word, unless human beings can learn to pull together and regulate consumption and production patterns, they are headed for disaster. It is impossible to cooperate or to do any of these things unless we know each other's ways of thinking.

The answer lies not in restricting human endeavors, but in evolving new alternatives, new possibilities, new dimensions, new options, and new avenues for creative uses of human beings based on the recognition of the multiple and unusual talents so manifest in the diversity of the human race.

This brings us to an important question that has grown in my mind throughout my lifetime. It has to do with ~~our underlying attitudes toward ourselves~~. I am not speaking of something superficial, which can be easily observed or experienced, but something deeper and more subtle than what appears on the surface. The question is: ~~Why are most people so unnecessarily hard on themselves?~~ Why do they not make better use of their talents? It is as though we nurtured the child that is in all of us and, in being childish, were afraid of each other. This is not a simple

problem, and it may be worldwide. Certainly the human species has not begun to tap its potential and half suspecting this deficiency, we blame everyone and everything except the real culprit.

We see evidence of mankind's disparaging itself in folklore, religion, philosophies, institutions, as well as in daily life. It seems that these processes are not within the reach of conscious control but deep within us. Freud was so struck by the capacity of the human race to put itself down that he posited a death instinct and built his theories around the notion that the human species inevitably advances at its own expense. Freud believed that the basic energies (the libidinal forces) had to be repressed for people to even live in groups, and that the libidinal energy was "sublimated" into the creative, cooperative drives that produced modern institutions. For him, creativity was a by-product of the necessity for man to repress his human nature. Like all of us, Freud was a product of *his* times, which were characterized by such thinking, and in the context of the times much of Freud's thinking made sense. Nevertheless, the study of our past as well as our present fails to confirm Freud's view that humans advance and build institutions through a process of sublimation of sexual energy. This book suggests another alternative, namely that once people began evolving their extensions, particularly language, tools and institutions, they got caught in the web of what I term "extension transference" (Chapter 2), and as a consequence, they err in judgment and become alienated from and incapable of controlling the monsters they have created. In this sense, humans have advanced at the expense of that part of themselves that has been extended, and as a consequence ended up repressing human nature in its many forms. Man's goal from this point should be to rediscover that lost, alienated natural self.

Certainly, there are tremendous areas of conflict between Western man and his material, and nonmaterial ex-

tensions. The instruments we have created are like ill-fitting shoes. By creating extensions that don't fit or don't work, humans have failed to develop some of the most important aspects of their own psychic and physical potential. According to some of the most distinguished and thoughtful students of the mind, ~~perhaps the most devastating and damaging thing that can happen to someone is to fail to fulfill his potential.~~ A kind of gnawing emptiness, longing, frustration, and displaced anger overwhelms people when this occurs. Whether the anger is turned inward on the self, or outward toward others, dreadful destruction results. We know that mankind has great talent; we see evidence of it on all sides. Yet, how humans evolved with such an incredible reservoir of diverse talents is not completely understood. We haven't looked, possibly because ~~we are not nearly enough in awe of ourselves,~~ possibly because we know so little and have nothing to measure ourselves against.

Part of the problem lies in the tension between creativeness and diversity and the rather specific limiting needs of institutions. Most cultures and the institutions they engender are the result of having to evolve highly specialized solutions to rather specific problems. For example, in England during the early days of the Industrial Revolution,<sup>4</sup> when villagers and field hands were brought into the factories to work, the first generations of mill hands had not been conditioned to the factory whistle and linear-scheduled time. Like all preindustrial peoples, when they earned enough to pay off their debts and keep body and soul together for a while, they would quit and go home, much to the consternation of the factory owners. This situation could have continued indefinitely if there had not been a hidden trap—children. Not only were there no child labor laws then, but no one to care for the children at home; so the malleable children worked with their parents in the factory, and being young, they became imprinted by the whistle. When they grew up they brought up their



own children accordingly, thereby setting in motion a series of events and ways of handling time which fit neither the psychic nor the physical needs of the workers. However, because the adaptation to the linear schedule had become internalized and automatic, it was viewed as an asset and not a liability. It has taken almost a century and a quarter to begin to work itself out. Today children are brought up on a different time system—one that is less obviously tied down in time and space, and to single institutions; there is also growing pressure to overcome monotony and the tempo conflicts between man and the machine. Because we have put ourselves in our own zoo, we find it difficult to break out. Since people can't fight institutions on which their lives depend, the result is that first they unconsciously turn their anger inward then later outward.

To continue our basic theme, many people's sense of worth is directly related to the number of situations in which they are in control, which means that many people have problems with their self-image because they are clearly in control of so little.<sup>5</sup> The ultimate in human degradation and the subservience of human needs to institutional forms is shown in Ken Kesey's<sup>6</sup> novel, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Big Nurse in Kesey's book epitomizes all the anti-humanism and destructiveness, all the distortions of the communication process, all the violations of cultural norms that one finds in the bureaucracies that we have created. The book is an exquisitely apt metaphorical statement of the powerlessness and lack of self-affirmation so common in our times.

Powerlessness and lack of self-affirmation lead to aggression, as repeatedly asserted by psychologists and psychiatrists. Psychological powerlessness is the result of past events, but situational and cultural powerlessness are here and now. Blacks and other minorities rioted in recent years because they saw themselves as powerless to make the system work. There is no other way to explain the incredible

outburst of rage triggered by the assassination of Martin Luther King or the "incursion" into Cambodia. The groundwork had been laid long before, but it was suddenly and overwhelmingly apparent to minority groups.

Things are quieter in the ghettos now because the rhythm of black life is in a quiet phase—they are taking a breather. It is quieter on the campus since the winding down of the Vietnam War. But a major and continuing source of frustration exists because the many gifts and talents of women, blacks, Native Americans, Spanish-Americans and others are not only unrecognized, but frequently denigrated by members of the dominant group. It is the corrosive daily frustration, the inability to communicate or to establish meaningful relationships that is so soul-shrinking.

The cultural and psychological insight that is important for us to accept is that ~~denying culture and obscuring the effects that it can have on human talents can be as destructive and potentially dangerous as denying civil~~. We must come to terms with both. It is our powerlessness in the face of culture and the cultural limitations placed on the development of self that result in aggression. Paradoxically, the only way that we can escape the hidden constraints of covert culture is to involve ourselves actively and consciously in the very parts of life that we take most for granted.

A massive cultural literacy movement that is not imposed, but which springs from within is called for. We can all benefit from a deeper knowledge of what an incredible organism we really are. We can grow, swell with pride, and breathe better for having so many remarkable talents. To do so, however, we must stop ranking both people and talents and accept the fact that there are many roads to truth and no culture has a corner on the path or is better equipped than others to search for it. Furthermore, no man can tell another how to conduct that search.

Writing a book is a cooperative effort; while the author is ultimately responsible for the content, form, style, and organization of ideas, he depends upon the assistance of others, without which his task would be immeasurably lengthened.

My first acknowledgment, therefore, with thanks and appreciation, is to Mildred Reed Hall, my friend, partner, and wife, whose faith in my work frequently kept me going in times of doubt or stress. Despite fulltime professional responsibilities, she made it possible for me to have time for writing by assuming burdens and shielding me from the demands of others. She has also read and criticized several versions of this book. For editorial assistance I am indebted to Roma McNickle, whose skill and experience were extremely helpful. My first editor at Doubleday, William Whitehead, provided an extensive and thoughtful critique of the first draft. The second draft of the book was reviewed and strengthened by Elizabeth Knappman. To both these Doubleday editors I express my thanks. My agent, Robert Lescher, also contributed invaluable assistance at many stages in the production of the manuscript.

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### 1. *The Paradox of Culture*

Two widely divergent but interrelated experiences, psychoanalysis and work as an anthropologist, have led me to the belief that in his strivings for order, Western man has created chaos by denying that part of his self that integrates while enshrining the parts that fragment experience. These examinations of man's psyche have also convinced me that: the natural act of thinking is greatly modified by culture; Western man uses only a small fraction of his mental capabilities; there are many different and legitimate ways of thinking; we in the West value one of these ways above all others—the one we call “logic,” a linear system that has been with us since Socrates.

Western man sees his system of logic as synonymous with the truth. For him it is the only road to reality. Yet Freud educated us to the complexities of the psyche, helping his readers to look at dreams as a legitimate mental process that exists quite apart from the linearity of manifest thought. But his ideas were from the outset strenuously resisted, particularly by scientists and engineers, who were still wedded to a Newtonian model. When taken seriously, Freudian thinking shook the very foundations of conventional thought. Freud's followers, particularly Fromm and Jung, undeterred by popular stereotypes and the tremendous prestige of the physical sciences, added to his theories and bridged the gap between the linear world of logic and the integrative world of dreams.<sup>1</sup>

Knowing that the interpretation of dreams, myths, and acts is always to some degree an individual matter,<sup>2</sup> I cannot help asking myself what a psychoanalytically sophisticated reader would add to my own interpretation of a sequence of events reported in the *New York Times* concerning a police dog sighted on Ruffle Bar, an uninhabited island near New York.<sup>3</sup> Visible only from a distance, the dog, nicknamed the King of Ruffle Bar, had sustained itself for an estimated two years, was apparently in good health, and presumably would have survived in his semi-wild state, barring accidents, for the rest of his natural life. However, some well-meaning soul heard about the dog and reported him to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, thereby setting the bureaucratic wheels in motion. Since the King could not be approached by people, a baited trap was set. According to the *Times* report: "... every day, a police launch from Sheepshead Bay takes off for Ruffle Bar, the uninhabited swampy island of the dog. Every day, a police helicopter hovers for a half hour or more over Ruffle Bar." A radio report of the broadcast at the time described how the helicopter harassed the dog in futile efforts to "catch" (sic) him (he refused to enter the trap) or at least to get a better view of him. Police were quoted as saying the dog "looked in good shape." When questioned, representatives of the ASPCA said: "When we catch the dog, we will have it examined by a vet, and if it is in good health, we will find a *happy* home for it."<sup>4</sup> (*italics added*)

If this story had been a dream or a myth instead of a news report, there is little doubt as to its interpretation. Both the latent and the manifest content are quite clear, possibly explaining why this local news item was given national coverage. I find, as I go over the story, that free associations come to mind on different levels. The story epitomizes the little man against the big bureaucracy. There is also a delusional side which cannot be overlooked. The ASPCA became obsessed with capturing the dog. Once

triggered, the ASPCA involved the police with a remorseless, mindless persistence that is too terrifyingly characteristic of bureaucracies once they are activated. Interestingly enough, the police, having known about the dog for two years, had been content to leave him on the island. Emotionally, they sided with the King, even while carrying out their orders. "Why don't they leave the dog alone?" said one policeman. Another observed, "The dog is as happy as a pig in a puddle."<sup>5</sup>

The delusional aspects have to do with the institutionalized necessity to control "everything," and the widely accepted notion that the bureaucrat knows what is best; **never for a moment does he doubt the validity of the bureaucratic solution.** It is also slightly insane, or at least indicative of our incapacity to order priorities with any common sense, to spend thousands of dollars for helicopters, gasoline, and salaries for the sole purpose of bureaucratic neatness.

Even more recently, a *New York Times* news item<sup>6</sup> reported a U. S. Park Police campaign to stamp out kite flying on the grounds of the Washington Monument. Their charter to harass the kite fliers lay in an old law written by Congress supposedly to keep the Wright brothers' planes from becoming fouled in kite strings.

The psychoanalyst Laing is convinced that the Western world is mad.<sup>7</sup> These stories of the dog and the kite fliers bolster Laing's view and symbolize man's plight as well as any recent events I know.<sup>8</sup> However, it is not man who is crazy so much as his institutions<sup>9</sup> and those culture patterns that determine his behavior. We in the West are alienated from ourselves and from nature. **We labor under a number of delusions, one of which is that life makes sense; i.e., that we are sane.** We persist in this view despite massive evidence to the contrary. We live fragmented, compartmentalized lives in which contradictions are carefully sealed off from each other. We have been taught to think linearly rather than comprehensively,<sup>10</sup>

and we do this not through conscious design or because we are not intelligent or capable, but because of the way in which **deep cultural undercurrents structure life in subtle but highly consistent ways that are not consciously formulated**. Like the invisible jet streams in the skies that determine the course of a storm, these hidden currents shape our lives; yet their influence is only beginning to be identified. Given our linear, step-by-step, compartmentalized way of thinking,<sup>11</sup> fostered by the schools and public media, it is impossible for our leaders to consider events comprehensively or to weigh priorities according to a system of common good, all of which can be placed like an unwanted waif on culture's doorstep. Yet, paradoxically, few anthropologists are in agreement as to what to include under the general rubric of culture. While it will be denied by some, much depends on the anthropologist's own culture, which exerts a deep and abiding influence not only over how anthropologists think but over where they draw the boundaries in such matters. Frequently, the greater portion of contemporary culture will be excluded or referred to as "mere convention." In a practical sense, the conventions of the field and what one's peers are studying have more to do with what anthropologists define as culture than an appraisal of one's data might indicate. Like everyone else, anthropologists use models, and some models are more fashionable than others. Most of them are handed down and modified periodically.

The reader may well ask, "What is a model?" or "What kind of models are you talking about?" While models and how man uses them are just beginning to be understood, one thing is certain: many different models exist. Mechanical models, such as scale models of airplanes flown in wind tunnels, show how machines and processes work. Models for making molds can reproduce everything from machines to copies of works of art. Life models help the artist fill in gaps in a faulty visual memory. Parents and teachers may be models for the young.

Scientists use theoretical models, often mathematical in nature. These are used to symbolically express certain qualities, quantities, and relationships encountered in life. Econometricians, for example, use these models to investigate how the more measurable aspects of the economic system operate.

Anthropologists use predominantly non-mathematical theoretical models that are rooted in culture. Since culture is itself a series of situational models for behavior and thought, the models anthropologists use are frequently highly abstract versions of parts of models that make up the entire culture (kinship systems, for example).

Man is the model-making organism par excellence. His earliest intellectual endeavors resulted in monuments that mystified and puzzled twentieth-century man until they were figured out. Stonehenge, for example, is a model of the solar system that enabled the early inhabitants of the Salisbury Plain to make accurate observations of celestial events and to keep track of the seasons, order their ceremonial life, and even predict eclipses at a time when no one would have thought such refined calculations and observations were possible (fifteen hundred to two thousand years B.C.).

Grammars and writing systems are models of language. Any school child who has struggled to make sense of what he is taught knows that some fit reasonably well, others don't. Myths, philosophical systems, and science represent different types of models of what the social scientists call **cognitive systems**. **The purpose of the model is to enable the user to do a better job in handling the enormous complexity of life.** By using models, we see and test how things work and can even predict how things will go in the future. The effectiveness of a model can be judged by how well it works, as well as how consistent it is as a mechanical or philosophical system. People are very closely identified with their models, since they also form the basis



for behavior. Men have fought and died in the name of different models of nature.

All theoretical models are incomplete. By definition, they are abstractions and therefore leave things out. What they leave out is as important as, if not more important than, what they do not, because it is what is left out that gives structure and form to the system. Models have a half life—some are ephemeral, others last for centuries. There are highly explicit models, while others are so much a part of life as to be unavailable for analysis except under very special circumstances.

In constructing their models of culture, most anthropologists take into account that there are different levels of behavior: overt and covert, implicit and explicit, things you talk about and things you do not. Also, that there is such a thing as the unconscious, although few are in agreement as to the degree to which the unconscious is influenced by culture. The psychologist Jung, for example, hypothesized a "collective" unconscious that was shared by all mankind (a concept many anthropologists might have trouble accepting). Paradoxically, studying the models that men create to explain nature tells you more about the men than about the part of nature being studied. In the West, people are more concerned with the content or meaning of the model than they are with how it is put together, is organized, or performs, and the purpose it is supposed to fulfill.

Anthropologists have studied only those things people could or would talk to them about, with the result that many of the important things—culture patterns that make life meaningful and really differentiate one group from another—have gone unnoticed or been unreported and brushed aside as trivial. If one were to use a linguistic analogy, it would be as though there were data on the vocabulary of culture but very little on either the syntactic (grammar) or phonemic systems (alphabets are based on a phonemic analysis). It is not enough to say that the

French believe this and the Spanish believe that. Beliefs can change. Beneath the clearly perceived, highly explicit surface culture, there lies a whole other world, which when understood will ultimately radically change our view of human nature. Writing forty years ago, the linguist Sapir started the ball rolling by demonstrating that in language (an important part of culture) man created an instrument that is quite different from what is commonly supposed. He states:

The relation between language and experience is often misunderstood . . . [it] actually defines experience for us by reason of its formal completeness and because of our unconscious projection of its implicit expectations into the field of experience. . . . [L]anguage is much like a mathematical system, which . . . becomes elaborated into a self-contained conceptual system which *previsages all possible experience* in accordance with certain accepted formal limitations. . . . [C]ategories such as number, gender, case, tense, mode, voice, "aspect" and a host of others . . . *are not so much discovered in experience as imposed upon it.* . . . (italics added)<sup>12</sup>

Sapir's work, which predates McLuhan by thirty-five years, not only makes a stronger, more detailed case than McLuhan that "the media is the message," but can be extended to include other cultural systems as well. In the process of evolving culture, the human species did much more than was at first supposed.

The usefulness of Sapir's model was demonstrated in a practical way by Kluckhohn and Leighton in their pioneering book *The Navajo*,<sup>13</sup> which illustrates the difficulties the verb-oriented Navajo children experienced when they attended white schools and were confronted by English—a loosely structured, adjective language. Kluckhohn and Leighton's basic point, however, was not only that differences in emphasis on adjectival and verbal forms

caused difficulty in school, but that the total orientation of the two languages was different, forcing the two groups to attend and fail to attend entirely different things in nature. Having lived and dealt with Navajos for a number of years, I have no doubt not only that they think very differently from the white man, but that much of this difference is at least initially traceable to their language. Working with other cultural systems, I have found evidence that it is not just in language that one finds such constraints, but elsewhere as well, provided of course that one is fortunate enough to have studied cultures sufficiently different from one's own to bring its latent structures into focus.

In considering the data presented in this book, it is important for the reader to come to grips with his own model of culture in its manifest as well as its latent forms, because my purpose is to raise some of the latent to conscious awareness and to give it form so that it can be dealt with. Technically, the model of culture on which my work is based is more inclusive than those of some of my colleagues. My emphasis is on the nonverbal, unstated realm of culture. While I do not exclude philosophical systems, religion, social organization, language, moral values, art, and material culture, I feel it is more important to look at the way things are actually put together than at theories.

Nevertheless, and in spite of many differences in detail, anthropologists do agree on three characteristics of culture: **it is not innate, but learned; the various facets of culture are interrelated**—you touch a culture in one place and everything else is affected; **it is shared** and in effect defines the boundaries of different groups.

Culture is man's medium; there is not one aspect of human life that is not touched and altered by culture. This means personality, how people express themselves (including shows of emotion), the way they think, how they move, how problems are solved, how their cities are planned and laid out, how transportation systems function

and are organized, as well as how economic and government systems are put together and function. However, like the purloined letter, it is frequently the most obvious and taken-for-granted and therefore the least studied aspects of culture that influence behavior in the deepest and most subtle ways.

As a case in point, let us examine how white Americans are captives of their own time and space systems—beginning with time. American time is what I have termed “**monochronic**”; that is, Americans, when they are serious, **usually prefer to do one thing at a time**, and this requires some kind of scheduling, either implicit or explicit. Not all of us conform to monochronic norms. Nevertheless, there are social and other pressures that keep most Americans within the monochronic frame. However, when Americans interact with people of foreign cultures, the different time systems cause great difficulty.

Monochronic time (M-time) and polychronic time (P-time) represent two variant solutions to the use of both time and space as organizing frames for activities. Space is included because the two systems (time and space) are functionally interrelated. M-time emphasizes schedules, segmentation, and promptness. P-time systems are characterized by several things happening at once. They stress **involvement of people and completion of transactions** rather than adherence to preset schedules. P-time is treated as much less tangible than M-time. P-time is apt to be considered a point rather than a ribbon or a road, and that point is sacred.<sup>14</sup>

Americans overseas are psychologically stressed in many ways when confronted by **P-time systems such as those in Latin America and the Middle East**. In the markets and stores of Mediterranean countries, one is surrounded by other customers vying for the attention of a clerk. There is no order as to who is served next,<sup>15</sup> and to the northern European or American, confusion and clamor abound. In a different context, the same patterns apply within the

governmental bureaucracies of Mediterranean countries: A cabinet officer, for instance, may have a large reception area outside his private office. There are almost always small groups waiting in this area, and these groups are visited by government officials, who move around the room conferring with each. Much of their business is transacted in public instead of having a series of private meetings in an inner office. Particularly distressing to Americans is the way in which appointments are handled by polychronic people. Appointments just don't carry the same weight as they do in the United States. Things are constantly shifted around. Nothing seems solid or firm, particularly plans for the future, and there are always changes in the most important plans right up to the very last minute.

In contrast, within the Western world, man finds little in life that is exempt from the iron hand of M-time. In fact, his social and business life, even his sex life, are apt to be completely time-dominated. Time is so thoroughly woven into the fabric of existence that we are hardly aware of the degree to which it determines and co-ordinates everything we do, including the molding of relations with others in many subtle ways. By scheduling, we compartmentalize; this makes it possible to concentrate on one thing at a time, but it also denies us context. Since scheduling by its very nature selects what will and will not be perceived and attended and permits only a limited number of events within a given period, what gets scheduled in or out constitutes a system for setting priorities for both people and functions.<sup>16</sup> Important things are taken up first and allotted the most time; unimportant things are left to last or omitted if time runs out.<sup>17</sup>

Space and its handling also signal importance and priorities. The amount of space allocated and where a person is placed within an organization tell a lot about him and his relation to the organization. Equally significant is how he handles his time. In fact, discretion over schedul-

ing—the option of determining when one will be in the office—indicates that one has arrived. The exceptions are salesmen, whose jobs demand that they be away from their desks, or those who hold unusual positions, for example the city editor of a newspaper, whose job is inherently polychronic. The importance of place—where the activities are permitted to occur—has become so much a part of modern bureaucracy that some employees whose performance would be enormously enhanced if they could get away from their desks are seldom permitted to do so. For example, ~~American Foreign Service officers assigned to Latin America should be out interacting with the local people, but because of immutable bureaucratic custom they can't leave their desks.~~ Cut off from the people with whom they should be establishing ties, how can they ever be effective? In another American-based bureaucracy, an important and famous research program was threatened because the space required for the experiments was greater than that appropriate to the rank of the investigator. Mad? Yes, completely mad; but bureaucratically very real.

For M-time people reared in the northern European tradition, time is linear and segmented like a road or a ribbon extending forward into the future and backward to the past. It is also tangible; they speak of it as being saved, spent, wasted, lost, made up, accelerated, slowed down, crawling, and running out. These metaphors should be taken very seriously, because they express the basic manner in which time is conceived as an unconscious determinant or frame on which everything else is built. M-time scheduling is used as a classification system that orders life. With the exception of birth and death, all important activities are scheduled. It should be mentioned that without schedules and something very much like the M-time system, it is doubtful if our industrial civilization could have developed as it has. There are other consequences, however. Monochronic time seals off one or two people from the group and intensifies relationships with one other

person or, at most, two or three people. M-time in this sense is like a room with a closed door that ensures privacy. The only problem is that you must vacate the "room" at the end of fifteen minutes or an hour, a day, or a week, depending on the schedule, and make way for the next one in line. Failure to make way by intruding on the time of the person waiting is egocentric, narcissistic, and bad manners.

Monochronic time is arbitrary and imposed; that is, *learned*. Because it is so thoroughly learned and so thoroughly integrated into our culture, it is treated as though it were the only natural and "logical" way of organizing life. Yet it is not inherent in man's own rhythms and creative drives, nor is it existential in nature. Furthermore, organizations, particularly business and government bureaucracies, subordinate man to the organization, and they accomplish this mainly by the way they handle time-space systems.

Everything in our lives must be fitted to the Procrustean demands of the schedule. As any American can tell you, there are times when things are just beginning to develop in the desired way; yet they must be stopped to conform to a preset schedule. Example: research funds run out just as the results are beginning to be achieved. How often has the reader had the experience of realizing that he is pleasurably immersed in some creative activity, totally unaware of time, solely conscious of the job at hand, only to be brought back to "reality" with the rude shock of realizing that other, preset, frequently inconsequential commitments are bearing down on him?

From this, we see that many Americans make the common mistake of associating the schedule with reality and one's self or the activity as something that is removed from life. M-time can alienate us from ourselves and deny us the experience of context in the wider sense. That is, M-time narrows one's view of events in much the same way as looking through a cardboard tube narrows vision,

and it influences subtly and in depth how we think—in segmented compartments.

Possibly, this restriction of context explains in part the difficulty that American enterprises have in adapting to other time systems. An economist once told me that Eskimos working for a fish cannery in Alaska thought factory whistles were ridiculous. The idea that men would work or not work because of a whistle seemed to them sheer lunacy. For the Eskimo, the tides determined what men did, how long they did it, and when they did it. Tide out meant one set of activities; tide in, another. This same man later worked in a large international agency and observed in himself signs of stress resulting from futile attempts to gear his own productivity, particularly its creative aspects, to a time schedule. Finally, convinced that it was impossible to schedule creativity, he gave up trying and compromised by adopting a schedule in which there were periods when he was tied to a desk and handled trivia, followed by other periods in which he worked around the clock. One wonders how many individuals who have been forced to adjust to eight-hour, nine-to-five schedules have sacrificed their creativity, and what the social and human cost of this sacrifice has been.

Time and space are functions of each other. How can you meet a deadline if you are constantly interrupted, for example? How much you are interrupted depends on how available you are. And how available you are is a matter of how well you are screened from others. Also, how can a doctor listen deeply and carefully to a patient's account of his life without proper screening? It's impossible. I am referring here to ideal patterns. Many people have to put up with spaces that cripple them in the performance of their jobs. Some of this comes about because of the tight way in which space, as well as time, is locked into the bureaucratic ranking system. It is quite clear, for example, that case workers in welfare departments require the privacy of an office, yet the rank of their activity and the low status



accorded the needy are such as to make an office bureaucratically unfeasible (offices are for "important" people). Incongruities of this type at all levels, where the requirements of the activity call for one thing and the organizational needs for something else, endow much of life with an Alice in Wonderland quality.

It is in this respect that cultures also contrast with each other; polychronic people, such as the Arabs and the Turks, who are almost never alone, even in the home, make different uses of screening.<sup>18</sup> They interact with several people at once and are continually involved with each other. Scheduling is difficult if not impossible with P-time people unless they have mastered M-time technically as a very different system, one they do not confuse with their own but use when it is situationally appropriate, much as they use a foreign language.

Theoretically, when considering social organization, P-time systems should demand a much greater centralization of control and be characterized by a rather shallow or simple structure. This is because the top man deals continually with many people, most of whom stay informed as to what is happening: they are around in the same spaces, are brought up to be deeply involved with each other, and continually ask questions to stay informed. In these circumstances, delegation of authority and a build-up in bureaucratic levels should not be required to handle high volumes of business. The principal shortcomings of P-type bureaucracies are that as functions increase, one would expect to find a proliferation of small bureaucracies as well as difficulty in handling the problems of outsiders. In fact, outsiders traveling or residing in Mediterranean countries find the bureaucracies unusually unresponsive. In polychronic countries, one has to be an insider or else have a "friend" who can make things happen. All bureaucracies are oriented inward, but P-type are especially so.

There are also interesting points to be made concerning the act of administration as it is conceived in these two

settings. Administration and control of polychronic peoples (in the Middle East and Latin America) is a matter of job analysis. Administration consists of taking each subordinate's job and identifying the activities that go to make up the job. These are then named and frequently indicated on the elaborate charts with checks that make it possible for the administrator to be sure that each function has been performed. In this way, it is felt, absolute control is maintained over the individual. Yet, **how and when each activity is actually attended to is up to the employee.** To schedule his activities for him would be considered a tyrannical violation of his individuality.

In contrast, M-time people schedule the activity and leave the analysis of the parts of the job to the individual. A P-type analysis, even though technical by its very nature, keeps reminding the subordinate that his job is a system and is also part of a larger system. M-type people, by virtue of compartmentalization, are less likely to see their activities in context as part of the larger whole. This does not mean that they are unaware of the "organization"—far from it; only that the job itself or even the goals of the organization are seldom seen in larger contexts. Again, placing the organization above what it is supposedly doing is common in our culture and is epitomized in our allowing the TV commercial, the "special message," to break the continuity of even the most important communication. By way of contrast, in Spain I once counted twenty-one commercials lumped together at the end of an hour's program. The polychronic Spanish quite sensibly put the commercials between the major programs, not within them.

Both systems have strengths as well as weaknesses. There is a limit to the speed with which jobs can be analyzed, although once analyzed, proper reporting can enable a P-time administrator to handle a surprising number of subordinates. Nevertheless, organizations run on the polychronic model are limited in size, depend on having gifted men at the top, and are slow and cumbersome when

dealing with the business of outsiders. Without gifted men, a P-type bureaucracy can be a disaster, as many people know. P-type models proliferate bureaucracies as a way of handling greater demands on the system.

M-type organizations go in the opposite direction. They can and do grow much larger than the P-type. However, they combine instead of proliferating bureaucracies—e.g., consolidated schools, the business conglomerate, and the new superdepartments we are developing in government today.

The particular blindness of the monochronic organization is to the humanness of its members. The weakness of the polychronic type lies in their extreme dependence on the head man to handle contingencies and stay on top of things. M-type bureaucracies, as they grow larger, turn inward, becoming blind to their own structure; they grow rigid and are even apt to lose sight of their original purpose. Prime examples are the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation, which wreak havoc on our environment in their dedicated efforts to stay in business by building dams or hurrying the flow of rivers to the sea.

495 Monochronic and polychronic have to do with the way time and space are organized and how this organization affects the very core of existence. We can look at things in such a way as to transcend culture and, in so doing, generalize about how culture is organized. One of these generalizations concerns the subtle but complex relationship between meaning and context described in Chapters 6, 7, and 8. Another deals with man as a producer of extensions which in turn mold his life (Chapter 2). What the ethologist calls action chains (Chapter 10) and the situational frame and situational dialect (Chapter 9) are all structural features of unconscious culture. Possibly because they are so ubiquitous, man's extensions will be taken up next.

## 2. *Man as Extension*

Nineteenth-century naturalists suggested that mammals were divided into two groups—man and all other mammals; they also thought that birds should be divided into two groups—bowerbirds and all other birds. These categorizations resulted from the observation that both man and the bowerbird have elaborated their extensions and in so doing have greatly accelerated their evolution. The bowerbird occupies the jungles and thickets of New Guinea and northern Australia and, as its name implies, builds a bower with which to attract and woo its mate. The elaborate bower, constructed of twigs and grass, is decorated with shells, iridescent skeletons of insects, seeds, clay balls, charcoal, pebbles, and brightly colored objects including freshly picked flowers. Actually, the bower and its decoration is not only an extension of once brilliant plumage but also of courtship displays as well. As Gilliard<sup>1</sup> states, “. . . these objects have in effect become *externalized* bundles of secondary sexual characteristics that are *psychologically* but not *physically* connected with the *males*” (*italics added*). Behind the bower lie some radical changes in social organization and behavior. The bowerbirds belong to a group of birds who no longer pair off (*pair bonding*) with the opposite sex to mate, nest, and raise the young. Instead, males gather in clans (*separate from the females*) in which they rank themselves hierarchically. In the spring, the clans are formed around “arenas” in which display and

# Beyond Bureaucracy

Strategic Management of Social Development

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### Strategies of Household Subsistence and Interdependency in Nicaragua

*Silvio De Franco*

The purpose of this chapter is twofold: to report the findings of a study of subsistence characteristics of producers and peasants (campesinos) in the coffee-growing regions of Nicaragua and to analyze the implications of these characteristics for the design of agrarian and rural development policies. The central premise is that the lack of consideration in the design of food production and commercialization policies given to the interdependency among producers and campesinos, between production and commercialization systems, and between food-crop cultivation and labor in the production of coffee and other export crops, will result in unnecessary social and political costs. This is illustrated by the example of Nicaragua since the Revolution in July 1979.

The first three sections of the chapter describe in some detail the characteristics and operational logic of coffee producers in Nicaragua, the determinants of labor absorption, and the survival strategies pursued by rural workers and peasants linked with the coffee industry. The fourth section attempts to evaluate the effects of policies implemented by the Revolutionary Government on both producers and workers by focusing on the impact of these policies on their strategies of survival and subsistence. In the fifth section, some general conclusions and their implications for the management of social development are presented.

#### CHARACTERISTICS OF COFFEE PRODUCTION

Traditionally, coffee has represented one of the main sources of foreign exchange in the Nicaraguan economy (about 30 percent of total exports in 1979). Its primary basis of production is on small plots for

exchange earner, but also on its capacity for employment generation (22 percent of annual agricultural employment, 33 percent of employment during the picking season), and on the significance of the portion of agricultural land under cultivation which it represents (about 21 percent).

Nicaraguan coffee production is concentrated in the mountainous zones of Jinotega and Matagalpa in the north central part of the country and in the Cordillera that separates Lake Managua from the Pacific Ocean. The coffee zones are characterized by cool climates, sparse populations, and scarce infrastructure.

Unlike other agro-export crops, such as cotton, the cultivation of coffee is not a year-to-year decision. The creation or renovation of a coffee plantation requires from four to six years, which implies that the coffee grower is betting on making a profit in the long run. Once he has planted the coffee and the trees begin to produce, the only factor that the producer can attempt to control is the variable cost. In other words, once he has made the investment, the producer becomes a price taker in the long run, in contrast to the cotton grower, who may base his cultivation decision on short-run price expectations.

Coffee growing is also characterized by the variability of inputs required at different times during the year, which greatly depends on the cultivation practices followed. The demand for labor is concentrated during the harvest period, from November to February.

In spite of its importance to the Nicaraguan economy, the productivity of the crop has never been high. Yields in Nicaragua average 10 cwt. per manzana,<sup>1</sup> while it is possible, as proven by the experience in other countries, to attain average yields of 25 cwt. and more per manzana. Highly technological plantations in El Salvador can yield 80 and more cwt. per manzana.

Behind the average yield figure of 10 cwt./mz. is a dispersion from under 5 cwt. to 30 cwt., according to widely varying technologies. Eighty-five percent of the twenty-seven thousand coffee producers are considered to be in the "small" category, utilizing rudimentary technologies based on the intensive use of family labor and few modern inputs. These small producers account for around 30 percent of total coffee production. Their characteristics, as opposed to the characteristics of medium and large producers, are shown in Table 1.

As Table 1 illustrates, small coffee producers in Nicaragua are characterized by low productivity, high isolation, and low technology, education, and income levels. This implies that an important task in the improvement of agricultural conditions and in obtaining a greater amount of foreign exchange lies in the improvement of production methods and the social conditions of this small producer group. Improved production methods, in turn, imply the delivery of complementary inputs (fertilizers and pesticides) and, with it, access to credit.

TABLE 1  
CHARACTERISTICS OF COFFEE PRODUCERS

|                             | Small Producers<br>(100 cwt of Coffee<br>per Year, or Less)                                                                                                                                                                  | Medium Producers<br>(between 100 and<br>500 cwt of Coffee<br>per Year)                                                                                                                       | Large Producers<br>(More Than 500<br>cwt of Coffee per<br>Year)                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Personal<br>Characteristics | Low level of education (10% with less than 2 years of schooling)<br><br>Live at the farm all year (90%)<br><br>Some of them former salaried workers                                                                          | Higher level of education (71% with more than 7 years of schooling)<br><br>Most nonresidents of farms                                                                                        | 48% with more than 12 years of schooling<br><br>Most do not live at the farms                                                                                                                                                         |
| Degree of<br>Isolation      | High degree of isolation and access difficulties (66% between 1 and 20 kilometers from small villages)<br><br>37% have access to villages only during dry season                                                             | Greater access: 88% have transitable roads all year, but 41% have only small villages as nearest settlement and are isolated from provincial capital<br><br>Generally have year-round access | 90% have access all year. 44% have provincial capital nearby<br><br>Generally have year-round access                                                                                                                                  |
| Diversification             | Plant 2 or more crops essentially basic grains (90% at least one more)<br><br>Own animals (dairy cattle, fowls, hogs)<br><br>Most of production for consumption of farm                                                      | Less cultivation of basic grains<br><br>Greater use for pastures and cattle<br><br>Not for family use                                                                                        | Most of the land not planted with coffee is for pastures for cattle<br><br>Not for family use                                                                                                                                         |
| Technology                  | Absence of inputs other than labor<br><br>Average yield 5 cwt/manzana<br><br>Little relative use of high-yield coffee varieties<br><br>Production based on the family<br><br>Some (33%) facilitate land to permanent workers | Use of fertilizers and more advanced cultural practices<br><br>Average yield 15 cwt/manzana<br><br>Not based on family labor<br><br>Permanent workers have access to land                    | Intensive use of fertilizers, pesticides, and advanced cultural practices<br><br>Yield 25-30 cwt/manzana<br><br>Predominance of caturra coffee variety<br><br>Most (70%) provide land for workers for the cultivation of basic grains |

Source: Survey of 75 producers conducted by INCAE in August-September 1980 as part of a study sponsored by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Ottawa, Canada.

The survival strategy of the small growers is broadly based upon a family work force for the coffee production (except during the harvest period), and complemented by the growing of basic grains and the raising of animals for domestic consumption and the generation of additional income.

At the other hand of the scale, the strategy of large producers is to diversify into crops other than coffee for the strict purpose of generating more cash and reducing the risk of dependence on a single product.

This diversity in size, technology, and crop diversification of the producers implies that a rural improvement policy through the use of instruments such as credit, inputs, and technical assistance will clearly be insufficient if it does not have the flexibility to adjust to the different situations and peculiarities of the producers on an almost one-to-one basis. This policy should be based not on a single crop, but rather on the set of activities which, together, form the survival strategies of the different types of producers and the workers linked to them.

In all cases, field research among seventy-five producers revealed that the social arrangement within the plantation is more complicated than a simple salaried worker-capitalist relationship. Although at first glance it would seem that the permanent workers<sup>2</sup> are simply salaried employees, many times these workers are instead paid piece-rate during the year, complementing their income with what they cultivate in parcels of land usufructed from the plantation. It can be argued that the fact that owners grant the usufruct of land to the workers for household cultivation—often without cost—is part of the producer's strategy to retain and flexibly use labor without having to fully pay for the cost of its maintenance. However, this argument has important implications for a policy of improved income distribution, one of which is that the betterment of these workers cannot simply be achieved through higher salaries without causing serious disruptions in the existing set of social arrangements as well as in production, as we shall see further on.

#### DETERMINANTS OF THE ABSORPTION AND PROCUREMENT OF LABOR

One of the most notable characteristics of the cultivation of coffee is the marked seasonality of labor demand. The harvest period, which lasts for seventy-five days from mid-November to late January, accounts for 37.5 percent of the total absorption of man-days in the cultivation of coffee. Careful and timely picking of the ripe bean from the tree is critical to the quality and yield of the product and thus to its price and income.

Alternatives to hand-picking are non-existent, due to the fact that the mountainous terrain precludes the use of machinery and, in any case, there is no current technology capable of ripe bean selection.

The absorption of labor throughout the year and during the harvest is largely a function of the yield per manzana of the plantation, which is reflected in the use of modern technologies. The range of labor demand per manzana of coffee is between 61 and 200 man-days, with the peak coming in the picking stage. Nevertheless, the use of advanced cultural practices, such as pruning and weeding, and the more intensive use of inputs, such as fertilizers, is linked to a higher demand for labor, since the substitution of labor by equipment and machinery is highly limited. The absence of modern practices and inputs not only reduces the demand for labor for these activities, but also, with the lower yields, reduces the demand during the harvest.

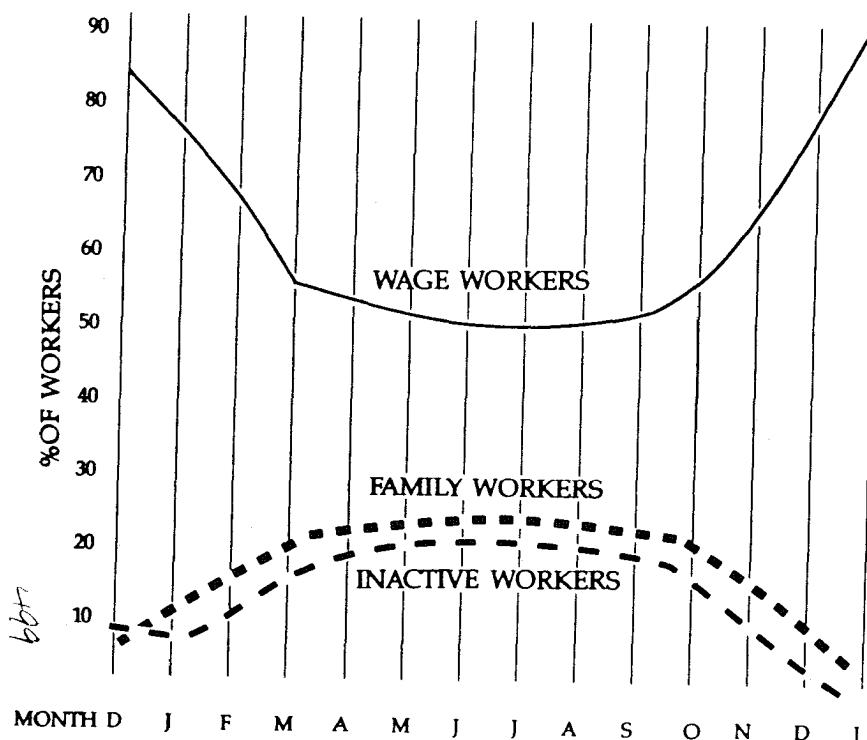
Coffee producers pursue two strategies for obtaining labor. The first, pursued by medium and large growers, involves the use of laborers residing in the plantation who often have access to plots within the property, which allows them to work throughout the year. It is common for the growers to pay piece-rate for coffee production tasks, which allows a close adjustment of salary expenses to the actual work requirements. The access to land permits, on the other hand, the survival of the worker's family, thus complementing his income in periods of low demand. This does not necessarily imply that this arrangement is the most adequate. In fact, the income and quality of life of these workers have traditionally been deplorable.

For small producers, the mechanisms for the procurement of labor is the use of the family labor force. During the picking season, however, the strategy of all producers is to incorporate the entire labor force resident on the plantation, including minors not utilized during the rest of the year and, in addition, to hire labor in a strictly regional market through mechanisms which vary according to the type of producers. (See Figure 1.) The small producers rely upon neighbors and local farms as complementary sources of labor, while the large ones have to seek them in a much broader geographic area.<sup>3</sup>

The use of family labor largely explains the differences in the measurement of sub-employment between the small, and the large and medium-sized producers.<sup>4</sup> The large producers show a practically insignificant sub-employment (which does not necessarily imply adequate incomes or optimal location of the labor force), while among the small ones, almost one-third (29.3%) of labor is under-utilized. In the case of the medium and large producers, the fact that this measure carries no great weight is due not only to the previously described practice of paying piece-rate, but also to the diversification of crops, which allows the utilization of labor in other types of activities which generate profits in periods of slack coffee activity.

In the case of the small producers, the diversification runs to basic grains, which, in part, are for self-consumption. This combines with the

Figure 4-1  
Participation in the coffee labor market, by type of worker  
(Nicaragua, 1981-82)



absence of advanced cultural practices in an inexorable logic: the demand for work fluctuates, and in spite of the fact that there is no high demand for labor, the small producer does not "fire" his relatives, since the family subsistence imperative dominates over the profit objectives.<sup>5</sup>

This second strategy for the use of the labor force, although varied according to the type of producer, is essentially based on the capacity for the reproduction and survival of a large part of the labor force during the rest of the year, when they do not receive an income as salaried harvest workers; and on the flexibility of their occupations during the rest of the year, which allows them to adjust to the great seasonality of the demand. How this labor force manages to subsist is touched upon later on in this paper.

There are indications that the system is far from being perfectly adjusted and that there are chronic problems in the procurement of labor, as indicated in Table 2.

TABLE 2  
PROBLEMS WITH LABOR PROCUREMENT

| With chronic labor problems:<br>(27.2% of total interviewed) |       | Type of problems<br>(Percent) |                    |         | Total |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------|--------------------|---------|-------|
|                                                              |       | In cultivation only           | In harvesting only | In both |       |
| Small producers                                              | 16.7% | -                             | 80.0               | 20.0    | 100.0 |
| Medium producers                                             | 35.3% | -                             | 33.3               | 66.7    | 100.0 |
| Large producers                                              | 29.0% | 25.0                          | 12.5               | 62.5    | 100.0 |

As seen in Table 2, more than 25 percent of those interviewed confessed to having chronic labor problems. Consistent with previous arguments, it is among the medium and large producers where the incidence of problems is greater, since the small ones need help primarily only in the harvest, which, because of their low productivity, is less than for the other groups of producers.

In this respect, we must point out that a substantial increase in the productivity of the small producers would bring about a greater accentuation in the seasonal demand for labor which, together with a labor market that functions on a regional basis, would put an enormous stress on the market. This could, in turn, seriously limit any serious consideration of rapid expansion of production given the socio-cultural and population mechanisms existing in the coffee-growing zones.

Given these characteristics of coffee production in Nicaragua, how successfully has the labor force been adjusting to this seasonality of demand? What has been the predominant survival strategy for the rest of the year? These issues are discussed in the following section.

### SURVIVAL MECHANISMS AND THE LABOR SUPPLY

The labor market for the coffee production is primarily regional and self-contained. According to the evidence emerging from the INCAE survey, the incorporation into the labor force during the picking season is a family phenomenon; that is to say, several members of the same family are incorporated into the picking activities, constituting an informal work group within the same plantation. Of an average of 6.7 members per family, 2.9 join in the picking tasks. If those under 10 years of age are not considered, average family size is reduced to 4.2 per family, meaning that nearly 70 percent join in the picking.

The decision to join the labor force during the coffee-picking season



is influenced by two factors: first, the opportunities available to the campesino for income-producing activities on his own land or land to which he has access; and second, the opportunities for more stable sources of employment elsewhere.

The first proposition is suggested by in-depth interviews with campesinos, as illustrated in the results of the survey: 44.5 percent of the families in the sample cultivate plots of land (averaging 3.7 manzanas per family, mainly in basic grains) either on their own property (52.2 percent) or under other arrangements (47.8 percent). Many of these plots that are not owned are probably located on the plantations of the owner for whom they work, as suggested by the fact that 46.1 percent of the picking families reside on the same coffee plantations where they do the picking.

The important point, nevertheless, is suggested by Table 3. As can be seen, the incorporation of family members seems to be directly related to the absence of available land to do their own planting. Although the evidence presented in the table is not conclusive, it is very probable that an expansion in the cultivation of basic grains would lead to a reduction of the labor force available for coffee picking if such expansion occurred during the picking season.<sup>7</sup> In any case, data in Table 3 are consistent with the strategy of incorporation described above. The lesser the availability of opportunities within family production units, the greater the propensity to join the labor force during the coffee picking season. Once the possibilities of work within the family production unit are exhausted, a part of the labor force within the family incorporates itself into coffee picking, while the other part goes to work more or less permanently in other occupations, together with agricultural activities. Only 14.7 percent of the members of the family over 10 years old do not become incorporated in the labor force in some form or other, being mostly engaged in domestic tasks.<sup>8</sup> Of the total of the active labor force 10 years of age and older, 82.2 percent of those surveyed joined the picking, while the other 17.8 percent were engaged in other activities, such as handicrafts, services, and the cultivation of their own plots.

TABLE 3  
SUPPLY OF FAMILY LABOR IN RELATION TO OWN CULTIVATION

| Proportion of pickers<br>as a % of the family labor<br>force, older than 10 years | With own plot<br>(% of families) | Without own plot<br>(% of families) |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 0.01 - 0.49                                                                       | 68.2                             | 31.8                                |
| 0.50 - 0.74                                                                       | 54.5                             | 45.5                                |
| 0.75 - 0.99                                                                       | 36.0                             | 64.0                                |
| 1.00                                                                              |                                  |                                     |

Behind this distribution of labor—working in the coffee harvest versus other occupations, including family activities—there is another logic besides the availability of land: the largest number of pickers (48.8 percent) are young people between 10 and 19 years of age, with little education and few opportunities outside of coffee picking. While the average age of the pickers is 25 years, the average age of the family labor force in other occupations rises to 29. Of the latter, 45.8 percent have some formal education, while among the pickers, only 27.7 percent present this characteristic.

Thus, it would seem that inside the family there occurs a certain selectivity in the face of the opportunities in the labor market. The picking activity, requiring physical skills and dexterity,<sup>9</sup> attracts mainly the young people, whose productive work opportunities—given the existing socioeconomic arrangements and technological levels—are minimal or nonexistent outside the picking itself. On the other hand, those with better human capital endowment are engaged in more stable activities and are probably able to generate a higher income throughout the year.

Once the harvest is over, the survival logic consists of adapting as well as possible to the opportunities existing both in salaried work (usually piece-rate) and in family production, usually the cultivation of basic grains either on plots granted by producers within the perimeters of their coffee plantations or on family-owned plots.

Field research, as referred to earlier, revealed a marked annual occupation cycle of campesinos associated with coffee growing. The complementarity of the survival strategy may be clearly observed: some of the campesinos remain working as salaried laborers (piece-rate), while others take refuge in subsistence plots, dedicating a minimal part to activities other than agricultural activities. Finally, some campesinos, especially the young people between 10 and 14 years old, remain inactive in the formal sense of the word, although they do contribute with minor chores to the welfare of their families. The arguments and the findings presented up to this point may be summarized as follows: On the one hand, producers try to obtain profits from a crop requiring large fixed investment by seeking to adjust their cyclical labor input needs through a series of strategies, such as piece-work payment, temporary hiring, and providing access to land to some of the workers. Given the natural growing cycle of coffee and the impossibility of mechanization, these strategies would appear to reflect a very rational pattern of choice.

The campesinos, on the other hand, appear to follow a strategy of survival and the betterment of their families that includes such mechanisms as self-employment—often linked to subsistence plots—during the season of scarcity of salaried jobs; the incorporation of most family members, including the youngest ones, into the coffee harvest to

maximize cash revenues; and finally, the allocation of the more able family members in permanent jobs either in the countryside or in the urban areas.

### THE IMPACT OF THE NEW AGRICULTURAL POLICIES

In earlier sections we have identified the operation and subsistence logic of the coffee producers and the labor force associated with coffee production. We examined the mechanisms employed by members of the labor force, including their participation in coffee picking and the subsistence mechanisms employed throughout the year. As stated before, it is my premise that the lack of careful consideration of these mechanisms that operate with the producers and workers, and the interdependence of both groups, can lead to an agricultural and rural development policy characterized by high social costs and minimal benefits to the rural poor. This may be illustrated with examples of some of the rural development policies implemented up to mid-1982 in Nicaragua and the effect that they have had in the coffee-growing regions.

Beginning in July 1979, the Revolutionary Government initiated a series of measures intended to increase the levels of production and to raise the living standard of the rural poor. Although the decree of confiscation against all of the land previously owned by Somoza and his followers was perhaps the step which received the most international attention, a series of other less publicized but perhaps more significant policies were initiated at this time.

Beginning with the 1979-80 agricultural cycle and accentuated in the 1980-81 cycle, the amount of agricultural credit increased dramatically in relation to the levels in the previous regime—an increase of 600 percent over the 1978-79 cycle. The financing of corn and beans alone, typically grown by small farmers, accounted for 14.4 percent of the country's total amount of rural financing.<sup>10</sup>

The general objectives sought by the government with its credit and other agricultural policies were to make the country self-sufficient in basic grains, to facilitate campesino access to the land by placing ceilings on the rent prices of land, and to support the formation of cooperatives. Alongside these policies, the government took a series of measures aimed at replacing existing internal and external commercialization mechanisms through the nationalization of foreign trade and the regulation of internal prices. The government also encouraged the formation of rural worker associations,<sup>11</sup> while at the same time demanding from the producers higher wages and better living conditions for their workers.

The policies have had significant impact on producers as well as on campesinos, though in many instances this impact has affected the operation and subsistence mechanisms without necessarily improving the life of the poorest of the rural inhabitants, as shall be seen in the following analysis.

One of the immediate effects of these policies on the producers was the loss of their direct access to foreign currencies as the government sold the coffee abroad, received foreign exchange, and paid the producers in local currency at rates set by the government itself. This commercialization mechanism has resulted in a loss in real income for producers.<sup>12</sup> Besides this loss in real income, many of the wage and price policies introduced have resulted in a substantial increase in costs to the producers. Local experts in the coffee industry claim that total production costs have doubled in the last three years, and coffee harvesting costs have tripled due to lower productivity increases in wages.<sup>13</sup>

The sum of all this is a reduction in profits and the erosion of incentives to reinvest in the coffee plantation. In response, many of the producers have suspended reinvestment and some have even cut back on cultivation maintenance practices in order to reduce their costs.<sup>14</sup> This is the result not only of an economic logic, but also of the political uncertainty arising out of what the producers perceive to be a lack of clarity in the "rules of the game."

It is well to remember that the great majority of the coffee growers are small producers, and that they, as well as the large producers, have been affected by these policies. There are no mechanisms built into the policies which discriminate in favor of these smaller producers.

We may conclude, then, that large and small producers alike have responded to policies that have adversely affected the profitability of their operations by curtailing investments and inputs. How have these policies affected the logic of the campesinos?

The investment and cost curtailment strategy pursued by the producers has had a direct effect on the campesinos that reside permanently on the farm. With diminished investment and maintenance, the amount in wages that they may earn is enormously reduced, with the resulting deterioration in their already low standard of living. In the words of a local medium-sized producer:

I feel sorry for these poor people (the campesinos), because it is they who have lost the most. I let them live on the farm, but cannot pay them. I do not plan to invest a single cent to renovate anything (of the coffee plants) since coffee is no longer profitable in Nicaragua. All of us here on this farm are living on our past investments, feeding on what was done before...

Demand for seasonal labor, on the other hand, remained strong, while a number of factors contributed to the scarcity of seasonal labor during the 1980 and 1981 picking seasons. The most important factor cited by producers was the enormous expansion in credit for basic grains, which caused many campesinos to leave the wage market. A second factor cited was the growth of the army (E.P.S., or Ejército Popular Sandinista), which recruited many campesinos and their sons, further reducing the available supply of seasonal labor.



This shortage of labor during the harvest was, in part, the cause of the drop in productivity during these years that reinforced the cycle of lower income for the producers, less investment, and less demand for permanent wage workers. Attempts by the government to overcome the shortage with volunteers from the urban labor force were generally successful. Urban workers were inexperienced and thus not as productive as their rural counterparts, whom they were replacing; moreover, through carelessness or a lack of knowledge of harvesting techniques, they often picked berries which were not yet ripe, and sometimes caused damage to the coffee trees.

Although the permanent workers on coffee haciendas have not fared well during the revolutionary period because of the decline in reinvestment, the case of the temporary workers who work only during the harvest months appears to be quite different, as they have been favored by the new policy of higher wages. Because of the importance of the wage work within the subsistence cycle of the campesinos and rural workers associated with coffee, these salary increases and their effects should be studied more closely. By government decree, wages rose 20 percent each year between the 1978-79, 1979-80, and 1980-81 harvests, while at the same time improvements in living conditions for workers on haciendas were demanded by new government regulations. Although these welfare measures have been effective in improving the quality of the workers' lives, the benefits of wage increases have been completely nullified by the inflation rate that the Nicaraguan economy has been experiencing: between 1978 and 1982 wages rose by 53.6 percent, while the cumulative consumer price index increased by 146.1 percent.

Many of the social gains obtained in food, health, shelter, and education are perceived by the workers as natural vindications postponed for decades, and not necessarily linked to their contribution to production. On the contrary, the response of the worker in the face of a drop in real wages after inflation has been to reduce his work effort, with a resulting lower productivity and further declines in income for the producer.

By mid-1981, high-level Nicaraguan public officials from the agricultural sector recognized the serious national problems resulting from low productivity of the labor force, the lack of clear orientation in organized labor policies, and a decrease in the accumulation of capital. Part of the government's reaction has been to nationalize the farms that disinvest or that have strong labor conflicts. Nationalization, however, does not contribute to solving these problems, at least in the short-run. Given the limited administrative capacity of the public sector, productivity has not risen as much as expected in the farms that have been taken over. Moreover, the campesinos themselves complain about the bureaucratic slowness which characterizes the public administrative systems and which results in delay-

If within the production of coffee we cannot find that the producers or the campesinos have achieved improvement, then it is logical to examine the other aspect of the survival strategy of the rural workers; that is, the production of basic grains. As previously mentioned, and as part of a plan for self-sufficiency and inducing the campesinos to unite in cooperatives guided by the state, credit to the small producer was increased by 600 percent. At first glance, this may seem a great push for the development of the small producer, who had been traditionally abandoned by financial institutions. In practice, however, this policy demonstrated once again that in the absence of complementary inputs and improved technologies, effective marketing channels, and adequate administrative systems, credit, by itself, only produces a temporary increase in the consumption of the beneficiaries, without increasing production.

For most campesinos equipped with traditional technologies, the availability of credit under liberal conditions represented no more than the opportunity to have cash for consumption purposes. For 1981, the delinquency in repayment of loans was estimated at 45.3% of the beneficiaries. The reasons for nonpayment are varied:

- Excess of bank credit: In 1980, the government went so far as to utilize light planes or "flying banks" for the distribution of credit in remote areas where it was impossible to market the harvest because of the inexistence of roadways or waterways. Also, cultivation was financed in areas not suitable for the type of grains sown.
- Inadequate organization of the agricultural cooperatives: There were cases in which the members would get together to obtain money and then would proceed to leave for other regions. Others were thrown out of the cooperative for their irresponsibility.
- Lack of coordination among the various state institutions, such as PROCAMPO (inputs) and AGROMECA (machinery) over the technical services they should provide to their clients.
- Attitudes among some campesinos who considered that since the Revolution was for them, they should not have to pay their debts. These attitudes were reinforced by the inexistence of an adequate administrative apparatus to supervise the application and recuperation of credit.
- Poor quality of the cultivated land: Most campesinos do not have access to fertile land; these lands are usually in the hands of the medium and large private producers or the state.
- Level of existing technology: The quality of the existing traditional technology, as mentioned before, is poor. In some products, such as corn, the imported seeds were not suitable for certain regions, resulting in a disastrous harvest.

- Lack of selectivity of clients: Credit was given to anyone who requested it. It is believed that in many cases the credit was diverted to other purposes.

The Minister of Agricultural Development recognized these problems. In 1981 he said:

We have to be more rational with the credit, give to those who can produce most effectively. A little bit romantic, in a given moment, we were in a helicopter with money, giving credit to campesinos who were in faraway places; they would receive their credit from that helicopter that would practically throw the money into their hands; nevertheless, who was going to bring out that production? Through roads? By what means of transport? And the product stayed there, the production did not get out of there because in many ways that money was used to buy salt, shoes, clothing and not for producing.<sup>15</sup>

As mentioned earlier, this easy credit policy resulted in a windfall for many campesinos, which possibly enabled them to increase their consumption levels temporarily. On the other hand, the massive injection of credit in an open economy with serious problems in its balance of payments contributed to an inflation rate that, to a great degree, voided these temporary gains.

The cost of production inputs rose by more than the prices of some basic grains set by the government, with a resulting disincentive for the campesinos. The opinion of some experts is that the effect has been such that for some grains, such as corn, it is not profitable to produce for sale. Thus, the tendency among campesinos now is to produce just for their own consumption and in lands where there are no opportunities to develop alternative crops.

Part of this lack of incentive comes from the inclination of ENABAS, the public institute that regulates the commodity prices, to favor the consumer and not the producer and from the inability of the small producer to influence the price decisions of ENABAS.

In summary, although it is true that the campesinos obtained a temporary benefit from liberal credit policies, the combination of the absence of technological improvement, inflation, and low prices has resulted in disincentives and has adversely affected the survival strategy of the campesino. Moreover, the alternative model of state farms is at an incipient stage with serious administrative problems, and it can offer no alternative as yet. The operation and subsistence model of the producers and workers has been adversely affected by the agricultural policies to date, yet it has not been possible to create an alternative model that is effective for rural poor.

There are indications that the government is consciously pulling back from its extensive credit strategy and is emphasizing rather the state farms

and the distribution of land in cooperatives.<sup>16</sup> Without careful consideration of the interactions of the coffee production system, of the basic grains system, and of the logic of their interaction, however, it is unlikely that any policy will accomplish the dual purpose of raising productivity as well as increasing rural welfare levels.

## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The following are some of the development policies and social management lessons that can be derived from our previous analysis:

1. In the first place, I have tried to show how the existing socioeconomic structural arrangements and the subsistence logic of the poorest in the rural areas make up extremely complex arrangements that we need to understand in depth—and not as simple macroeconomic aggregates—to be able to visualize and evaluate the results of policies that are intended to raise the living standards of the poor. This knowledge is important not only for the aforementioned purposes, but also to enable a greater involvement of the beneficiaries in the process of change. Otherwise, one succumbs to the temptation of playing the role of almighty planner, manipulating figures and political-economic objectives with little regard for the target groups who are supposed to benefit.
2. It is important to point out, nevertheless, that no sectoral social development program can isolate itself from the national context, since the economic and political interplay at the macro level determines their success or failure. Often, the action at the macro level thwarts the sectoral objectives, as we see in the case of agricultural wages in Nicaragua, where an expansionist credit policy contributed to eliminating the nominal gains of the wage-workers. Also, the state policy of capturing foreign exchange in order to solve its balance-of-payments problem resulted in a loss of incentives for the producers and a greater reduction of foreign exchange. Where possible, the inconsistencies among policy objectives directed to other sectors and other levels must be carefully examined, particularly with respect to the interactions between the agroexport and local consumption sectors.
3. Apart from the above, it must be recognized that the bureaucratic structures which implement these policies are slow to respond to changes and unable to absorb new objectives. In the example presented, it is clearly noted how the agricultural credit program expanded without positive results due to the absence of a corresponding expansion in the rest of the institutions that provide the complementary inputs and services. Even within the financ-

ing system, some of its parts (e.g., the subsystem of portfolio recuperation) were unable to adapt to the changes.

4. The most interesting lesson to be learned is that given a production system and the operational and subsistence logic associated with it, it is impossible—without paying a high price—to affect a part of the system without also noticeably affecting the rest of it. In the case of the coffee production system in Nicaragua, the policies aimed at seizing profits from the producers resulted in a loss for the producer, in a disruption of the subsistence cycle of the campesinos and agricultural workers in the coffee system, and in a negative impact on macroeconomic objectives, since the reduction in productivity led to a reduction in foreign exchange inflow, thus affecting the economy and society as a whole.

#### NOTES

1. A "manzana" is a unit of measure equivalent to 0.7 hectares.
2. "Permanent workers" are those who remain on the plantation after the harvest season.
3. One-third of the large producers and approximately 6 percent of the medium-sized producers seek labor outside the regional market; none of the small producers do. Data based on INCAE Survey, 1980-81.
4. Sub-employment is measured as a relationship between the labor available throughout the year and the labor technically required during the year, according to the cultural practices carried out. This is a very approximate measure which requires refinement.
5. I shall not enter here into a debate as to whether there is a *sui generis* "campesino" logic, a la Chayanov, or whether the behavior of the small producers is due to an insufficient development of the production and labor market mechanisms. The point is that family labor is a basic mechanism of the small producer's survival strategy.
6. In some cases, the opportunities for the family are in the form of small business, handicrafts, etc.
7. Other variables should obviously be taken into account, such as access to credit, basic grains prices, and above all, the coincidence of the coffee harvest, if any, with the period of grain harvesting, and its duration.
8. Approximately 80 percent of the families surveyed were of rural origins (farms and rural villages).
9. The survey shows that men are more productive than women in picking, and that the 15- to 24-year-old group demonstrates greater productivity during the picking (in cwt picked per day).
10. Until 1980, rural credit was extended to around 18,000 to 20,000 beneficiaries. In 1980-81 it had expanded to 90,000 clients, 75 percent of whom were members of cooperatives and 25 percent individual producers.
11. These associations, known as Asociaciones de Trabajadores del Campo (ATC), were represented by delegates at departmental and national levels.

12. The government maintains an official exchange rate of ten cordobas to one U.S. dollar (C\$10 = US\$1) while in mid-1982 the legal parallel rate was 24 cordobas to the dollar, with black market rates at better than 40 cordobas to the dollar. There is a current inflation rate of 40 percent a year.
13. A comparison between the 1979-80 harvest and the 1981-82 harvest shows an increase of almost three times in the total costs; for semi-technological producers the total costs rose from C\$5,252 per manzana to C\$13,536 per manzana, an increase of 257%. The harvest cost, which previously represented 35% of the total costs, now represents 51% of the total costs. Assuming a steady international price level since 1978-79 (it has actually dropped), the profit per hundred-weight (quintal) would be C\$117 (US\$2.71 at an exchange rate of C\$43 to US\$1.00) versus US\$63.90 in 1978-79. At the domestic price paid in 1981-82, the result is a loss of US\$2.04 per hundredweight.
14. This in fact constitutes disinvestment. Though the elimination of cultivation maintenance practices does not seriously affect the yields in the first few years after the cutback, more serious consequences arise in later years, with progressively lower yields.
15. Cmdte. Jaime Wheelock, public discourse, 1981.
16. Beginning in 1984, credit for state farms was also curtailed, and for the first time there was talk of closing uneconomic operations. J. Ickis, interviews with state enterprise managers, August 1984.

## LESSON 10

### ENDING GRACEFULLY

#### Learning Objectives

The participants will:

1. Know some of the factors that inhibit the transferring of power to communities.
2. Understand the limitations and opportunity of being an outsider.
3. Consider different ways of ending a job and course.

#### Activities

1. Discussion in large group (45 min)
  - a) Factors that inhibit empowerment of others.
  - b) Outsiders as empowering or disempowering.
2. Break (15 min)
3. Triads (40 min)

How to end an assignment - brainstorm all the ways in which an assignment can end, which can be controlled and which are preferred.
4. Large group evaluation (1 hour)

What should be the appropriate ending for this course? What have been the issues that make this ending suitable?
5. Discussion of final case papers and any other ends (20 min)

discuss usefulness of readings in homework 10.

#### Materials

1. Cookies, coffee, and other yummy party things.
2. Special certificates?

## HOMework 10

### ANALYZING YOUR CASE

#### 1. Read:

1. Evans, "Analysis of Case Histories."
2. Batten, The Non-Directive Approach to Community Work.
3. Korten, "Reflections of a Rural Development Worker."
4. Oxfam Field Directors' Handbook.
3. Miller, "Columbia: An Innovative Approach to Rural Development."

2. The above readings will help you to finalize your case and ensure that it results in a coherent and useful documentary.

507

# Appropriate Technology || for Development: A Discussion and Case Histories

edited by Donald D. Evans  
and Laurie Nogg Adler

A Study Prepared by Denver Research Institute,  
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## Analyses of Case Histories

Various methods could be devised as the basis on which to analyze the case histories. Of course, the best method is to discuss them in an interactive atmosphere with other concerned persons, where a wide-ranging examination of their implications can occur. The value in analysis of complex socioeconomic-technological situations is largely subjective in any event.

Somewhat arbitrarily, a system has been developed for arraying these case histories according to a structure of interactions and effects.

Cases can be examined in terms of three primary elements: (1) the resources, human and material, with which they are concerned; (2) the means by which these resources are developed or utilized; and (3) the effect that this utilization has on the environment and people within it.

Resources themselves can be classified in two ways: one is in terms of natural endowments such as minerals, energy sources, organic materials, and climatic factors. The other is on the basis of human attributes, particularly analytic capability, innovation and inventiveness, and the elusive quality of entrepreneurship.

The classification of "means" includes, first of all, technology in its multiple forms. It also includes the provision of finance for development purposes. The role of government as the manifestation of social and political will plays a pivotal role. So, also, does foreign aid in the form of materiel, finance, and technical assistance.

The effects of the interaction of resources with means in the pursuit of some planned objective can be classified as: (1) economic--with a special subset concerned with foreign and domestic markets; (2) social impact; and (3) the effect on the physical environment. Within this generalized structure it is interesting to examine the various case histories.

It is not surprising that about half of the cases are concerned particularly with resource utilization. The Tunisian use of available, less costly butagaz as an alternative for gasoline is an example, as is the harnessing of hydro power in Samoa or the enlistment of human resources

in the CRUTAC community development project in Brazil and in the "rural university" in Colombia. In some cases it is the use of a waste resource, as in the coffee beneficios of Central America or the generation of biogas from cow manure in Tanzania.

Perhaps most important of all the resources in the various cases is the human function of providing inventiveness, organization, and drive toward goal achievement; this element is especially prominent in fourteen of the twenty-two cases. Certainly nothing occurs in the development process without human intervention, but these qualities are particularly prominent in such examples as the ball-point pen manufacturing venture in Pakistan, the Samoan Methodist land development program, the engineering consulting firm in Singapore, and in the "coffee roads" project in Haiti. In each instance the enthusiasm and persistence of the motivated person or group played a dominant role.

In examining the means by which these projects have been accomplished (and considering that technology is the subject of this study), it is not surprising that some specific aspect of technology has been at the focus of each situation. This is especially the case in the involvement of such relatively sophisticated technologies as the explosive metalworking applications in Brazil or the use of bioengineering approaches in developing cattle feed in Korea from natural indigenous sources. At the other end of the sophistication spectrum are the design of a simple, efficient cookstove in Central America; the traditional process of preserving fish in the Philippines; or the manufacture of bricks in Malaysia using labor-intensive, energy-conserving methods. Foreign technology use as a stimulus to domestic inventiveness is a feature of the ball-point pen enterprise in Pakistan and the fungal conversion projects in Central America.

Because of the complexity, pervasiveness, and scale of the development need, it falls to governments of both the developing and the industrialized countries to take a leading role in planning and implementing appropriate programs (notwithstanding the important role played by the private sector in technology development and transfer).

Sometimes this government role can thwart the development process--it certainly does not always have a positive effect. Government action was decisive in the case of the non-use of composite flour to reduce wheat imports in Colombia, where policy action and market intervention have stopped this program. Similarly, government policy in Indonesia resulted in large dislocations in the farm labor market. In Sri Lanka, the minimal support given a research institute by government significantly inhibited its effectiveness. On the other hand, government support of a similar institution in Brazil through provision of development funds

has been instrumental in revitalization and growth in that instance. Also, government interest and support were responsible for initiating the regional development program on Cheju Island in Korea.

The provision or, conversely, lack of finance will always be a fundamental factor in any endeavor. The lack of finance in the case of the entrepreneur in butagaz conversions in Tunisia was a cause of the slow development of that promising technology application. Government grants are important to the functioning of the rural university in Colombia and to the similar project in Brazil. The Korea Institute of Science and Technology (KIST), as well as the Ceylon Institute of Scientific and Industrial Research (CISIR) and most other research institutions, were funded at least initially through government grants. Private financial support makes the rural development program in Samoa possible (along with the dedication and enthusiasm of the participants, of course).

Foreign assistance from the industrialized nations is a prominent part of many development efforts. This is supplied in combinations of material products, technical assistance, and finance. In Colombia, the composite flour project received technical and financial assistance over a period of years from both the Dutch government and the Organization of American States, as well as assistance from the United States through a private research institution. The coffee roads project in Haiti received both financial and technical assistance from USAID. The Lorena cookstove project had technical advice from consultants provided by a private voluntary organization, as did the small-scale sugar processing project in Ghana and the lime kiln development effort in Honduras. Private sources assisted with equipment and technical assistance on the hydroelectric project in Papua New Guinea. One of the most intensive and sustained technical assistance programs was that provided by the Denver Research Institute in the transfer of explosive metalworking technology to the Institute for Technological Studies (IPT) in São Paulo, Brazil.

Assistance of the industrialized countries to the developing world is, of course, a central theme of the development effort, although in recent years there has been increasing emphasis on the attainment of greater degrees of technological self-sufficiency on the part of the Third World (note especially the precepts of the New International Economic Order).

In over half of the cases one of the principal outcomes of the impact of technology has been its economic effect. Thailand's main export, cassava pellets, has been heavily influenced by technology, both foreign and domestic. Coffee roads in Haiti are expected to have great economic effect on

remote rural areas that the roads open up to commerce and communication. The Lorena cookstove is making possible appreciable savings in fuel costs for users. Cheju Island's economy has grown significantly as a consequence of development work based on technology application. Explosive metalworking in Brazil makes savings possible through import substitution. Sugar-processing technology in Ghana is also saving foreign exchange and creating domestic employment. Imports have been reduced by butagaz use in Tunisia and by ball-point pen manufacturing in Pakistan. Local professional engineers and architects are being used in Singapore in place of foreign experts. On the other hand, the Thai mint project, which had such optimistic beginnings, has not lived up to expectations of having a major economic effect.

Social impact of technology is sometimes difficult to assess and especially to measure; only in recent years have there been systematized efforts at technology assessment from this standpoint. Nevertheless, the cases reveal some important social results of technology utilization as in the instance of community development along Haitian roads, the changes in community life in Papua New Guinea as a result of electrification, and the social development aspects of the extension and education projects by universities in South America. Rice hulling in Java had serious impact on rural populations, especially women. Part of the disappointment in the economic performance of the Thai mint program was the result of life-style preferences of farmers in that country. The absence of technological innovation in the Philippines' fish-drying industry permits it to continue as a family-centered activity.

Finally, environmental effects have resulted from technology introduction in several of the examples. Cassava-pellet dust pollution has been a very important cause of technological innovation and economic impact in Thailand. The Lorena cookstove has not only reduced deforestation in Central America but has also improved the health conditions of housewives in that region. The biogas generators in Tanzania have also reduced the demand for fuel wood. And fungal fermentation holds promise of reducing the polluting effects of coffee processing wastes while creating a valuable feed supplement for livestock.

## CASE HISTORIES MATRIX

This matrix is based on the analysis method presented in the text. Principal elements of case histories appear in the left-hand column; the individual cases, identified by number and country of occurrence are across the top; the numbers and country names correspond to the list of cases.

A mark was entered in a column if that specific element of the analysis format was judged to be relevant to the case. There is, obviously, a degree of subjectivity in deciding the relative importance of one of the analysis elements, but it is felt that this system is useful.

It can be used as a means of selecting cases for review, based either on country site or on identification of some particular set of characteristics. Or, it may be useful to compare to the reader's own assessment after reading an individual case.

|                    | 1       | 2        | 3        | 4     | 5        | 6         | 7         | 8        | 9        | 10       | 11     | 12            | 13       | 14     | 15    | 16       | 17              | 18          | 19        | 20        | 21               | 22    |
|--------------------|---------|----------|----------|-------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|--------|---------------|----------|--------|-------|----------|-----------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|------------------|-------|
|                    | TUNISIA | THAILAND | COLOMBIA | HAITI | PAKISTAN | INDONESIA | GUATEMALA | HONDURAS | MALAYSIA | COLOMBIA | BRAZIL | WESTERN SAMOA | TANZANIA | BRAZIL | GHANA | THAILAND | CENTRAL AMERICA | PHILIPPINES | SINGAPORE | SRI LANKA | PAPUA NEW GUINEA | KOREA |
| RESOURCES          |         |          |          |       |          |           |           |          |          |          |        |               |          |        |       |          |                 |             |           |           |                  |       |
| NATURAL            | •       | •        |          |       |          |           | •         |          | •        | •        | •      | •             | •        |        |       | •        | •               |             |           |           | •                | •     |
| HUMAN              | •       |          |          |       | •        |           |           | •        |          | •        | •      | •             |          | •      | •     | •        | •               |             | •         | •         | •                | •     |
| MEANS              |         |          |          |       |          |           |           |          |          |          |        |               |          |        |       |          |                 |             |           |           |                  |       |
| TECHNOLOGY         | •       | •        | •        | •     | •        | •         |           | •        |          |          |        | •             | •        | •      | •     | •        | •               | •           | •         | •         | •                | •     |
| GOVERNMENT         |         |          | •        |       |          | •         |           |          |          | •        |        |               |          | •      |       |          |                 |             |           | •         |                  | •     |
| FINANCE            | •       |          |          |       |          |           |           |          |          |          |        |               | •        |        |       | •        |                 |             |           | •         |                  | •     |
| FOREIGN ASSISTANCE |         |          | •        | •     |          |           | •         | •        |          |          |        | •             |          | •      | •     |          |                 |             | •         |           | •                |       |
| EFFECTS            |         |          |          |       |          |           |           |          |          |          |        |               |          |        |       |          |                 |             |           |           |                  |       |
| ECONOMIC           | •       | •        | •        | •     | •        | •         | •         |          | •        |          |        | •             | •        | •      | •     | •        | •               | •           | •         |           | •                | •     |
| SOCIAL             |         |          |          | •     |          | •         |           |          | •        | •        | •      | •             |          |        |       |          |                 | •           |           |           | •                | •     |
| ENVIRONMENTAL      |         | •        |          |       |          |           | •         | •        |          |          |        |               | •        |        |       |          | •               |             |           |           |                  |       |



Other books by the same author:  
*Communities and their Development*  
*School and Community in the Tropics*  
*Training for Community Development*  
*The Human Factor in Community Work*  
*The Human Factor in Youth Work*  
*Problems of African Development*

# THE NON-DIRECTIVE APPROACH IN GROUP AND COMMUNITY WORK

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with the collaboration of  
MADGE BATTEN

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510

## Obtaining, Selecting, and Editing Cases

TRAINERS who want to use cases need cases to use. In our experience the best providers of cases are the members of training groups. They can be stimulated to provide them if, when they have listed their problems according to the procedures outlined on pp. 89-91, the trainer asks each member of the group to write a brief descriptive account of what he did and with what result in some specific situation in which he encountered one of these problems and felt that he had not succeeded in coping satisfactorily with it. Each situation of this kind provides material for a case, and once the trainer has thus stimulated the members of the group to try to remember one or more of them, nearly everyone will usually be able to do so.

The trainer will then have a stock of potentially suitable cases for use with the group which produced them and he can continually add to his stock by following the same procedure with other groups whenever he can. In this way he can accumulate a wide variety of cases which he can, at need, use with training groups whose members cannot contribute their own cases for discussion, either because of shortage of time, or because they are inexperienced, or for any other reason.

Cases produced in this way, however, are only *potentially* suitable, even for the group which produced them, and most cases as originally contributed can be very much improved by careful editing before they are used. In fact, careful selection and editing of a case can greatly increase the chances that the members of a group will accept it when the trainer tests it with them for relevance and acceptability as described on

pp. 97-8, and that they will be able to discuss it profitably if they do accept it.

Every case should satisfy certain basic requirements and cases which do not satisfy them should either be edited until they do, or if this should prove impossible, they should be scrapped. These requirements can be stated as follows:

1. *that it leaves no room for doubt about the identity of the person who encountered the problem;*
2. *that the problem it presents is one that quite commonly occurs and one that workers find it difficult to cope with;*
3. *that it states quite specifically what the worker did and with what result; and*
4. *that he might have succeeded if he had more skill.*

There are many other editing points too numerous to have specific mention here, although some of them are indicated by the editing of the three examples which follow. However, two points particularly deserve mention. The first is that even the slightest hint of criticism of the conduct of the worker in the case should be deleted. If it is left in the members of the training group will not want to accept the worker and his problem as typical of themselves and their problems, and this will defeat the purpose of the trainer in introducing the case.

The second point is that a trainer may edit a case differently according to the kind of training group he has specifically in mind. Thus the inclusion of detail about the kind of situation in which a particular problem occurs will strengthen the presentation of a case when it is used with members of a training group who all work in situations of a similar kind: but the same amount of detail will weaken a case—and should therefore be omitted—when the case is used with a training group composed of members most of whom do not work in situations of that specific kind. This point occurs in the editing of *Example Three* below.

The following case is in the form in which it was contributed for discussion by a member of the Youth Service.

*Example One*

The 'Commando Club' which has a strong tradition for outdoor activities arranged a week-end camp on their usual camping site. 'The Arabs', a mixed group from a different club, asked if they could share the camp with them. The 'Commandos' agreed and twelve members of the mixed group came to the camp accompanied by their leader.

On the Saturday evening the 'Commandos', their leader, and the leader of the mixed group went off for a hike, while the 'Arabs', the mixed group, preferred to stay in camp. When the hikers returned, they found the 'Arabs' lounging around the fire 'necking'. The leader of the 'Commandos' was annoyed and said so, whereupon the 'Arabs' became abusive. The 'Commandos' leader then said flatly that he would not have them in camp again and has since refused to accept another visit.

This is a poor case and if one assesses it to see how well it meets the requirements stated on the previous page it is easy to see why. There are two youth leaders and two groups of young people and the case is so presented that the reader is left to think out for himself whose problem is presented by the case and just what the problem is.

This could be remedied by editing, but even if this were done it is more than doubtful whether it could ever become a good case. One would expect most training groups of youth leaders to reject it, partly because most of them would feel that they might never get involved in a situation of that kind, and partly because the outcome or problem aspect of the case might seem to them too insignificant to worry about. This, therefore, is the kind of case to scrap.

*Example Two*

A Youth Centre has been established for several years *in its own premises* (1) with a good Management Committee and also a hard-working Members' Committee. When the Centre was established the canteen was staffed by a rota of lady helpers and this rota has worked satisfactorily for four years.

A full-time leader is appointed *and the two previous leaders are made assistants. This team works well in the club situation.* (2)

The leader suddenly decides that it should be the task of his senior girl members together with a few boys to staff the canteen. (3)

At a Management Committee he puts forward this proposal, pointing out that the running of a canteen is a responsible job and offers a training situation for his senior members.

The representative on the Management Committee of the lady helpers is upset at this idea, threatens to withdraw her services from the club and intimates that she will be able to persuade the other lady members to do likewise.

*The Club Leader, however, has already committed his members to form a rota and this is due to start the following Monday.* (4) He therefore tries to persuade the Management Committee that his idea is the right one, but their sympathies are with the lady helpers' representative whom they have known for four years and not with the leader who has recently been appointed.

*The Chairman of the Management Committee sees this as a possible rift in the organization of the club and closes the discussion by saying that he will discuss the problem with the leader and the representative of the lady helpers after the formal business of the Management Committee has been concluded.* (5)

This has the makings of a very good case. Today's trend in the Youth Service is all for getting young people to undertake more responsibilities for the day-to-day conduct of affairs within their clubs, and one of the major difficulties of a youth leader who tries to do this may be the reluctance of his adult helpers to hand over some of their responsibilities to young people. Thus very many youth leaders are likely to agree that this case illustrates a problem that is very relevant to themselves. The case is also a good one because it provides quite a clear picture of what the leader did and of the kind of difficulty he got into as a result of what he did.

This having been said, it is still true that the case can be considerably improved by editing. The points at which this might be done are indicated in the text of the case by italics and by the figures in parentheses. The first two points are very minor ones, for the italics merely indicate information which could be omitted as irrelevant to the problem contained in the case. Point (4) is more important, for the information provided by the words italicized refers to something the leader did at an earlier stage and would be more suitably provided at (3). It is, however, even more important that something should be done about the final paragraph, for it weakens the case from the

point of view of leader-training by informing us that the Chairman of the Management Committee has taken over from the leader responsibility for dealing with the leader's problem. For use with youth leaders, therefore, the case would be much improved if the whole of the last paragraph were omitted.

If the case were edited in this way it would then read as follows:

A Youth Centre has been established for four years with a good Management Committee and also a hard-working Members' Committee. When the Centre was established the canteen was staffed by a rota of lady helpers, and this rota has worked satisfactorily for four years.

Then a new full-time leader is appointed who thinks that his senior girl members together with a few boys should staff the canteen. He discusses this with his Members' Committee and other club members who accept the idea and organize a rota which is due to start the following Monday.

He then seeks the approval of his Management Committee, explaining that the running of a canteen is a responsible job which provides a good training situation for his senior members.

The representative on the Management Committee of the lady helpers is upset at this idea. She threatens to withdraw her services from the club and intimates that she will be able to persuade the other lady helpers to do likewise.

Aware that he has already committed himself with his members, the leader does his best to persuade the Management Committee that his idea is the right one, but their sympathies are with the lady helper on the Management Committee whom they have known for four years, and not with the leader who has only recently been appointed. So the leader now has a difficult problem on his hands.

Could he have avoided it and still achieved his purpose, and if so, how?

### Example Three

*The leader of a church club of some thirty members, meeting once a week, decides after full consultation with the Management and Members' Committees and the church authorities to relax the rule of church membership and open the club to more people.*

*This move is resented by Richard, a member of long standing and a keen*

*communicant, and by the technical group to which he belongs which is responsible for maintaining the club electric (record player, etc.).*

*This group looks on newcomers with suspicion and Richard expresses his resentment (1) by avoiding the payment of subscriptions whenever possible. When the leader tackles him on this he becomes abusive, and the leader feels that he can take little definite action because the subscriptions are administered in a slack way, and there is no easy way to check up.*

*The problem reaches a critical point when the Members' Committee, of which the leader is chairman, (2) decides to tighten up the door procedure and raise the subs.*

At the meeting, some of the committee who do not pay subs claim that they need not as they are in effect helpers. *The Chairman (3) said that the responsibility as to whether they paid or not was theirs, but he advised that they should pay and put forward several reasons. After a full discussion they voted in favour of exempting themselves from subs. Then the question of Richard was raised (4) as he was not a committee member. The committee were strongly divided and recommended as a compromise that the leader should exercise his discretion in the matter.*

Subsequently the leader tried to regularize the situation by asking Richard to pay up, but Richard was abusive. He left the club and the church (1) and took his technical group with him.

Could the leader have avoided this outcome?

This is also potentially a good case. It leaves one in no doubt about whose problem it presents, and the problem itself is one that any leader may encounter from time to time and have difficulty in dealing with. Once again, however, the case can be considerably improved by editing. Most of the detailed information (1) given at the beginning of the case should be omitted, since it helps to distract attention from the basic fact that the leader thought that Richard should pay and Richard, for reasons best known to himself, thought otherwise. Also, if the club is defined as a club of one particular kind—a small church club open on one night a week only—the case may appear less relevant than it really is to leaders, for example, of large open clubs which meet nearly every night of the week. This might influence them against accepting it in spite of the fact that the basic problem the case presents can face the leader in any kind of club.

The case can also be improved by editing it at points (2), (3), and (4) to bring out more clearly what the leader actually did. This can be done by rewriting the words underlined at (2) to make it clear that it was the leader who introduced into the Members' Committee the idea of tightening up the door procedure and raising the subs; by substituting 'leader' for 'chairman' at point (3); and by substituting 'Then the leader raised the question of Richard . . .' for 'Then the question of Richard was raised' at point (4). The purpose of all three emendations is to help focus the attention of the members of a training group more directly on how the leader tried to cope with his problem.

If the case is edited in this way it will then read as follows:

A club leader has noticed that Richard, a senior club member who leads the group which looks after the club's electrics (record-player, etc.), has got into the habit of avoiding paying his club subscription whenever possible. When the leader tackles him on this he becomes abusive, and the leader feels that he can take little definite action because he is aware that the subscriptions are not well administered and there is no easy way to check up.

The leader then decides to get the Members' Committee, of which he is the chairman, to tighten up the door procedure and raise the subs.

At the meeting of this committee some of the committee members who are also in arrears with subs claim that they need not pay as they are in effect club helpers. The leader replies that whether they should pay or not is for the committee to decide, but he suggests they ought to pay and puts forward several reasons. After a full discussion the members of the committee vote in favour of exempting themselves from subs. Then the leader raises the question of Richard who is not a committee member but who also helps in the club. The members of the committee are strongly divided and recommend as a compromise that the leader should exercise his own discretion in the matter.

Subsequently the leader tries to regularize the situation by asking Richard to pay up. But Richard becomes abusive and finally leaves the club taking the technical group with him.

Could the leader have avoided this outcome?

The impact of a case can sometimes be strengthened by editing it so that the person who encountered the problem tells

his own story. If *Example Three* were rewritten in this way it might read as follows:

I am a bit worried about the way I handled a problem that I came up against in the club recently. I had noticed that one of my senior club members, a chap called Richard, had got into the habit of avoiding paying his club subscription whenever he could, and since the system for collecting subs had got a bit slack, he had been getting away with it for some time. Apart from that he was quite a useful club member for he and a few of his friends looked after the club electrics (record-player, etc.) and repaired them if they went wrong.

However, that was no reason why he should not pay his subs, but when I tackled him on the subject he became abusive, so I let the matter drop for the time being until I could feel I was on really strong ground.

I'm chairman of the Members' Committee in our club, and my next step was to get them to tighten up the door procedure so that no one would be able to get by without paying his subs. This wasn't at all popular with some of the committee members who also happened to be in arrears with their subs, and they took the line that as committee members they were really helpers and should not have to pay anything. I said that that was for the committee to decide, but that in my view everyone ought to pay and I told them why. The committee members discussed the pros and cons of this for a long time, but the upshot was that they decided to exempt themselves from paying subs.

I then raised the question of Richard who is not a committee member but who also does a lot to help the club. This led to still more discussion which ended with them telling me that I must do what I thought best.

I thought it over and decided that if I exempted Richard then a whole lot of other members would claim exemption too, so once again I asked Richard to pay up but he would have none of it. When I insisted, he left the club and his friends with him, and none of them has been back since.

Could you have handled this problem better?

A case can also sometimes be rewritten from the viewpoint of the person who, in the original case, was seen by the 'worker' as the cause of his problem. In *Example Two*, for instance, the youth leader's problem is with his Management Committee, and the case is suitable for use with a training group of youth leaders. But the final paragraph of the original case shows that

the youth leader, through what he did, had also created a problem for the Chairman of the Management Committee. If the case were rewritten to present the problem as the Chairman saw it, it could then be used on a training course for chairmen and members of Management Committees. The training applications of many cases can be extended in this way.

But however carefully a trainer may edit a case, and however good a case may seem to him to be, he can never be sure that it really is good until he has tested and used it with a training group. This may reveal the need for further editing and it is only when this has been done and the amended case has satisfactorily passed the test of further use that the trainer can confidently add it to his permanent stock of 'good' cases.

There is one final point. Cases vary very greatly in respect of the difficulty of the problems they present and in respect of the level of skill, or lack of it, of the 'workers' who encounter them: and the training value of a case is greatly enhanced if the members of the training group are able to identify themselves with the way the 'worker' tries to achieve his purpose as well as with the problem presented in the case. The ideal case for any particular group is one which presents a 'worker' tackling a situation in much the same way as the members of the training group would normally have done themselves, and with much the same result. They then become thoroughly involved in the process of pooling their ideas and experience in order to understand just why the 'worker' failed and just how he (and by implication also themselves) could have done better.

## Conclusion

It has been our theme in this book that every 'worker' in every situation in which he works will necessarily use one or other of two approaches according to whether his intention is basically directive or non-directive; that each approach offers some advantages and incurs some disadvantages that the other lacks; and that in order to be consistently efficient in achieving his purposes the worker needs realistically to assess which of these approaches is the more appropriate one for him to use in each of the situations in which he works.

We have outlined the relevant factors of choice as we see them and have described the kinds of skill we think are needed to enable workers to use the non-directive approach to good effect. We have done this because we believe that many workers habitually use the directive approach in situations where the non-directive approach would suit their purposes better; and that many others who aim to work non-directively often defeat themselves: either because they sometimes try to do so when the situation is not right for it, or because in trying to be non-directive they adopt too passive a role. In fact, their role should be negative only in the sense that they refrain from giving their own opinions, since this would defeat their main object of getting people to think things out for themselves. In every other respect their role is a very active one. It demands real skill to help people to think and decide realistically and constructively in the light of all the available facts about the things that really matter to them: and it is by thus helping people to think more effectively for themselves that the worker also helps them more fully to develop their potentialities as persons.

*Dedicated  
to the Living Memory of*

Evelio Javier

October 31, 1942 - February 11, 1986

"The challenge today stands not in the battlefield but in the provinces, in the barrios. They are where leaders are needed. Yet where are those who can lead where angels fear to tread?"

—Evelio Javier, editorial written as a law student.

Elected Governor in 1971 at age 29  
Antique Province, Philippines.

Evelio accepted his own challenge.

He committed himself to empowering the poor of his  
province.

He died in the defense of justice,  
gunned down by political assassins.

May his cause endure.

# Community Management

Asian Experience and Perspectives

Edited  
by  
David C. Korten



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516

CHAPTER THREE

# Reflections of a Village Development Worker<sup>1</sup>

Apichart Thongyu  
(Translated by James Hopkins)

Old bumpy laterite road--  
to the right, paddy fields and dikes;  
small stream on the left, water nearly dry.  
All along the road, a patchwork of grove and paddy  
just past the shabby wooden bridge  
resting on the stream ahead,  
lies the village.....people.

Large tamarind grove, dawn awakens:  
smoke drifts overhead in early morning light,  
cattle, buffalo and people emerge from dwellings.  
Noon passes, dusk falls:  
children herd buffalo to pens, maidens draw and fetch water,  
smoke arises once again.  
Evening comes, only sounds of householders:  
sorrow, joy, happiness, suffering.  
Silence and tranquility crawl in, covering the village.

Arising early,  
vanishing into the fields carrying a spade,  
in my heart a question:  
this? backward, undeveloped land;  
this? problem people of the country;  
this? symbol of ignorance;  
this? symbol of malnutrition;  
this? symbol of blackness, deprivation, and poverty?

Large square mesh composed of farm huts and houses.  
People and their Way; one hundred and sixty years have passed,  
change creeps slowly, filled with energy, yet balance.  
Hot potent wind swoops in shouting unexpected turbulence;  
aching and cracking.  
One question drifts in on the hot wind, lingering in my thoughts:  
"What am I to do here?"

After the season which has passed,  
yellow wildflowers cover the paddy fields,  
sunheat nearly burns crisp dried leaves.  
People passing to and fro, in their hands:  
workknives, baskets, fish nets.  
Far in the distance, ahead lies a dry mountain.  
As dusk falls, people return home carrying scrub wood,  
vegetables, grass, tadpoles, crabs, fish.  
Moonlight fills the sky, lustrous gold covers all;  
undeveloped backwardness cannot be found.  
Again the question arises: "What am I to do here?"

Sitting, reflecting on the past, reviewing sounds spoken from the  
outside and their thoughts toward here: "stupid...poor...sick;"  
"backward...undeveloped; not-growing...inert...lazy;"  
"unhealthy...lacking education."  
That is the force which pushed me here, together with the sound  
floating on the wind: "You are a developer."

The village is burning with heat, everyone works in the paddy  
fields; grandpa and son plow the fields, grandma and daughter  
care for little children and prepare food.  
Dawn till dusk, then go home.  
Hot wind blows by; outside and inside, scorching heat.  
Thought turns to the words of rice-eaters who have never farmed,  
words which echo with a striking feeling: "Those rice farmers...  
so lazy that they are poor."  
Another hot blast sweeps in, leaves fall to the cracked earth;  
people herd buffaloes home.

Hoey! Hoey! Hoey!  
Kung king...kung king...kung king,  
Small boys stuffs sticky rice in mouth,  
runs and jumps upon buffalo back.  
Dawn rays of silver and gold grasp the horizon,  
shortly the picture will fade.



On the road from the village to the paddy fields,  
no trace of "life" apart from "work,"  
no trace of "education" apart from "life."

Bamboo is split open; one, two, three, four.  
Enough for a house to live, only three walls is ample.  
Out front a ladder leans, tied to a beam;  
when leaving draw up the ladder, all villagers know...  
gone to the paddy fields.  
No question about morality of the village people.

No noisy sounds of confusion,  
no loud sounds of people-crowds,  
no heaps of noise from engines,  
no sound of search for freedom,  
no sound of calls for honor and rank;  
only quietude,  
life, and love.

One hundred sixty years of this village,  
no introduction to Dharma,  
no ethical theories,  
no economic plan,  
no articles of government,  
no philosophical theory.  
Only the life of people,  
propagated in tranquil bliss.

Iat aat..iat aat,  
bamboo leaves drift down into a pile on the ground;  
Grandma sits spinning cotton.  
Under the house is a buffalo pen...  
a shady resting place...  
a conversation spot...  
where the weaving loom sits...  
tomorrow...grandma's new sarong will be finished.  
Sitting reflecting quietly in my heart  
with the picture appearing before me,  
"Is this the meaning of laziness and backwardness?"

While philosophers are investigating the answers of life,  
economists are thinking and searching for economic systems,  
politicians are struggling for power,  
specialists are arguing over theories,

barristers are drafting laws,  
social workers are speaking of freedom,  
humanitarians are speaking of human rights,  
monks are delivering sermons to the people,  
rice farmers in the village are harvesting.

Those rice kernels  
shall feed the people.

Rice is food;  
vegetables, fish, birds, mice, are food.  
People in the village create, make...find by themselves.  
Silkworms, mulberry, cotton;  
with two hands, they become clothing.  
Tree roots, grass blades;  
with brains, they become curatives for disease and illness.  
Trees, leaves;  
with labor, they are constructed into dwelling.  
Ethics, virtues;  
by telling and showing the way of life,  
establish and thoroughly transmit values of righteousness.  
What else do humans want!

Entire Khun trees blossom in yellow flowers,  
today the village is exited.  
Some people are saying:  
"The Boss is coming today to recommend planting new crops."  
The people fill the village temple pavillion;  
shortly, a green vehicle glides in,  
three men alight.  
They start training about planting crops after the rice season,  
together with exhortations not to be lazy.  
People nod their heads as if they understand.  
When the three men have left,  
sounds of some people arise randomly:  
"The plague!...only good at speaking, can they do it?...  
I've planted since my father, my grandfather!  
What do they know better than I?"

Grandpa, seventy-six years old,  
is planting rice in the middle of the paddy field,  
from morning until afternoon;  
rushing the planting to catch the early rains,  
and hurrying back home before dusk  
because yesterday,

the district office ordered:  
all villagers must prepare to enter training about:  
"Conditions of Malnutrition Which Cause Ill-health and Weakness."

Jong, a small girl in the village, is carried out,  
she is being taken to a hospital in the city.  
White-haired grandfather prevents it;  
they all take Jong to his house,  
place her on the porch.  
Before the Buddha altar, grandfather busily prepares things.  
Shortly, the exorcist arrives;  
after sitting and chanting for awhile,  
a strange language bursts out.  
White-haired grandfather translates,  
then steps down and disappears towards the garden,  
everyone sits waiting:  
grandfather returns with four or five leaves,  
binds them together, puts them in his mouth, chews them,  
it's so confusing: I don't know, are they backward or not?  
and sprays them on Jong's head.

Jong gradually moves her eyes, awakens, and regains consciousness;  
Afterwards, Jong arises and walks back home;  
in the evening,  
I see her pushing a water cart vigorously.

Days and time change,  
people change,  
feelings and moods change.  
I, too, am the same;  
many things have changed.  
I really wonder about myself:  
who is actually being developed,  
us, or the people in the villages?

Baskets covered and wrapped with an old sarong,  
placed on wooden shelves under the house:  
one...two...three...four...  
five...six...

Grandmother delicately pulls them out,  
unwraps the cloth carefully;  
left hand swatting flies swarming around,  
right hand scratching and flicking  
silkworms crowded in the basket,  
white and nearly full-grown.

Not too much longer,  
and another new sarong will exist.

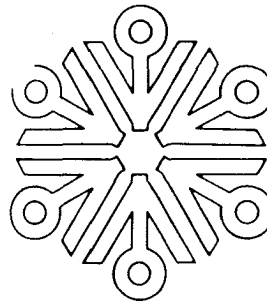
Daybreak,  
another new day.  
Arising slowly,  
lonely and thinking of someone;  
turning and seeing Grandfather sitting next to the water jar,  
using an axe to cut a plow handle,  
stroking it delightedly.  
Loneliness disappears;  
the person who turns the earth is right here.

It's nearly time to leave the village:  
Mother pulls my arm and has me sit close by;  
she describes the collective life of the village,  
history which has never poured out in print.  
Each word...each sentence  
is full of life:  
the story of the village in the past,  
the fear of the future,  
the struggle of the present.

Turning back to look once again,  
to be sure.  
Water in the stream is clear and clean,  
Mother with a new silk skirt,  
Father with a checkered sarong,  
people with Virtue,  
life with simplicity.  
Questions are not exhausted, even at parting:  
Undeveloped, really?  
Backward, really?  
In the time that has passed,  
only one type of development was seen:  
that of myself!

#### NOTE

1. Abstracted by David C. Korten from Apichart Thongyu "Reflections of a Village Development Worker," (Research Development Institute, Khon Kaen University, 1985). Reprinted with permission.



# THE FIELD DIRECTORS' HANDBOOK

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AN OXFAM MANUAL FOR  
DEVELOPMENT WORKERS

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## The non-governmental organisation

In its field operations the NGO cannot expect to create structures parallel to those of the State, nor act as a substitute in the provision of services which are recognised as a State responsibility. However, NGOs can be effective in working with those groups ignored or by-passed by large State development schemes. The main priority should be to try to reach the growing numbers of people not affected by liberal reforms or increases in wealth.

Perhaps the main problem for the NGO is that the scale of its operations is too small to effect direct structural change at a general level. It can, however, be effective in supporting small-scale self-help schemes and pilot projects, and can assist in the development of ideas. It must be recognised, though, that the self-help approach, while it is often the only way open to the poor in a world of shrinking resources, and can bring tangible benefits to those in need, is part of a trend in economic development that mainly benefits the wealthy. So long as the poor are forced to sustain their own development, without the assistance or even cooperation of society at large, they will remain marginalised both economically and politically. Therefore the NGO should encourage enlightened development education directed at the general populations of both Third World and industrialised nations and especially at governments. By exposing the problems caused by poverty to society at large, it is hoped to change attitudes towards the poor and affect policies so that those who are privileged will become more active in helping the poor and will direct funds and resources to that end.

Frequently in low-income areas many of the resources necessary for development exist, but are either under-utilised or appropriated by wealthy elites. Foremost among these is the intelligence, ingenuity and effort of labour itself. Self-help programmes funded by the NGO may well not bring about structural change on a large scale, but they can at least help ensure that reserves of capital, labour, appropriate technologies etc. are used to a more constructive end — an end which will benefit the poor and not the upper income groups.

Thus, the ability of the NGO to achieve its goals depends not only on its own resources and policies, but also on the constraints operating in the environment in which it works. Much of the NGO input may seem discouragingly fragmentary and yet the development agency must work within prevailing political conditions. With persistence and tact some solutions may be possible, even in the most intractable political situations. In many areas the NGO faces not so much an antipathetic government as a complete vacuum, where the development effort is circumscribed by problems other than the political. In such circumstances the government may well welcome the operations of the NGO.

However, even in areas where the need is very great, NGOs should never take for granted their impact, and their work must be monitored and assessed regularly. One of the shortcomings of much past NGO work has been the way programmes have been influenced by the need to be financially accountable in the short-term. Development in a true and profound sense is a slow process. One cannot expect people to change their life-styles and life-chances in the short time-span of the average NGO programme. In some ways funding and volunteer agencies can be blamed for a project-centred view of development

whereby projects are expected to come to fruition according to timetable. This pressure, which may cause considerable strain in project, is compounded by the need felt by most NGOs to be structures to demonstrate a programme's success...

This is not to say that the NGO should not support small, short-term projects with limited, concrete goals, but that development should be seen as a gradual and sometimes radical process rather than a series of projects. Often it is not the outcome of a project — in terms of material benefits accruing, the numbers of people affected etc. — which is most important. The very act of demanding a service can be a reflection of a people's awareness of their role in society, their needs and the obstacles they confront. And sometimes the development of this awareness can be the main goal of a programme. (See PART FOUR)

## II

## Oxfam and development

Oxfam's main objective is outlined in its Memorandum of Association: *"The relief of poverty, distress and suffering in every part of the world without regard to political and religious beliefs."*

This involves, on the one hand, trying to relieve the suffering caused by poverty and, on the other, reducing the total number of poor. But Oxfam is trying to do something more: namely, to influence the process of development in such a way that the poorest are enabled to take charge of their own lives and to mount their own initiatives in the improvement of living standards. Thus, the main objective is to try to end bias against the poor in the development process.

It is hoped that the projects supported by Oxfam will be designed for:

- ☐ the poorest to *have* more (particularly in terms of food and health care) and to gain control of a fair share of the world's resources, and
- ☐ for the poor to *be* more, in terms of self-confidence, ability to manage their own future, and improving their status in society at large.

We are not just concerned, therefore, with material improvement through rural or urban production schemes or health programmes, but also with the manner in which material change is organised; i.e., with the social institutions and organisations that accompany the programmes.

It follows that the main aim of Oxfam as a funding agency is not simply to improve access to resources or deliver essential services, but to assist the poor to gain increasing control over resources and to remove the obstacles to a more equitable distribution. To have any real impact on development must involve a more rational distribution of ownership, income transfer; institutional reform; the provision of services and increased participation of the poor in political life.

Oxfam has identified three key objectives in its work:

- a:** To fund and support small-scale development programmes in certain priority areas (geographic and functional) which will enable the poor as far as possible — to provide for their own needs, to obtain social justice and to secure their basic human rights.
- b:** To fund and support humanitarian welfare work among deprived people in certain priority areas.
- c:** To fund, plan and, where necessary, operate an effective relief response to those disasters identified as requiring Oxfam's assistance.

Each of these priorities is discussed in some detail in the following 'PARTS' of the Handbook. Often development, relief and welfare programmes will in reality be indivisible. And it is hoped that all programmes will have a strong development component, enabling

people gradually to devise their own strategies for subsistence and survival.

It is the primary purpose of this Handbook to provide guidelines, grouped largely under the headings of Agriculture, Health, Social and Economic Development, to show how our aims may be pursued. But, however important such guidelines and the development framework they imply may be, we must always remember that Oxfam exists to serve people, not to promote an ideology or development model.

The first essential, then, is to respond to human need out of compassion and a sense of natural kinship with those who suffer. The guidelines are necessary so that this humanitarian impulse may be tempered with realism, so that it does not degenerate into mere sentimentality. Oxfam field staff should be flexible and imaginative in interpreting the guidelines and should respond to human need wherever there is a genuine opportunity to do so.

The main challenge for aid agencies is twofold:

- ☐ the urgent need to save the destitute from extreme deprivation and premature death, and
- ☐ the need to arrest and reverse the process of decline towards destitution.

To the extent that in any given situation the former dominates, Oxfam's response will be in terms of gifts in cash and kind, and will be a short-term measure until a more substantial change in the condition of the victims can be effected. Thus, even though Oxfam's main aim is to help people to help themselves, 'welfare' projects may in certain circumstances be necessary, especially where the people concerned are not in a position to benefit from a development programme.

In situations where the main priority is to reverse the process of destitution, it is important to understand not only present conditions, but also the past and likely future dynamics of change, and to seek a durable solution. This will be one which results in the rehabilitation of the poor in such a way that there is a good chance of continued improvement after Oxfam ceases to be involved.

The alternative strategies available to field staff, when set against the limited resources at their disposal, serve to underline the dilemma they constantly face between 'rescue' and development aid. Whereas rescue aid may ensure survival but solve none of the long-term problems, development aid, while holding the promise of a self-sustaining pattern of development, entails a high degree of risk and may easily fail.

Although the Handbook is primarily concerned with development strategy, it must be emphasised that the destitute who have no resources and little hope should receive assistance to secure their survival. Ideally, relief will give way to longer-term development programmes.

Disasters and emergencies present a challenge which Oxfam cannot ignore. The plight of people made homeless or afflicted by sudden disaster such as earthquakes, hurricanes, epidemics or forced migrations evokes a response from the public which has provided much of the impetus for the growth of Oxfam. To do justice to the compassion felt by our supporters and by the public as a whole, it is essential that we continue to assist in times of emergency and disaster (for detailed guidelines see PART EIGHT).

There are many communities in the world where people live in a chronic state of destitution, degradation and illness, for which development can offer no solutions. Compassion demands that Oxfam should respond in such a way that

### 3 Development

If it is accepted that Oxfam strives to arrest and reverse the process that result in deprivation, the difficulties of designing appropriate effective programmes should not be underestimated. It takes patience and imagination to gain a full understanding of conditions and their causes, and to formulate and promote solutions. This is in many ways a new field and, unfortunately, little can be learned from orthodox development programmes designed from the top down. Indeed, in some cases it is the unequal and unacceptable effects of programmes that Oxfam will have to counter.

Disillusionment with development projects which stress narrow economic objectives has resulted in a search for other strategies which stress the social dynamics of change and the nature of the distribution of assets within society. The dominant, 'modernisation', approach to rural development may well have increased levels of agricultural production but has also increased inequalities and helped to perpetuate unjust and inequalitarian forms of organisation. Modernisation benefited some, but the vast majority of people in the world continue to be marginalised and excluded from development projects.

Oxfam tries to avoid becoming involved in development work as an operational agency, but to retain its integrity as a funding agency. Whereas in the past funds were often channelled through international agencies, missions and other expatriate groups, now emphasis is on funding directly either grass-roots groups or intermediate development agencies. Sometimes the operational approach to aid may seem less frustrating and more dramatic in its effects (especially if development is measured by material indices) than the centralist approach. But a decentralised form of development is based on the view that the development initiative is more likely to be sustainable if there is strong support for, and a high degree of control over, the programme at the local level.

It is mainly for this reason that Oxfam's policy in development has moved away from the funding of large numbers of expatriate experts and technical advisers towards providing local people with the opportunity to put their own initiatives, ideas and enthusiasm to work for the benefit of their own communities. Thus, Oxfam's role in the development process is that of a partner. Although the organisation has benefited from the experience of working in many different countries and contrasting circumstances, each culture and socio-political context presents unique problems, and it is therefore neither possible nor desirable that the organisation should manage the process of change. Funding and intermediate agencies, grass-roots groups and all other interested parties should work together in a partnership, exchanging ideas, sharing their effort and taking risks towards achieving their goals.

Emphasis is placed on the individual and unique circumstances of each society. The era of 'blue-prints' for the development of the Third World, in which pre-packaged solutions are worked out in the capital of the industrialised countries is over. Stress is placed on small-scale projects rather than on comprehensive planning strategies, and secondary importance is given to quantitative results. Much more emphasis is placed on the *processes* by which results are achieved than on the resultant *forms*: for example, it is much more important to ensure that the content and continuity of educational provision are appropriate than merely to construct a school. Major emphasis is placed on increasing the opportunities of previously excluded groups to participate more fully in the development process.

## Development strategies

Participatory  
democracy

If people are to 'be more', they must participate fully in their own social and economic development: they must make their own choices and not become the servants of an externally-devised grand design.

In the past ten years or so an approach has emerged which emphasises the *participation* of the poor in determining self-reliant development strategies. The paternalism of 'traditional' strategies is replaced by an emphasis on the provision of education and employment skills which will enable the poor to formulate their own programmes for change (see PART FOUR). Thus, an increasing number of development projects which Oxfam supports stress what we might term non-material objectives. Such objectives include the raising of people's consciousness, increasing solidarity and creating organisations through which the impoverished and marginalised groups within a society can build a more secure, less oppressed base from which to challenge established privilege. Oxfam's aim to relieve poverty, when translated into such terms, means supporting projects to increase awareness and self-determination and to remove the material barriers to self-reliant development.

This approach means directing support to particular groups within society: the poorest of the poor, those marginalised socially or politically and the unemployed. It is different from the traditional social welfare approach, which emphasises the care of the socially disabled. Firstly, it extends the meaning of this disability to include much larger sections of the population. Secondly, and more importantly, it sees disability as a product of the disabling processes of rapid social change; processes which encourage dependence and push more people into poverty and thus on to the periphery of society. Participatory democracy is identified as the most important mechanism for ensuring that a programme is appropriate to the problems presented in a given area. Participation is not merely an ideal; neither is it simply a question of consultation with project holders; nor is it defined by the acceptance and/or use of a particular service provided by the development agency. Participation is crucial to the identification of the goals of a programme, its implementation, organisation and evaluation, and is thus a vital factor affecting its potential for success. The participatory approach places strong emphasis on the need for social awareness; the identification by people of their common problems and goals; the importance of information, education and training to enable the effective use of local resources; and the necessity that all programmes be founded on collaboration between the funding agency, grass-roots organisations and, if applicable, the intermediate agency.

The stress on participatory democracy in development has certain practical implications.

- a:** The outcome will depend on the extent to which participation has occurred at the local level in all aspects of the project and on whether local resources have been truly mobilised.
- b:** The level of funding and the technological input must be appropriate to the local culture economy and the administrative and organisational capacity of the project holders. For example, in those rural areas where the need for assistance is very strong, but the population is only nominally incorporated in the market economy, it is all too easy to flood a zone with funds. In such circumstances, local initiative and participation in, or control of, a project may easily be destroyed.
- c:** The potential for full participation at the local level is very much determined by the degree of social differentiation and the interests of the local leadership. Charismatic leaders may be very persuasive and may

have a strong influence on field staff and project holders alike, and yet they frequently inhibit the political development of the group they represent and marginalise the weaker members.

**d:** If the emphasis is on a democratic polity and collective effort, then it is important to examine the tradition of collective action in any given area so as to avoid imposing models. For example, in Latin America, despite extreme social differentiation, the pre-Columbian tradition of collective labour organises and reinforces many present day development programmes in both rural and urban communities. In India, on the other hand, strict caste observances would make this kind of community involvement impossible and collective effort would more likely be based on different principles of unity, such as kinship.

**e:** It may be that democratic participation is not simply a means of achieving a given end, but is seen as a goal in itself; a goal which helps focus social awareness and provides continuity in development.

## 2 Self-Reliance

Where there is full participation at all levels and stages of a development programme, it is hoped that one result will be self-reliance in financial, administrative, educational and social terms. However, in many instances — and particularly in remote rural areas — complete independence is not possible. Even in industrialised countries where extensive infrastructures have been established, the cost and organisational problems involved in creating a new service may be enormous; but in low-income countries the obstacles to improving health or education provision etc. will be even greater. A people occupied almost full-time with survival cannot be expected to have the time, energy or even the interest to sustain a programme without support of some kind from outside.

Perhaps in an ideal world all funding would be directed at grass-roots organisations — communities, cooperatives, associations etc. Even though this kind of work requires a high staff input from the funding agency, direct funding can bring considerable savings, since the institutional structures, staff and capital equipment of intermediate agencies can be extremely costly. However, it is often necessary to seek the support of local development institutions in the planning and implementation of projects or the provision of specialist services. Working through such organisations has the advantage of assisting in the formation of local development expertise. Further, the foreign funding agency is not capable of providing outreach to all groups that need help, nor is it desirable that it should do so. Therefore, where appropriate, local intermediate agencies should be identified and encouraged.

If a local development agency is involved in a programme, it is extremely important to examine its relationship with the grass-roots organisations. All too often it is assumed that the credibility of local professionals stems automatically from the very fact that they are local as opposed to expatriate. The marked social stratification characteristic of most low-income countries means that local middle-class professionals frequently have very little understanding of the problems faced by the poor. In most cases, the mandate to work in a given area, or with a given group of people, arises not because of a person's origins but because of their motives, their actions and their ability to foster a relationship of trust. The difference in status between the manual labourer and the local professional may be such that there is very little exchange of ideas between the two and very little chance of their working together on equal terms.

The achievement of self-reliance depends on a number of factors.

- a:** The constraints of the area: geographical, economic, social and political. Independent development initiatives are frequently

undermined by forces external to the programme; income generation projects, for example, often increase dependence and exploitation.

**b:** The project timetable should not be planned simply to fit in with the requirements of the funding agency. The decision to end funding is an enormous responsibility. The progress of a project may be much slower than expected and therefore a lot of flexibility is needed in planning financial assistance. Constant monitoring and evaluation by all interested parties is the best way of determining when the funding agency should be able to withdraw without destroying a programme.

**c:** Where a project will require a permanent external input, for example, in the form of technologies which cannot be produced by project holders, then alternative sources of finance (other than the funding agency) must be identified from the outset. If there are sufficient reserves, the project itself may take over funding, but if not, arrangements must be made with the government or some other institution. It is too often the case that only when a project has already absorbed all the capital available from a funding agency does the search for an alternative source of finance begin.

#### Small Scale

The scale of a programme can be measured by the level of funding, the area or population affected, the number of structures built, or the size of the implementing institution. Oxfam's commitment is mainly to small-scale development programmes, not simply because of the limited availability of resources, but more because larger programmes are less likely to guarantee a high level of participation or address problems at the local level.

In recent decades there has been world-wide criticism of many of the large-scale, 'top down', development programmes. Attention has been focused on certain shortcomings which seem often to result: alienation of project management from project holders; the lack of involvement of project holders in implementation and administration; bureaucratisation and the use of inappropriate technologies and policies. The impact of these programmes is rarely commensurate with the resources invested. Thus, throughout the world we see large, unwieldy development projects boasting massive funding, sophisticated equipment and expertise and large numbers of professional staff. And yet, despite exaggerated claims, they often prove unrealistic in their objectives, ill-advised in their methods and ineffective in terms of results; above all, failing to reach those most in need.

There are certain problems specific to funding large non-governmental operational agencies:

**a:** The institutionalisation of the agency. A commitment to working for/with the poor may rapidly be replaced by a commitment to maintaining the institution and providing jobs for the staff. This trend is accentuated in countries with high unemployment among middle-class professionals. Projects will often be devised by staff in order to secure their own future, and participation in project design and implementation will be severely restricted.

**b:** Large operational agencies will be seriously affected by changes in funding. The cost of maintaining institutional structures with inflated bureaucracies and staff numbers can be exorbitant — especially where they are based in urban areas — and it is unlikely that self-financing will be feasible.

Perhaps the most serious problem with large-scale 'top down' programmes is the tendency to create a level of dependence which leaves the project extremely vulnerable to changes in circumstance. If a project is beyond the control of project holders or is extremely expensive, then it is unlikely to be able to survive changes either in government or in funding policy.

#### 4 Development as an Intervention

However, small-scale development programmes do have a number of disadvantages. For example, small groups often have very limited skills and abilities; they are frequently dominated by one or two people; they have difficulty in planning a programme and in assessing the results of their efforts. The activities of small programmes, by definition, have limited impact and sometimes it is hard for the funding agency to detect any impact at all — much depends on faith in the organisations involved. Finally, their size frequently makes them very vulnerable to attack by the vested interests they offend.

Thus, there are no rigid rules regarding the size or scope of development programmes. The priority of field staff should be to support those programmes which with the minimum possible outlay reach the maximum possible numbers of people, the scale of funding or institutional development never undermining the feasibility of participation of, and control by, project holders.

It must be recognised that however little field staff may wish to interfere in the development process, the role of Oxfam as a funding agency will always imply an intervention of some kind. But Oxfam at least has the advantage of not being forced to work to any specific directive and can support either single- or multi-purpose programmes, in response to local priorities. Continual evaluation and monitoring of both policy and practice is necessary to assess the impact of the funding agency in the countries in which it is active.

Perhaps the most controversial feature of intervention by the development agency is the way in which it may affect local cultural traditions. The wide range of cultural and institutional conditions in different parts of the world will affect radically what the funding agency is able to achieve in each region. Enormous tact and sensitivity are required when dealing with cultural attitudes which apparently obstruct educational or developmental activities. Yet one of the main challenges faced by the development agency is to try to reach those most deprived and marginalised: this implies that we cannot take local structures and attitudes at face value.

Rigid rules regarding marriage and kinship; taboos, prohibitions and other cultural practices; strict class and caste observances, etc., may all contribute to group security, but often at the expense of individual freedom. While these cultural traditions may be appropriate in many contexts, they frequently outlive their usefulness to the individual or community in changing circumstances. And yet they do not disappear easily, nor should a pattern of development which is destructive of a cultural tradition be encouraged. Sometimes the most violent social and psychological disruptions brought about by economic change can be those which result from the destruction of the integrity of a local culture and the removal of a people's links with their past (see PART TWO, Section 5).

#### 5 Evaluation and Monitoring

It is recognised that all development programmes are experimental and entail some risk. Therefore, constant monitoring and evaluation is an essential component of ANY programme (see PART THREE). This kind of assessment not only helps to minimise detrimental effects but enables all interested parties (funding, intermediate agencies and grass-roots groups) to benefit more fully from the experience of development.

Evaluation should be integral to a programme and not added as an afterthought or as a requirement of the funding agency anxious to demonstrate success in order to justify its involvement. Evaluation and monitoring offer all concerned a chance of redefining goals or procedures where necessary and of applying the experience to future programmes.

## Appraisal of projects prior to making grants

### Partnership

The idea has already been mentioned that the funding agency functions, not simply to underwrite material change, but more to enter into partnership to achieve social and economic development. *The achievement of mutual understanding and respect between field staff and project holders takes great sensitivity, understanding and perception, which cannot be substituted by any amount of paperwork.* A good relationship between field staff and project holders is vital. Where the rapport does not exist and project holders are unwilling to discuss their programme, and where there is no understanding of the reciprocal obligations, it will not be possible to develop a working relationship.

### Preliminary discussions

Consultation between field staff and project holders may often start before the preparation of a project proposal. Such preliminary discussions frequently help avoid mistakes. If possible, when considering a new project the following should be incorporated:

**a: Adequate baseline data.** The information available should be sufficient to enable errors to be avoided in the decision-making process. Projects often collapse because the information on which certain assumptions have been based is either inadequate or false. It is difficult to assess a project if there is no baseline data against which to judge progress. Even in cases where it is hard to obtain information, the question should be asked: what is the minimum one needs to know before work can be initiated?

**b: Tangible, and preferably quantifiable, objectives.** Some projects may have objectives that do not lend themselves to assessment by statistical methods: for example, those concerned with social education. In these cases, it is vital to ensure that the objectives of the project are well defined and understood by all. Many programmes fail because project objectives are vague, ill-defined or over-ambitious. The objectives should also specify the group to benefit from the programme, its numbers and location.

**c: Control groups.** Where feasible, it is useful to identify a control group against which progress can be measured. Sometimes projects have resulted in apparently remarkable improvements, but further investigation has shown that the circumstances of neighbouring communities not exposed to the project have improved to the same degree. The use of a control group, therefore, can give a more modest and realistic impression of a project. It is unlikely that sufficient resources will be available for detailed monitoring of a control group; however, relatively informal comparisons with such a group may suffice.

**d: Reporting and monitoring procedures** should be discussed at the earliest possible moment: what information is to be included, by whom, how often and how to implement any changes indicated by the reports?

**e: Provision for self-evaluation and for external evaluation studies,** if appropriate, should also be discussed (see Section 4). A useful approach is to incorporate plans for a mid-term review in the life of a project, in which project staff and beneficiaries, field staff and outside consultants etc. meet to discuss the project and to measure achievements against goals and objectives. This should be done with a view to changing objectives and programmes in the second period of the project if necessary. Future funding should also be discussed at this

### 3 Background

If the above procedures are followed, the funding agency will be able to meet its obligations to donors and to recipients to obtain publicity material and assist in its own resource allocation and policy formulation. More importantly, these procedures provide a means whereby the project can stimulate and improve its own management. There is no doubt that good management is one of the critical elements affecting the outcome of projects.

Similarly, at this early stage it should be made clear to what extent grants will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory reports, and any other conditions should be specified.

It is essential that in the appraisal of all projects due regard is paid to the national, regional and local socio-economic context. Even the most effectively designed programme will collapse if insufficient attention has been paid to the background against which it is working. National policies may easily run counter to the objectives of the programme. For example, a rural community may seek to improve agricultural production only to discover that the government has decided to cut the price paid to producers, thus rendering production unprofitable. Many political variables have a bearing on development initiatives and must be analysed before decisions are made. *Field staff may feel that the general political and economic circumstances of a country are beyond the immediate frame of reference; to ignore them, however, is to risk project failure.* It is rare for Oxfam to support surveys of national and regional social trends, because frequently there will be existing studies or specialists will be available who can advise on the context of a proposed project. (See Appendix III SOCIAL SURVEYS).

Many factors may affect the life of a development project, and it is impossible to predict all of these. There are, however, certain factors which should always be taken into account:

**a: Government policies** are of obvious relevance to any project; food prices, education policies and political outlook are some of the aspects of government which need to be assessed.

**b: Development programmes.** Before funding a project, field staff should find out about other development programmes in the area and programmes mounted in the past. It is not unknown for different development programmes to be antagonistic in their goals. For example, plans to settle jungle areas in South America are harmful to attempts to establish the rights of indigenous peoples inhabiting the zone. In other cases, development agencies have been found to be duplicating their efforts. This problem is particularly unfortunate given the limited resources available for development. A preliminary survey is especially important with service projects (e.g., health and education) where an NGO might duplicate work planned by the State or even give the State an excuse to withdraw from its programme, thereby depriving a population of a long-term service. Similarly, investigations should be made into the previous development experience of those groups intending to mount a project. Often the impact of previous aid programmes can be such that the potential for future success is severely restricted. For example, communities that have at some stage received large sums from official sources may well become dependent on external funding and in such circumstances small-scale, self-help schemes will probably fail. Investigation may reveal a poor use of funds in previous programmes. Or it may be found that a funding application has been made primarily to enable a group to pay off debts incurred through earlier programmes.

**c: Local social and political hierarchies and structures** have immediate relevance to a small development programme: care should be taken to ensure that local elites do not destroy the project in its infancy.



Large landowners fearful of competition, for instance, may well seek to undermine the rural cooperatives or marketing groups. The first defence is to be aware of the possible dangers and to avoid a development plan that leaves gaps which could be exploited by outsiders. Many small marketing schemes, for example, fail because insufficient attention is paid to obtaining appropriate legal recognition or status for the group, thus leaving it open to harassment from local authorities. Similarly, there is little point in building a health post or digging a well if it is not clear who has legal title to the land on which the construction is to be sited.

**d: Cultural norms and practices** may impede a development project. Field staff must be sensitive to those practices and beliefs which could have an adverse effect on a project or isolate certain groups. Unfortunately, expatriate development workers have often been particularly remiss in this respect, not taking full account of local conditions. In some areas differences between classes, sexes, castes and tribes may be quite evident. In other areas social and cultural factors may not appear to be decisive; but it is all too easy to assume that all people engaged in the same kind of activity, dressed alike and speaking the same dialect have the same interests.

**e: Long-term trends.** Long-term climatic and social trends affecting a population are not always clear. Further, people's perceptions of these trends can sometimes be misleading. It is therefore vital to examine the history of the area in which the project is located. Extreme drought can be treated — mistakenly — as if it were an emergency which could be alleviated with short-term relief measures. However, if it is found that drought is becoming an annual event, then it might be more appropriate to think in terms of funding measures designed to have a long-term impact.

**a: Field staff should assess** projects mainly on the basis of:

- ☐ whether the people have a genuine need;
- ☐ whether the project is desired by the intended beneficiaries, both men and women;
- ☐ whether the objectives of the project fall within the scope of Oxfam's policies and terms of reference;
- ☐ whether the project is likely to achieve its objectives;
- ☐ whether the project is technically appropriate and economically viable;
- ☐ whether the project will survive the test of time (or, in other words, what likelihood there is that the benefits will continue once the project ends); and
- ☐ whether the constraints can be overcome.

**b: Defining the objectives** of a project is perhaps the single most important stage in project preparation. There will obviously be a hierarchy of objectives, and these should be listed in order of importance, always taking care not to confuse ends and means. Frequently neither project holders nor field staff distinguish between the purpose of a grant (e.g., to build a health post) and the objective of the project (to improve the general level of health or eradicate infectious disease, etc.). Once the principal objective has been defined, the secondary objectives should be established. Thus the main aim of an agricultural programme may be to increase production and incomes; and once this primary objective is clear, then the secondary objectives will indicate more immediate goals (such as the introduction of a new cropping system, reclaiming of land or building of an irrigation system). The next stage is to decide on the appropriate means to achieve these ends (e.g., to build an irrigation ditch, carry out educational and extension programmes, etc.). One of the main reasons why projects collapse is the failure to define objectives and, therefore, to relate project

**c:** There are certain guidelines which can assist in *planning objectives*:

- ☐ An objective should be realistic in terms of time, quantity, quality and cost. The beneficiaries should be clearly identified in number and location. If the objectives are not defined precisely, what remains is simply a vague statement of intent.
- ☐ The planning process must involve people, and objectives should be defined *with* people and not *for* them. Involvement of project holders in planning a programme generally results in their greater commitment to implementation.
- ☐ In some cases the main objective of a programme might result from an outsider's perception of a given community's needs, and might differ from those perceived by the community itself. However, the participants in the project must be able to see some objectives in the project which relate to their own experience; there will otherwise be no reason for them to continue working with the programme.

**d:** The following sequence can be used in *planning projects* in relation to their objectives:

- ☐ define objectives (both primary and secondary);
- ☐ consider the alternative ways of achieving these objectives;
- ☐ choose the best, or least costly, alternative, given the resources required and available;
- ☐ plan expenditure (see notes on project budgets);
- ☐ plan implementation of the project, and
- ☐ plan regular assessment of progress against objectives, allowing for the adjustment of objectives, methods and resources in the light of experience. (See Section 3, Monitoring.)

## II

## Specific elements in project appraisal

The following notes draw attention to some of the problems likely to be encountered in project appraisal. Above all it must be remembered that its development is about people, and so is project appraisal. *However technically feasible a project, it is the participation of people which will determine whether it is a success or not.* The general atmosphere prevalent in a programme will indicate a great deal about the relations between the people involved in it. Are the people relaxed in their work? Are relationships within the group cordial? When entering a community in the company of project workers, do local people wave as you pass by? Do they even recognise the project workers? Do people stop and talk in the streets, or are they in awe of the project staff? Alternatively, are the staff respectful of local people? Do they keep them waiting for long periods? Do they treat locals as social inferiors, or as a hindrance to their work? On consecutive visits is the same small number of people always present, or is there evidence of a large number of people involved in the project? The appraiser should try to make sure that their visit is not treated as a special event since it is extremely important to establish, as far as possible, what a normal working day is like.

### 1 Leadership

People with qualities of leadership play an important role in all organisations. Many communities are fortunate enough to have a strong person to represent them, to lead the community in development and other initiatives. Inertia can be overcome by dynamic leadership. However, people may frequently agree with a leader, or be persuaded to take action during the excitement of a public meeting, but once away from the direct influence of the person's charisma may question the decision, and be unenthusiastic about implementing it. For example, people may promise to contribute labour to a community building project but fail to appear when required.

The charismatic leader may make appraisal of a project difficult, for his presence overshadows others, making it hard to assess with accuracy their attitudes and opinions. The leader may apparently know all the answers, communicate well with the appraisers, and always appear to speak on behalf of colleagues and neighbours. It is important to find out what the remainder of the group really thinks, or whether they even understand the project in question.

Many leaders work for long hours and put an enormous amount of effort into their work on behalf of other people. However, by taking so much onto themselves they do not allow others to participate fully in the project or to learn from their own experience. If leaders concentrate information, management and decision-making into their hands, others may fail to understand what is happening in a project.

It can be very difficult to explain to a hard working and committed person that their very immersion in their work may be detrimental to the people on whose behalf they are working. But for a group to be totally dependent upon one person is risky; leaders may obstruct new ideas or impede the participation of others, and their absence or removal can lead to the total collapse of the project.

There are people who will exploit power for their own ends. It is often all too easy for such persons to undermine morale by financial dishonesty or by encouraging a situation of permanent conflict in order to maintain their own dominant position.

People's motives for becoming involved in development vary greatly, although there is little evidence that the nature of individual motivation has any direct relationship to a project. However, it is important to be aware of the possible problems that can be caused by particular sorts of motivation.

**a: Religious conviction.** Involvement in development work is sometimes seen as a path to individual salvation rather than a process of participation with a group in a common activity. The improvement of the individual ego becomes a major objective of daily work. Religion can also be used to exaggerate the righteousness of the adherents, and this can make them unreceptive to outside ideas. Finally, development and humanitarian work can be seen merely as a vehicle for proselytising.

**b: Political.** The same factors can also affect the work of those people with strong political motivations. Sometimes outsiders will attempt to use poor people for their own political ends. Thus, different factions may compete for the allegiance of a group of people by offering development programmes as an enticement. Any project risks coming into conflict with power elites, but certain political factions may have the expressed aim of inciting conflict, or using the poor as political 'cannon fodder'.

**c: Professional.** The field of development is increasingly becoming an independent profession and offers to many an interesting and challenging career. Greater professionalism in development can bring many advantages, but the danger is that projects will be written specifically with the aim of professional advancement in mind. Intermediate agencies for example may look more towards the survival of their own institution than to the interests of those for whom they supposedly work.

**d: Expatriates.** There are many committed, experienced and well qualified expatriates working in development programmes throughout the Third World. They often provide scarce skills and work in inhospitable areas neglected or abandoned by others. Furthermore, some expatriates make long-term commitments to their adopted country and cease to be regarded or to regard themselves as foreigners.

However, the relationship between expatriates and local people is complex and should be taken into account when assessing a project.

The advantages and disadvantages should be weighed carefully. Some of the more obvious advantages are that expatriates may have professional experience and technical skills, and can train local people; have experience beyond national boundaries; are often highly motivated and committed and willing to work in difficult areas; often have greater objectivity and are able to identify more clearly local needs; can provide some protection against abuses of human rights by channelling information to the international press; can expose local prejudices and cross social boundaries, for example by working with women, low castes, tribal groups, minorities, refugees etc. The disadvantages are that: if expatriates are unfamiliar with local conditions and languages, a lot of time may be lost in training; they may be replacing local people in the job market; their participation continues the dependence on foreign knowledge; volunteers can be used as cheap labour, or if paid, expatriate labour can be very expensive; they may stay for a very short period and therefore destroy continuity; the project may collapse when they leave; they may push the programme too fast for local people in order to complete work before their contract ends; their lack of understanding of local society can lead to inappropriate responses; local agencies may seek to use expatriate assistance as a way of obtaining access to funds controlled by foreign agencies.

In an ideal world there would be little need for expatriate personnel. In certain areas, however, they are still required to assist in development and humanitarian work whether as paid staff or as volunteers. It is important to establish whether there is a real need to employ expatriate personnel or whether there are local people available with the necessary skills. Will the expatriate be teaching a counterpart or replacement? What will the role of the expatriate be? If it is as leader or project director, is someone being prepared to take over or will the project collapse on his or her departure? Are the expatriates encouraging a level of activity and funding which will be difficult to maintain in the future?

**a: Support for individuals.** In the absence of development agencies, individuals without any institutional backing sometimes become involved in development or humanitarian work. Some of the points raised above will be relevant in the assessment of such initiatives. For example, what will happen when the individual withdraws? Is management too centralised or is there allowance for community participation, etc.? What length of time is the person likely to continue their work?

It is highly inappropriate for agencies like Oxfam to provide funds in response to individual cases of hardship whether they be refugees, destitute people, the sick or anyone else. Not only is it an inefficient use of funds, but it entails many risks. It is not possible for the NGO to make a true assessment of individual cases. Individuals should be referred to an agency competent to undertake case-work. Other agencies specialise in providing grants for individual study. Where possible this is usually best carried out in the country of origin.

**b: Overfunding.** NGOs and governments alike constantly request an increase in resources available for development, but it must be remembered that the over-funding of projects can be very harmful. In part it is the uneven spread of assistance, which results in some groups receiving funds from many different sources whilst others are hardly touched by development activities. This imbalance is largely due to the deficiencies of funding agencies, which tend to concentrate their efforts in the same geographic areas, in those areas with good communications and with those people who are most articulate and able to present applications for funding. Unfortunately, many small groups have been destroyed by receiving excessive funds. Funding must be

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527

comurate with a group's capacity to grow, and to cope with the management, administrative and personnel problems incurred in such growth. As a group grows, informal mechanisms of coping with decision-making and coordination between the participants begin to break down. The result may be inefficiency, an erosion of trust, and emergence of conflicts and tensions. Alternatively, some activities are possible on a small scale, but become more difficult if expanded; for example, handicraft production at the basic level requires little administration, but with many people involved may encounter problems of obtaining supplies and markets, and incur fiscal and legal obligations. A project should be allowed to grow at its own pace. New initiatives, good ideas and successful schemes deserve support but not at the risk of flooding them with funds.

**c: Competition.** Beware of the possibility of duplication of effort between agencies in the same area and, worse still, competition between them. Certain circumstances may exacerbate this problem. For example, political, religious or personality differences can cause communities or agencies to break up into smaller groups which continue their work in competition with each other.

**d: Continuity and self-funding.** All funding agencies are, or should be, preoccupied with the long-term management and financial arrangements of projects. Most recurrent costs are met by external funding agencies for only short periods, and therefore it is essential that before commencement some thought be given to possible sources of funding at the end of the initial grant.

Certain types of project should become self-sufficient as soon as possible. If, for example, an income-generating project is feasible, well-managed and well-planned, there should be no need to provide subsidies for running costs. Production should never be subsidised, although it might be acceptable to subsidise initial capital costs (or related social costs such as training). On the other hand, even though local people should make some kind of contribution to the costs of their services, it is unrealistic to expect all services to become self-funding.

One common problem is that many proposals for service projects are over-optimistic about the likelihood of a contribution from local sources, whether private or governmental. For example, the ideal health programme would allow for referral to a hospital and for laboratory services. However, the system of referral in many countries is very inefficient and in some areas is completely absent. Governments sometimes use the involvement of NGO funding agencies in health programmes as a pretext for neglecting the service. Allowance must be made for these possibilities.

If a service provided is more lavish than is the norm for the country or area, then the government is unlikely to be able or willing to maintain it. Many mission facilities transferred to state control have subsequently fallen into decay because they were more expensive to run than the average for the country. It may therefore be advisable to fund and plan for a programme which is less than the ideal, but which stands a better chance of obtaining finance for the future.

By not taking into account the longer-term future of a programme it is possible that services will be created and will disappear according to the availability of funds. It is important to plan for the longer term, to ensure follow-up, continuity and a lesser degree of dependence on external funds. It is unfortunately the case that many programmes only survive financially by being passed from one funding agency to another.

the technical details of agricultural, health, social and economic development, educational and disaster programmes. It is important to measure the objectives of the programme against its technical feasibility; people tend to be over-optimistic about the expected results of small projects and hence are disappointed when goals are not achieved. It is also important to ensure that the management and technical capacity of the project team is sufficient to meet the requirements of the programme.

**b: Concentration on theory.** The development process is highly complex, and in the attempt to understand often contradictory factors there is a tendency to formulate all-encompassing models. These may not only over-simplify reality but also restrict the implementation and achievement of goals. Any group which claims to have discovered the only true road to development must be treated with some circumspection, as it is unlikely to learn from its mistakes.

Project proposals which are over-theoretical in approach may obscure the empirical problems likely to be encountered in the project's implementation. Care should also be taken with plans for immediate replicability of a successful programme, as conditions may vary so much as to prohibit duplication of the model.

It is one thing to write a well thought-out proposal and provide all the necessary background information and analysis, but it is something else actually to implement the ideas. Excessive concentration on the theory of development can be as unproductive as extreme pragmatism.

**c: Regional concentration.** It is important to ascertain whether the proposed project is too concentrated geographically or, alternatively, too dispersed. Excessive concentration will lead to a reduction in the number of beneficiaries, and may increase costs per person as against benefits. Furthermore, neighbouring communities may become hostile if they are excluded from a programme: on the other hand, a programme taking in a larger area may become too thinly stretched and therefore lack impact. In dispersed programmes travel expenses may be high and a great deal of time can be wasted in travelling. There may be too little time available to spend in each locality for good relationships to develop.

Rather than concentrating on one locality, and rather than attempting to tackle many different problems in an integrated fashion, a programme may choose one single aspect of development. There have been some remarkable projects which have developed one type of expertise or pilot activity, sometimes as a complement to the development work of other agencies. However, such specialisation may lose the many advantages of integration.

**d: Legal identity.** This element of an organisation should not be taken for granted when assessing a project proposal. It is important to ensure that the legal identity of the project is appropriate to the nature of the activity proposed (e.g., if a production cooperative is envisaged, then in most countries the organisation should not be legally registered as a charitable body). Legal recognition may be essential for a programme to operate. For instance, an export licence may be a requisite for a handicraft group. Obviously the legal requirements will vary from country to country. Once legal status has been established, it is important to see how the control and ownership of assets are organised. Field staff must be cautious of projects which register ownership in the name of individuals. There is always a possibility that an institution may have only a short life-span; it should be clear how assets will be disposed of if the organisation dissolves (assets should preferably be given to a similar group to be used for the purposes for which they were originally acquired). The disposal of capital items will be of particular importance if expensive buildings are involved.

**e: Organisation.** The internal structure of an institution should have

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mar' impact on its operational success. A very small group with centralised management may in time run into trouble, since a highly centralised structure can become inadequate as the group grows. It is probably impossible to achieve a perfect balance between a hierarchy and democracy. While a hierarchical structure inhibits participation, total democracy impedes decision-making. But it is important to establish that an organisation does have a clear system of management, decision-making, procedures for reconciling conflicts etc. Is there, for example, a governing body to which staff and beneficiaries can appeal in case of conflict within the group?

However well a proposal is written, if the project holders are not sufficiently prepared technically, or committed personally to the project, then it cannot progress. Some people are excellent at preparing project proposals but lack the capacity for implementation. It is important to look at the project members as a team and not simply as a collection of individuals: a project director may be impressive in many ways but not work well with the team. The appraisal should include a study of group dynamics, leadership and, where funding is not aimed directly at grass roots groups, the relationship between the project team and beneficiaries.

**f: Finance.** There are two aspects of the project finance which need to be examined: firstly, the economic feasibility of the project — where this is appropriate — and secondly, the details of the operational budget. It must be ascertained whether the budget is realistic in terms of salaries, running costs and capital equipment; whether it takes due account of inflation and possible unforeseen costs, and whether it details additional contributions from the community and/or from other sources. It may also be important to examine plans for the attainment of self-financing or alternative funding at the end of the grant period.

## Specialised appraisal techniques

### Assessment

A project which has admirable objectives may still be refused a grant if it appears to have a poor chance of reaching those objectives. However, in cases of urgent need, Oxfam may be willing to take much greater risks than would normally be acceptable, a willingness to take risks being one of the strengths of non-governmental organisations. Assessment of the degree of risk may depend mainly on intuition based on experience. However, certain questions may help in making this assessment:

- ☐ To what extent is the project likely to be interfered with by the government, local authorities, or by other power elites?
- ☐ How confident are you of the managerial ability of the project staff, and their ability to work together?
- ☐ In the long-term, what permanent improvements should the project bring about? Will the project have any adverse environmental effects? To what extent will the project be replicable?

A key part of the design of projects is the preparation of budgets covering anticipated expenditure and revenue. The failure to analyse budgets properly has often hidden from view potential risks or pitfalls. Field staff should pay close attention to budgets and income estimates and check especially economic forecasting and assumptions. Detailed advice on budgets is included in Section 6, Budgeting and Accountancy and in PART FIVE, Economic Development Guidelines.

### Costs and effectiveness

One simple measure for appraising a project is to estimate the *cost per person*: that is, divide the cost of the project by the number of people to benefit (it is important to define the exact number of beneficiaries, not the total population in the area). Where two alternative methods of

reaching the same objective are presented, a decision between them may be made on the basis of cost effectiveness or cost per person.

This is a fairly crude measure, however, applicable only to clear-cut objectives where there are only 'direct' beneficiaries, all of whom stand to benefit equally; for example, with the provision of clean water to a village or construction of a health post. It is difficult to make any objective estimate in situations where the benefits resulting from a programme are indirect and unquantifiable.

The greatest *per capita* expenditures are probably justified in projects which train individuals to help others, for example extension workers or nutritionists, as these projects have a *multiplier effect*. In general, projects which invest in buildings or capital equipment have a low multiplier effect as compared with projects which train or educate people. In particular, investment in buildings is hard to justify because of the long period of use required to merit the high levels of capital investment entailed.

### 3 Cost Benefit Analysis and Investment Appraisal

The evaluation techniques of Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) are now widely used in appraising development projects, and field staff should be aware of the principles involved in applying such techniques, the limitations and difficulties involved, and their relevance to the types of project likely to be supported by NGOs.

CBA is a project appraisal technique that helps decide whether or not a particular project is economically acceptable, or which out of a number of alternative projects is the most acceptable.

**a: Concepts involved.** It is important to see how the perspective of 'social CBA' differs from a purely financial analysis of a project. Both try to predict the profitability of a project by comparing the project's expected costs with its expected return. If the project's return exceeds its costs, then the project is acceptable.

In contrast to purely financial appraisals, social CBA takes a wide view of a project, and considers all the costs and benefits that may result. A businessman may not take into account the environmental consequences of a project, for example. The pollution of rivers or the preservation of wild life may be irrelevant to the economics of a project. Social CBA, however, views such effects as costs that may have a very important effect on a particular society, and they must therefore be considered if a project's wider implications are to be adequately assessed.

#### b: The three stages of social CBA.

- ☐ **Estimating future costs and benefits.** The procedure is first to identify all costs and benefits of a project, and then to put a value on them. All relevant costs and benefits should be included, whether direct or indirect. For example, an indirect cost of new industry might be the possible adverse effect on local artisans. Another important difference between financial appraisal and social CBA arises in estimating the monetary value of costs and benefits. A financial appraisal will assess the cost of materials, labour and equipment at just the market prices paid for them. Social CBA will assess these costs using the economic concept of the *opportunity cost*. For example, an industrial project decides to recruit a worker. He or she is at present earning a living in agriculture. The project offers a wage that is higher than the total value of his or her agricultural production. The cost to the economy is *not* the new wage that will be paid, but the cost of the agricultural production lost as a result of the worker's transferring from agriculture to the project. This is therefore the *opportunity cost* to the economy as a whole of the labour input of the new worker in the project; it is also known as the *shadow wage rate*, or the *accounting wage rate*.

- 'Discounting' future costs and benefits. Since the benefits of costs not appear until *after* the initial outlay, a technique known as discounting is used to take this into account.

Discounting occurs when the immediate prospect of receiving, say, £100 is more attractive than receiving the same sum, or even a greater amount, at some point in the future: £100 received *now* may be equivalent to £120 received next year (because of inflation, pressing needs etc.). Next year's £120 is discounted to this year's £100. The discount rate in this case is 20%, i.e. the difference expressed as a percentage of £100.

Typically, over the lifespan of a project the major cost will be incurred in the early stages and the benefits will accrue later. In an agricultural project, the cost of land improvement and irrigation demands an immediate outlay. The increase in agricultural output may not appear until a year or more later. So costs and benefits have to be identified and calculated year by year.

Once the future costs and benefits have been estimated over the life-span of the project, a second major step is therefore to reduce these costs and benefit flows to what are called *present day values*. This is done by the use of discount tables, after choosing a suitable discount rate over the time period.

In order to establish the suitable discount rate, the investor must decide upon a standard *required rate of return*. This is the lowest acceptable return on an investment, and is calculated in one of two ways: with an organisation like Oxfam, experience would suggest the lowest rate of return that makes a project a realistic proposition; alternatively, the required rate of return could be established by taking current interest rates into account.

Having discounted all future costs and benefits to obtain present day values, these can then be added to give *total discounted future costs* and *total discounted future benefits*. Appendix I includes project examples which illustrate the kind of calculations required to undertake a CBA.

- *Acceptance or rejection of a project*. Criteria need to be established with which to decide upon a project's economic acceptability. One or more of three decision rules may be used:

*Net Present Value (NPV)*: this is the discounted total benefits less the discounted total costs. If this difference is positive, i.e. if the monetary value of benefits outweighs the monetary value of costs, the project is deemed acceptable.

*Benefit-Cost Ratio (B/C)*: this is the ratio of the discounted benefits to the discounted costs. If this ratio is greater than one, the project is acceptable.

*Internal Rate of Return (IRR)*: this is the most commonly used decision rule. It is rather like quoting a rate of return on investment: a project with an IRR of 30% is better than one with an IRR of 20%. The computation of the IRR is rather more difficult to understand and explain, and will not be attempted here. In practice, a project will be acceptable if its IRR is higher than the required rate of return (see 'Discounting' future costs, above). The required rate of return therefore becomes the cut-off rate for acceptance or rejection of the project.

**c: Practical problems.** The three main steps in conducting social CBA outlined above include a great number of theoretical and operational problems. Some of these are touched upon here:

- Predicting future benefits is clearly difficult or impossible in many projects. For example, in an agricultural project, the adoption of innovations by farmers depends upon a whole range of technical, economic, social, political, and cultural factors. Most

of these are difficult to predict; e.g., unexpected weather conditions, recession, crop failure.

- Estimating benefits of 'social development' projects (such as training schemes or social education) in money terms is highly controversial. In the case of an industrial or agricultural project, the main direct benefits will be the increased output attributable to the project, e.g., bags of fertiliser or tons of rice. However, in the case of a nutrition or rural health project, the benefits are not normally expressed in such terms. These can be estimated by considering the costs these projects will *avert* if they are implemented. For example, a malnourished population will impose costs on an economy because people do not work as well as they would if they were adequately fed. Needless to say, valuing benefits in such a way is a difficult and controversial matter, as it involves putting a quantitative value on the quality of life.
- The impact of inflation can only be ignored if all relevant resources will be subject to the same rate of inflation. For example, if labour rates are expected to be subject to a rate of inflation different from the general inflation rate, then the different rate for labour must be brought into the calculation.
- The treatment of risk and uncertainty can be done by carrying out a *sensitivity analysis*. This is to undertake a series of CBA calculations by modifying the original assumptions of costs and benefits (e.g., price of inputs, cost of labour, price and quantities of project output) by, say, plus or minus 10% or plus or minus 20%. This will produce a range of *internal rates of return*, each reflecting the assumptions or estimates made during the CBA calculation.
- The final internal rate of return of the project will have made use of a whole range of assumptions about opportunity costs, future prices and quantities of output, an appropriate discount rate, the life-span of the project, and so on. Many of the assumptions are likely to be based on subjective judgement alone. It is therefore advisable to test the more important assumptions by using sensitivity analysis as described above, particularly since the final rate of return may turn out to be disproportionately affected by a particular assumption or group of assumptions.

The many difficulties involved in valuing benefits has led to a growth of interest in developing alternative appraisal procedures, such as Cost-Effectiveness Analysis. It is possible that CBA, by emphasising monetary values, could distort the project's potential; however, this would not happen if the results were weighed against and compared with the results of other appraisal techniques. In other words, these techniques should not be used in isolation.

A simple list of all the relevant costs and benefits, and some indication of their magnitude, would aid the formulation of a suitably objective judgement of a particular project. Where CBA is considered appropriate, but where the project holders are unable to carry out a full CBA, this list could then be included in the project's proposal so that field staff can make these calculations. (See Appendix I for examples.)

Field staff are unlikely to have to participate directly in surveys, although there are times when it will be necessary both to initiate a survey and to interpret its results. (A special note on nutrition surveys can be found in PART SEVEN, Section 1). All too often too much data is collected because the use of random sampling techniques has not been fully understood (see random sampling in Appendix III); excessive data collection can merely complicate the task of collating and interpreting the information.

#### 4 Surveys

There is always room for testing assumptions and hypotheses through the use of unstructured interviews and casual discussions; the more obvious information can often be overlooked by the use of complex questionnaires. However much thought goes into a questionnaire, the questions posed still determine to an extent the answers received. Important information may not be forthcoming because the questionnaire does not ask the appropriate question. Less structured questioning might well provide the information.

In planning any survey it is important to know:

- ☐ the types of situations in which a survey is/is not needed;
- ☐ where/how a group can get advice before it wastes time on the wrong kind of survey. What information is already available?
- ☐ the different approaches to surveys: participant observation, structured questionnaires, random sampling, participatory 'action'-styled investigation, etc.;
- ☐ the main types of sampling and statistical analysis available (ensuring that these are appropriate to the task in terms of sophistication, accuracy, and costs); and
- ☐ whether the survey will produce the sort of material necessary for future decision-making.

Further details are available in Appendix III.

## General remarks

1. Does the project fall within the guidelines and priorities for the area?
2. Is the project known to you? If not, then have you allowed sufficient time to get to know the group, and for a relationship of trust and confidence to be developed between you and the group?
3. The size of the project will have some bearing on the visit, whether it will be possible to talk of past work, and on aspects such as evaluation, planning and management. Small grass-roots groups will be more concerned with the immediate project in hand than with more general discussions about development and its mechanics. Discretion will always be required when visiting projects and the people involved in them.

## Specific points

It should be remembered that every project is to an extent unique, and that the relevance of particular questions will vary from project to project.

## 1. Objectives:

Are the short-term aims and goals of the project compatible with its longer and medium-term objectives?

- ☐ Are they clear? Are they reasonable and practical?
- ☐ Are they based on reality as illustrated through experience and discussion, and on the results of study?

## 2. Design:

- ☐ Is the project feasible?
- ☐ Does the design take into account local traditions and customs?
- ☐ Is the project over-ambitious? Are the resources adequate to the requirements?
- ☐ Does the project design cater for sufficient feedback?
- ☐ Is the timing realistic?
- ☐ Would a short pilot project be advisable to gain experience before commencing the project?

## 3. Financial involvement:

- ☐ Do all the people aided by the project have a stake in it? Are they contributing in some way (in cash, in kind or in labour)? Is the project simply a source of income or career advancement for the professionals and other development workers involved?
- ☐ Could those involved be asked to contribute more?

## 4. Education:

- ☐ Are the people involved going through a process of 'critical appraisal'? Does the project enable them to assume greater control over their own lives?
- ☐ Have they reached a stage at which they are able to articulate their problems, aspirations and priorities?
- ☐ Is it felt necessary to mount a programme of 'self-awareness'? How is this to be achieved, and how does it relate to the rest of the programme?

## 5. Practical effects:

- ☐ Will the project improve people's lives by bringing them material benefits? Will they have more cash, food, animals etc.? Will they have better access to services such as health?
- ☐ Compare this with the answers on the educational process. Material and economic benefit could be complementary. Sometimes the

expansion of the economic process helps to build up people's critical awareness, but the reverse is not necessarily true.

## 6. Staff of project team and/or promoters:

- ☐ Are they reliable, realistic, capable and motivated?
- ☐ Have they sufficient experience? In what fields are they experienced? Is this experience appropriate to the task in hand?
- ☐ Are they well qualified or do they need more training?
- ☐ Are the leaders strong? Do they respect and/or reflect the opinions of others? What do other local groups and individuals say about the project leaders?
- ☐ Do the staff/promoters work well together? What relationship do they have with the poor? What do the local people say about them?
- ☐ How open to new ideas and suggestions are the staff/promoters?

## 7. Participation:

- ☐ How was the application drawn up? Who was involved in this process?
- ☐ To what extent are the people supposedly being helped able to influence the course of the project? What mechanisms are there for this? Have they already participated in the planning of the project?
- ☐ Is the feedback of information being properly heeded by the project managers? Is there a mechanism to allow participants to voice complaints or make suggestions to amend the project?

## 8. Organisation:

- ☐ What is the nature of the organisation? Does it have legal status? In practical terms what effect does the legal status have?
- ☐ Are there clearly set rules for running meetings, taking minutes, following up decisions, changing leadership, etc?
- ☐ How democratic is the organisation and how difficult is it for the membership to overturn decisions of the executive body?
- ☐ If things go wrong with the project, what allowance has been made for either resolving internal conflict, or disposing of donated assets?
- ☐ Is there an education programme for members of the organisation? This is especially important for cooperatives and similar institutions.
- ☐ What safeguards are there to ensure that the organisation is not taken over by an elite group?

## 9. Monitoring:

- ☐ Is there a system for regular self-evaluation? If so, how is this carried out and who participates?
- ☐ Are the conclusions of the monitoring process used to change objectives or plans? Does the project design allow for the incorporation of new ideas?
- ☐ Are any outside agencies or individuals invited to assist in the planning, monitoring or evaluation process?

## 10. Budgets and cost effectiveness:

- ☐ To what extent is the project, as planned, the cheapest way to achieve the objectives defined?
- ☐ Is the budget reasonable? How do staff/promoter salaries, for example, relate to those of the beneficiaries of the project? Are salaries compatible with local norms? Are equipment costs appropriate to local conditions?
- ☐ What previous aid has the project received? What were the results of this aid?
- ☐ Is there a danger that further aid will do more harm than good?

## 11. Measurability:

- ☐ Will it be possible to measure the progress of the project? If so, how?
- ☐ Is a form of measurement built in to the project design?
- ☐ How often will this monitoring be carried out? At regular intervals?

## 12. Replicability:

- ☐ If the project is successful could it be repeated elsewhere? What

the multiplier effect likely to be? Could the programme be expanded to neighbouring areas?

Continuity:

- ☐ When outside aid ceases, is it likely that the project would be able to continue on its own?
- ☐ What plans are there for continuation at the end of the project period?
- ☐ Is it likely that government and local authorities will encourage or oppose the project?
- ☐ Is the project so designed as to allow it to survive into future generations, i.e. are new techniques being passed on, and is there a teaching element?

14. Other institutions:

- ☐ Is the project linked to other similar institutions? Is it able to learn from other groups?
- ☐ Does an appropriate intermediate or representative group exist to which the project holders should belong, e.g. a federation of cooperatives?
- ☐ Is the agency responsive to requests for assistance from similar groups?

15. Risk assessment (see Section 2):

- ☐ Compared with other applications for funds, how much risk is involved in helping this particular project?
- ☐ Which applications are the most viable, with the greatest possibility of achieving results, of being able to expand and of having a multiplier effect?

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### Other considerations

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1. When considering the funding of intermediate agencies it is essential to talk not only to the staff of the project but also to the people who are to be helped by the project, e.g. peasant groups, community committees, indigenous groups, women or handicapped people. It is also important to talk to other agencies and prominent local figures such as priests, development officers etc.

2. Even before a project has begun to receive funding, it can be useful to arrange for prospective project members to visit other similar programmes.

3. It can also be helpful to organise simple surveys and/or baseline data collecting. This should be done by an experienced agency. If at all possible, the people from the project area should help in the process.

4. Sometimes after visiting a group that is seeking funds, field staff will be forced to consider whether, in spite of its deficiencies, the group shows sufficient potential to merit receiving limited support, in the hope that — in time — the good points will outweigh the faults. This requires much thought, tact and a good relationship with the group.

5. In certain cases, where the needs of the community are great and where the prospect of a successful project seems minimal, it might be possible to give a small donation, on condition that an evaluation (internal or external) should be undertaken at once. If all goes well, a further application can be invited after this process has been completed.

6. Field staff should never try to impose forcibly their own, or the funding agency's, ideas or rules. Ultimately, both the applicants and the funding agency must feel that they are convinced about what they are undertaking. An imbalance in this respect is not only likely to result in disaster but is also an insult to the applicant's integrity. Hence the insistence that field staff should spend as much time as possible getting to know and understand the group concerned.

7. Funding agencies must be consistent in their work. They cannot say one thing and do another. Consistency is also important in the way agencies raise their money, deal with applications in their home office, alert their own nationals to the problems of the Third World, criticise their own government's policies towards development, and stand up for human rights issues, etc. Always try to explain to those seeking help how the funding agency is run, where the money comes from, what the organisation stands for, what it does at home in the way of educating the public on Third World issues, etc.



Appropriate Technology  
for Development:  
A Discussion and Case Histories  
edited by Donald D. Evans  
and Laurie Nogg Adler

A Study Prepared by Denver Research Institute,  
University of Denver

10  
Colombia:  
An Innovative Approach to  
Rural Development

*James M. Miller*

BACKGROUND

The Foundation for the Application and Teaching of the Sciences (FUNDAEC) is a private, nonprofit organization that was granted legal status by Resolution #4747 of the government of Cauca Valley, Colombia, on 25 October 1974.

FUNDAEC actually had begun several years earlier at the University of Valle (funded by the Rockefeller Foundation), where questions had been asked about the role of higher education in the field of development. Many years of involvement in community projects, primarily in the area of health, had led several of the professors to question the very concepts of development. It was clear that traditional indicators such as Gross National Product and exportation indices were not applicable in terms of describing the conditions of the poor. In spite of economic growth, health conditions, nutrition, living conditions, and educational opportunities for the majority of the people had not improved and, in many cases, had actually worsened. This is attributable to the large gap that exists between the established institutions--governmental or private, national or multinational--that have know-how, human and financial resources, and infrastructure, and the small farmers, who each year abandon their villages in large numbers to migrate to the slums of urban areas.

One of the often-mentioned solutions to needed improvements in development projects is to formulate interdisciplinary groups and multi-institutional programs. One such group consisting of professors at the university met regularly for almost one year and began to consider models for social development. However, problems related to the integration of their efforts at the level of community action arose. An element seemed to be missing: someone or a group of persons who could coordinate actions or needs at the family and community levels. Since no one with this type of skill

could be found from among the group of university experts, issues were raised about the effectiveness of the various academic disciplines themselves.

To begin with a specific problem, that of rural development, a new approach was taken by asking the question, "What would a person need to know in order to help the small farmers improve their living conditions?" Many fields of knowledge were seen as indispensable, especially agriculture, health and nutrition, sanitary engineering, civil engineering, formal education, and elements of the social sciences.

#### THE SMALL FARMER IN COLOMBIA

The size of landholdings in itself is a somewhat variable parameter since in regions such as the western plains of Colombia, twenty hectares is a small expanse, while in the fertile land near Bogotá, one to three hectares cultivated in flowers or vegetables are sufficient for a good income. Traditionally, in Colombia a small farmer is defined by the government as one who possesses less than ten hectares of land, who consumes most of what he produces, and who utilizes primarily his own manual labor. However, the majority of the small farmers have plots much smaller than ten hectares, consume little of what they produce, and are dedicating an increasing portion of their time to working in larger enterprises. These farmers, who do not have access to the services offered by the Colombian Social Security Institute, the Agriculture and Livestock Financial Fund, or other public institutions, grow approximately 60 percent of the food commodities produced in Colombia. This same rural population, according to data from the Survey of Human Resources for Health and Medical Education, has the least access to income, health care, sanitation facilities, and education of any group in the country.

The amount of land dedicated to agriculture in Colombia during 1970 was 31.3 million hectares, of which 76 percent was owned by 7 percent of the landowners in individual holdings generally far in excess of 50 hectares. In the decade of 1960-1970, the number of holdings with less than ten hectares decreased by approximately 5.5 percent due to abandonment or sale of the property. Of these, the farms most affected were those consisting of less than five hectares. This represents a total loss of land for more than 90,000 small farmers and their families, or an equivalent of 540,000 persons.

Twenty percent of persons employed in the rural sector work only six months of the year; 30 percent work up to eight months. Only 50 percent work all year. Although the

national average income is \$162<sup>1</sup>, small landowners receive only between 21 percent and 60 percent of this figure, or from \$34 to \$97. Therefore, in most instances, only a farmer with holdings between ten and fifty hectares can begin to have the possibility of an acceptable standard of living. As of April 1979, only 22 percent of the farmers are in this category.

Consequently, the rural population has the worst conditions in housing and sanitation and the lowest levels of literacy and primary education in the country. Nutritional levels are lower than those found in urban areas. The number of malnutrition cases, which in urban areas is around 30 percent, reaches levels of almost 90 percent in some rural regions.

A particular example of these conditions is present in northern Cauca Department. This region comprises various rural communities that are characterized by an unequal distribution and inadequate utilization of the land. With a population of 65,000, of which 25,000 live in the small town of Puerto Tejada, the region is inhabited primarily by small farmers who have partially abandoned their own agricultural labors in order to work for the nearby large sugar industries. Data show that 60 percent of the rural population are involved in this type of labor. Some 80 percent of the rural population have plots smaller than three hectares, of which 27 percent have only one-half hectare. Fifty-six percent of the houses lack sanitary facilities and, in some places, malnutrition reaches levels of between 65 and 70 percent.

The principal causes of these problems in the rural sector traditionally have been identified as the scarcity of credit, the poor quality of technical assistance, and difficulties in marketing. As mentioned previously, while accepting the indisputable importance of these factors, it seems in general that other aspects of possibly equal importance are not fully considered in the life of the small farmer. These include the need for new and adequate systems of agricultural production and animal husbandry and new technology that would permit the small farmer to live with a certain degree of independence.

The majority of development agencies have investigated and promoted solutions that have been successful for the larger agricultural industries. Such solutions have then been reduced in scale to be applicable to the small farmer. Much experience indicates, however, that a mere reduction in scale is not always effective and may not produce improvements in rural living conditions.

<sup>1</sup>U.S. dollars.

In the Cauca Valley the credit guide published by the Regional Corporation of Cauca Valley (CVC) shows an average profit of between \$30 to \$40 per hectare per month for commonly cultivated crops such as corn, soybeans, cassava, and red beans--a sum that represents an appreciable income for the owner of fifty or more hectares. These figures assume optimal conditions in the accessibility of modern machinery, credit, and marketing. In other words, assuming the perfection of existing national agencies and the accessibility of these services to the small farmer, the owner of two hectares (which is considerably more than the average in northern Cauca) would have a monthly income of sixty dollars. Considering that the prices of basic foodstuffs are relatively high (\$1.25 per pound of meat, \$.60 per pound of red beans, and \$.30 per pound of rice), it would be extremely difficult to feed a family.

Confronted with this situation, the majority of those who have not already sold their lands to the large agricultural industries maintain their traditional farms with permanent cash crops such as coffee, cocoa, plantain, or fruit trees. Although the lack of techniques such as crop rotation and the use of fertilizer has diminished the productivity of these landholdings, the crops nevertheless contribute to the low, but fixed, income of the rural family. The other part of the income derives from occasional low salaries from the agricultural industries.

Historically, and even today in many parts of the world, small farming is not as bad an occupation as the foregoing discussions show. Where, then, lies the contradiction between the actual situation of the farmers in northern Cauca (and in many similar parts of the world) and the potential for small farming? The quality of land in the Cauca Valley is so good that one hectare could produce abundant food for a large family. Why, once working within the economic system of a society that even in its most inefficient form is designed to render at least some benefits to its members and is seemingly preferable to a system in which individual families work their own farms in isolation from society, do the small farmer and his family suffer from severe malnutrition?

Part of the answer is found by examining modern agricultural production and animal husbandry, which, because of their mechanized and technical nature, have high requirements for investments of capital, energy, and natural resources. The question arises, then, whether science, which has permitted the development of a system applicable to a certain life-style, could not also improve the life of the small farmer. Wouldn't this contribute to the solution of the worldwide food problem given that, for example, in many countries in Latin America more than 60 percent of all food

already is produced by the small farmer under present adverse conditions?

Other questions examined are: (1) what experiences are there concerning making science and appropriate technology available to the small farmer? (2) what are the proper channels? (3) what methods are showing promising results? (4) where is the manpower for such a vast program of community education? (5) how is this manpower in itself to be trained? (6) what portion of the existing knowledge of appropriate agricultural practice actually needs to be propagated and to what extent? (7) how should the recipients of these services be organized? (8) what are the methods to bring about community participation? (9) what is really meant by it? (10) who should make the decisions about priorities? (11) are these organizational models at the village level? (12) what is the role of the economically advantaged section of the community? (13) how should the private sector participate in rural development and through what institutions?<sup>2</sup>

#### TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

Farzam Arbab, who received his Ph. D. in elementary particle physics from the University of California, Berkeley, and currently is a professor of physics at Valle University in Cali, concluded that solutions extended beyond traditional academic disciplines and indeed beyond the traditional educator. A concept of supplying a person with knowledge about his/her environment was required. Arbab gathered a small group of professionals from the natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, medicine, agriculture, and engineering fields. He set up what is now known as the Rural University (FUNDAEC), but which is not accredited in the usual academic manner.

The staff of FUNDAEC totals twenty-three full- and part-time professionals in the following fields: agricultural systems, mechanical and civil engineering, sociology, physiology, education, biology, medicine and public health, physics, anthropology, and veterinary medicine.

With the objectives of educating rural candidates in their own environment and having them remain in the rural scene rather than migrating to urban areas, selection teams went into rural areas discarding aptitude testing and concentrating instead on ability to learn. They gave courses to volunteers, then tested the volunteers for potential achievement in an accelerated program.

<sup>2</sup>All of the foregoing was extracted from papers by Dr. Farzam Arbab, head of FUNDAEC, and Ms. Christine Tucker of FUNDAEC.

The first group of candidates, twenty-six in number between the ages of sixteen and twenty-three, started in May 1975. The lowest level of schooling was through the fourth grade in grammar school (three in this group remain), and the highest level of schooling was the third year in high school. Six were young women. After the first two years, the group had dropped to sixteen, three being young women. The class then stayed this size for the remaining four years. Training is for six years and, for lack of a better name, is called "Engineering for Rural Welfare."

The second class began two years later with twenty-two students. Four were women. The class still retains fourteen, four of whom are women.

All classes are held in FUNDAEC facilities built in the community of Arrobleda, forty-five minutes from Cali. The students are completely subsidized, and they stay in dormitories for the three-month periods, some returning home for a one-month vacation following each trimester.

Textbooks are all originals written by FUNDAEC staff. The Colombian Ministry of Education has approved the curriculum as experimental for Arrobleda, in the Cauca Valley, making two years of FUNDAEC equivalent to four years of the Colombian high school program.

The objective of the "engineering" program has been to educate a new professional who can work within the rural milieu and look for answers to problems concerning health and nutrition, sanitation, housing, agricultural production, income, and community organization. The six-year training program has been designed in three stages, each consisting of two years. The curriculum fits into the following scheme:

| Preparatory<br>Stage<br>(First two years)                                                            | University Studies<br>Stage<br>(Second two years)       | Professional<br>Stage<br>(Third two years) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Language<br>Manual Arts &<br>Technology<br>Natural Science<br>Math<br>Community Service <sup>3</sup> | Science Courses<br>(special texts)<br>Community Service | Integral Courses<br>Community Service      |

The five general areas of the first two-year phase are designed to develop within the student scientific and investigative abilities. They do not follow the usual system dedicated almost totally to information delivery. Development of these fundamental capacities enables the students to learn in university-type courses of the second phase. The students

learn to study texts, extract information, express themselves, and communicate with others. They are given the opportunity to utilize their creativity and become familiar with the concepts of appropriate technology for translation into community service.

Looking at the first of three "text" examples--language--the objective is to regain and even strengthen the student's ability to communicate in terms of his rural language. Tapes and lecture material are built around this concept of retaining idiomatic usage as well as proceeding with developing language ability to cope with university-level education. The text begins with concepts like forms, size, geometry, substances and their properties, and color and expands into more complex concepts such as systems, changes in the state of a system, and interactions. True and False tests are given every five days.

In the area of mathematics, although abilities are taught systematically, immediate applications to real situations or to other areas of knowledge contribute to the process of integration. For example, in the first text, after a review of the concepts related to sets, a few lessons are dedicated to the classification of the plant and animal kingdoms. The text on geometry includes a number of activities in simple topography that are applied immediately by the students to their work in the community. The text on fractions includes many pages of material on epidemiology, a subject that generally is introduced in advanced university courses. The first concepts of the topic, however, only use rates and ratios, which are applications of the mathematical concepts well within the grasp of the students. The student uses these tools immediately to examine the health indicators for the Cauca Valley, the rates of mortality, and the prevalence and incidence of the most important diseases. This reorganization of knowledge is an important task for educators, and what FUNDAEC has done is indeed a very small step toward a far more ambitious program of changing the content of the text for primary and secondary education.<sup>4</sup>

During the first deliberation about possible methods and content in the areas of natural sciences, the educational team of FUNDAEC became aware of the inherent limitation of teaching the sciences as distinct disciplines. According to Arbab, the student, when introduced to the field for the first time through highly structured disciplines, with their definitions and formulas, never learns the fundamental task of observing, discovering, and describing that which surrounds him. The student mentally divorces science from nature, which, paradoxically, is what science tries to study.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Dr. Farzam Arbab.

It therefore was decided to teach the sciences of systems and natural processes related to the future work of the students. A list was made of the themes that are covered in pre-university science courses. These themes were separated concept by concept and reorganized into units that examine systems and processes such as the cultivation of beans and corn, the biosphere, the digestive system and nutrition, and the betterment of varieties of crops and animal breeds. In addition to developing the basic scientific capacities of the student, this approach has led to increased motivation and greater clarity of the material presented.<sup>5</sup>

The second phase of science courses (third and fourth years) is designed around University of Valle courses but with special texts. Professors from the university conduct many of these courses. Throughout all six years, emphasis remains on community services. This emphasis involves observation and description of the environment and its needs, which is carried out in cycles through specific packages developed by the faculty of the Rural University around "research-action-learning." The fifth and sixth years of professional integration are almost entirely devoted to community services and are organized around these packages.

Currently, packages under development are child development, production in small farms, appropriate technology, environmental sanitation, and community organization. The following sample details one of the packages selected at random.

#### Concepts of Sanitation: A Three-year Program.<sup>6</sup>

The first year includes lessons in diagnosis:

General sanitation

Problems of intestinal parasites relating to gastrointestinal systems

Taking fecal samples

Taking data on incidence of diarrhea

Laboratory diagnosis at the University of Valle of intestinal parasites

Diagnosis of water supply and disposal systems

Diagnosis of nutritional systems

<sup>5</sup>Dr. Farzam Arbab.

<sup>6</sup>One of the authors of this program is Dr. Gabriel Carrasquillas, M.D., who also holds an M.A. in public health.

The second year includes action/interventions based on diagnoses of the first year:

Water supply and disposal systems

Continue measuring indicators

Deeper theory and practice

The third year:

Analyze what has been accomplished.

As the training activities progressed, it became increasingly evident that more was required than placing new professionals as agents for rural change. The need for activities in the field of appropriate technology led to the establishment of a new department within FUNDAEC called "Technology for Rural Welfare." This effort seeks to adapt technology that is more suited to the economic capacities of the small farmer.

Two full-time engineers are dedicated to research in the field, supported by additional staff when necessary. They are seeking viable alternatives for production systems for the small farm. Work is underway in minimal irrigation, fertilizers, land preparation, credit, and availability of seeds.

This work on appropriate technology opens the opportunity of educating technicians and para-professionals in shorter training programs within the six-year training of Engineers for Rural Welfare. This program has two levels: (1) the practitioner for rural welfare, who undergoes one year of study; and (2) the technician for rural welfare, who has a three-year period of study and is classified as a middle-level professional. These two programs will become available during the coming year.

#### ECONOMIC ASPECTS

A large number of people (on staff and otherwise) plus organizations and industry have continuously contributed services and materials to this program. No donated value appears in the following fundings:

Appropriations: (all in U.S. dollars)

|       |              |                                                               |
|-------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1974  | \$32,000     | Rockefeller Foundation<br>(design programs and curricula)     |
|       | <u>4,000</u> | Colombian Foundation for Higher Education<br>(Arrobleda land) |
| Total | \$36,000     |                                                               |
| 1975  | \$29,000     | Rockefeller Foundation                                        |
| 1976  | 53,000       | Rockefeller Foundation                                        |
|       | <u>2,000</u> | Colombian Foundation for Higher Education<br>(FES)            |
| Total | 55,000       |                                                               |
| 1977  | 75,000       | Rockefeller Foundation                                        |
|       | 10,000       | FES                                                           |
|       | 10,000       | Carvajal Foundation of Colombia                               |
| Total | 95,000       |                                                               |
| 1978  | 50,000       | Rockefeller Foundation                                        |
|       | 30,000       | UNICEF                                                        |
|       | 10,000       | Colombian National Plan/Foods & Nutrition                     |
|       | 23,000       | Fundo Nacional para el Desarrollo (FONADE)                    |
|       | 7,000        | Eder Foundation of Colombia                                   |
|       | 27,500       | U.S. Inter-American Foundation                                |
| Total | 147,500      |                                                               |
| 1979  | 70,000       | Rockefeller Foundation                                        |
|       | 55,000       | PACT of the U.S.A.                                            |
|       | 15,000       | United Nations University                                     |
|       | *27,500      | Inter-American Foundation                                     |
|       | 7,000        | Eder Foundation of Colombia                                   |
|       | **45,000     | Colombian CIID (estimates pending)                            |
|       | 24,000       | Ford Foundation                                               |
|       | 50,000       | PAN of Colombia                                               |
| Total | 293,500      |                                                               |

\* Divided into 1978 and 1979.

\*\*To cover two years.

#### SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT

The community services "packages" vary in length throughout the six years. The sanitation package, for example, is three years. They then are to be repeated in subsequent classes, which will provide the basis for longer-term evaluations that will indicate the success or failure of specific interventions.

At present, each of the students in the first class (1974) has done about eighty family case descriptions that have led to assessments of need, e.g., water supply, animal feed, waste utilization, agricultural needs, and social/economic associations between families. The latter, for example, has resulted in separate cooperative systems for chicken production, processing, and marketing as individual small business enterprises.

The success of the program, according to Arbab, can only be measured by the welfare of the families and communities in which the rural engineer works. Evaluation plans are drawn up to yield the educational program's improvement. Immediate conclusions are premature, but the small projects now being implemented show excellent relationships between students and communities.

An obvious indicator of success is the fact that all sixteen students in the first class have been offered positions in various Colombian government agencies, even two years prior to graduation. They are to remain in the rural environment. Another strong indication of acceptance is the funding growth from \$36,000 in 1974 by two agencies to \$293,500 by eight agencies, national and international.

In terms of potential social impact, all aspects of health, education, nutrition, housing, social and community development, public utilities, recreation, and retention of professional leadership in the rural scene are areas of great promise for the future. Arbab advised that the best student with the most potential is one who finished only the fourth grade. According to Arbab, it is inspiring to see intellectuals saved for productive use for their communities.

Favorable economic impact, increased agricultural production and utilization, higher income levels, strengthened family relationships, and local and regional development with reduced urban migration all appear to be quite possible.

#### RELATIONSHIP TO NATIONAL GOALS

The Colombian PAN Food and Nutrition program plus the Integrated Rural Development program call for increased food production, better nutrition, improved sanitation, and improved rural infrastructure. The National Health System is extended to small towns and inaccessible areas. The National Education System aims at the application of knowledge to local conditions. FUNDAEC, with its engineers and technology for rural welfare through its university and community service, intends to fulfill all of these objectives.

#### PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Dr. Farzam Arbab  
President of the Board of Trustees, FUNDAEC  
Apartado Aereo 6555  
Cali, Colombia

Dr. Gabriel Carrasquillas, staff member, FUNDAEC

Ms. Christine Tucker, staff member, FUNDAEC

#### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. The more direct application of academic education to the problems of the rural areas is a sought-after objective. Do the students in this program have sufficient opportunity to learn the basics of their fields of interest, or are they too dispersed across their rural activities to develop a real specialty? If not, should there be an institution to accomplish these sorts of development activities, in addition to the more traditional forms that concentrate on academic preparation of students?
2. The minimum land area necessary for self-sufficiency in this region of Colombia appears to be below that which is typically owned. Is there a clear need for land redistribution policies in this instance? If so, how might they be accomplished?
3. Is the assistance program introduced by the university faculty likely to be perpetuated, or is it a phenomenon that depends on the motivation of a few individuals for its success? Is this concept replicable in other situations?
4. Other than the limited testimony of a few interviewees, is there any evidence that the program was having a material impact on the rural economy? In view of the land tenure situation and the economics of agricultural self-sufficiency, is there any real prospect for the long-term viability of the small farmer system?