

PD-AAR-862
BN 4112

**COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS
AND NATURAL RESOURCE SYSTEMS ANALYSIS**

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS IN HAITI
AND
EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:
SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE CENTRAL PLATEAU

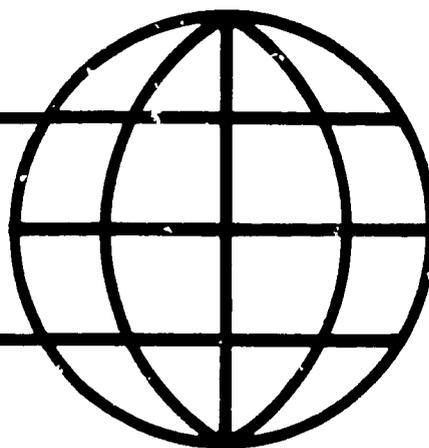
by
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Regional Reports
Clark University/Institute for Development Anthropology
Cooperative Agreement (USAID)



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Haiti Regional Report
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1984

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This report deals with how to have effective community development through a study of local organizations in Haiti. It is based on an analysis performed in the Central Plateau. In order to assess these organizations, the following related topics are discussed: current emphasis on organization and participation in rural development in the Third World; problems and issues in carrying out rural development in Haiti; previous and current attempts at rural development in Haiti and lessons that can be learned from them. After discussing the Central Plateau projects, an attempt is made to pinpoint project characteristics that serve to base an objective assessment. In the conclusion, recommendations are made for working with local organizations in the Central Plateau and in any area where a "Regional Development Authority" may be established.

CHAPTER II

ORGANIZATION AND PARTICIPATION

Various issues emerge in the recent literature on rural development in the Third World, none more important than those dealing with the contribution of local organizations, grassroots organization, and participation. Almost everywhere in the world where rural development is successful, one of the main components of the program is the organization of peasants into self-sustaining groups. In a recent study on rural development, Uphoff, et al. stated:

Building organizations of the assetless poor is one of the most promising means to reduce their present exploitation and provide them a potential vehicle for influencing political and administrative decision-makers (1979: 113-14).

Moreover, it has been found that these organizations, in order to be effective, should not be formed or controlled by the government. There is evidence from rural and urban settings the world over that suggests that:

grassroots organizations founded and nurtured by the government rarely succeed in becoming effective means for people to express themselves. Privately organized spontaneous efforts do much better (UNICEF: 39).

The reason for this is often the following:

A problem with many past efforts to assist the poor has been that government agencies foster, even desire, dependence of the supposed beneficiaries. They remain as subordinated and psychologically debilitated as when under the control of a local landlord, boss, or moneylender, unless the organization gives them means to formulate and express their own interests. Government can have a role in these organizations, but it should be that of a catalyst and protector, not patron and benefactor (Uphoff, et al.: 113-14).

What should be some of the characteristics of these organizations? The Cornell study found that the more effective organizations tend to be homogeneous in income:

...there was a very strong association between the degree of effective local organization and some relatively more egalitarian income distribution. ...no cases were found of effective local organization where there was marked inequality of income and assets (ibid.: 29).

In addition, it is vitally important that all the members of an organization participate in the decision-making process:

...Development Alternatives, Inc., concluded, after studying 36 rural development projects in 11 African and Asian countries that to maximize the chances for project success, the small farmer should be involved in the decision-making process and should be persuaded to make a resource commitment to the project (ibid.: 30).

Eight suggestions have been identified which should guide local-level rural development efforts seeking greater participation and effectiveness:

- (1) an emphasis on economically productive activities is essential;
- (2) targets should be fixed by local officials and farmers together, not from above;
- (3) all persons in the system should know what is planned and what their roles are;
- (4) a multi-purpose worker at the base is important, if not overloaded from above;
- (5) there should be on-the-spot study and solution of problems, rather than reliance on remote expertise;
- (6) all officials must maintain close personal contact with villagers;
- (7) there should be rigorous planning and execution of programs after ample prior discussion and consultation; and
- (8) once promises are made, they should be fulfilled to maintain the confidence of rural people; successful demonstrations are the key to gaining and maintaining cooperation (ibid.: 26).

In another study on the role of local organizations in development activity, Tendler, in her study of small farmer groups, found that building on indigenous associations is most likely to succeed when the project is:

- (1) organized around a concrete goal;
- (2) begun with a simple task;
- (3) based on present skill levels of members; and
- (4) focused on tasks that can only be done through cooperation (Tendler 1976: 56).

Other researchers list additional requirements, including that proposed benefits be seen as direct and valuable, the skills and time demanded should not be burdensome, membership is small enough for face-to-face contact among members, kinship organization can be involved in forming the groups, and domination by more powerful members can be restricted.

Besides participation in planning and decision-making, participation in benefits must be considered. The importance of increased food production is stressed by most researchers, although, according to the Cornell study, the way in which this increase is achieved is equally important:

One of the most apparent means to help the rural poor participate in the economic benefits would be through increased food production; but, in fact, much depends on how projects achieve this increase. Agricultural development strategies that work through "progressive" farmers, who are usually most responsive to new technology and short-run opportunities, will probably result in more concentrated land ownership, and in mechanization and displacement of tenants and laborers, who have no alternative sources of livelihood (Uphoff et al.: 103).

In addition, for valid participation, it is considered important for poor rural households to have at least some land of their own:

...simply trying to get income or jobs to poor rural households will not help them as much as when they also have some land of their own. They can become more self-sufficient for food, and this in turn gives them greater bargaining power in selling their labor.

The concept of a 'viable' farming unit may itself be an inappropriate concept transposed from land-plentiful economies. In land-scarce economies, where returns to land are the key to maximizing output, a different approach may be desirable. To produce food that will reach the most needy, development of larger, more 'modern' farms cannot compete with small, intensively cultivated plots (ibid.: 112).

Another important component in increasing the participation of the poorest farmers is increased access to credit at fair rates:

One of the main consequences of lacking assets is that one is therefore not considered creditworthy. Lack of access to credit has several pernicious effects, for a large share of all assets are acquired through some sort of credit. If denied access to credit, people cannot escape their assetless position. Moreover, when assetless people do borrow for emergencies, it is usually on the most unfavorable terms. They end up in permanent debt servitude, never able to pay their way clear because of heavy and accumulating interest (ibid.: 105).

CHAPTER III

ISSUES AND PROBLEMS IN DOING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN HAITI

Some considerations in the practice of rural development in Haiti, as in many other Third World Countries, relate to the issues of power, authority and hierarchy, kinship, land ownership, justice, and the concept of "community."

It has been stated that there is no such entity as a "community" in Haiti. That is, Haitians living in a specific locality may be seen by outsiders as comprising a community, but they themselves from the inside do not perceive this. This issue must be clarified because it affects how outsiders will approach an area. Smucker, in his doctoral dissertation, Peasants and Development Politics, addresses this issue in the context of success versus failure of community development projects, coming to this conclusion:

Any assessment of community development, its meanings and measures of success, must take into account its political character. Why is it that community development does not always work as intended? These issues call into question the very existence of community in peasant Haiti. ...There are conflicting political interests closely related to the nature of Haitian society and traditional peasant roles. ... To the degree that peasant communities exist, they are characterised by subordination to outsiders. A clear understanding of these issues helps to explain how community development works, for whom it works, and why it doesn't always work as intended (Smucker 1982: 412).

He also stated that "the mere existence of population aggregate does not imply a unity of purpose or of interest among the members of a residential grouping (ibid.: 413)." In fact, the community he studies "is not really a local group, but rather it is composed of local groupings, competing factions and dyadic ties of mutual obligation. There is no cohesive whole which might be called a true community. In this sense, there is no clear cut 'field of social relations' based on 'territorial propinquity'(ibid.: 415). "

Metraux (1951) also wrote about some of these issues over 30 years ago in Kith and Kin: A Study of Creole Social Structure in Marbial, Haiti. Her study was undertaken to determine the significance of authority through an analysis of the pattern of relationships. Metraux found that although named localities (which she called "neighborhoods") existed,

there is in Marbial no formal neighborhood organization and, in fact, structurally no center. The main ties the individual has to the place where he lives are the land which he cultivates and may own, his neighboring kinfolk, and the several groups which he may join, to which only some of his nearest kin and neighbors may also belong. There is no central authority in the region and the several representatives of public authority belong to separate hierarchies and depend upon and are responsible to figures of greater authority than themselves outside the region (Metraux 1951: 298).

Metraux's first concern was whether there existed, in social relationships between individuals or between groups, a particular emphasis upon relationships involving superordination and subordination. Her conclusion was:

There is a greater emphasis upon the person in the superordinate position, for -- directly or indirectly -- the relationships of others to one another are defined through him (or her); there is emphasis upon the superordinate-subordinate relationship for it is mainly through this that the individual can achieve and maintain success (ibid.: 300)."

Metraux has some provocative comments about what exactly is considered success in Haitian society. Just who is considered successful?

The successful man is the one who owns more land than he can work with his family, who is surrounded by a number of dependents, who holds one or several positions that give him a voice in the affairs of the neighborhood, who must be listened to, who is supposed to have access to important persons outside the locality and even to supernatural power, and who believes in his own strength....

His efforts at self-aggrandizement are directed at rising above others; the meaning of 'above' and 'below' are dependent more or less upon his own view -- that is, they are relative rather than absolute (ibid.: 308-09).

In addition she states:

At the same time there is also a very great emphasis upon the need for the assistance of those who are older, stronger, more important and more powerful if personal success is to be attained. No one can achieve success by his own unaided efforts. ...

Congruent with the idea that assistance should come from above, direct competition between equals for positions of importance is redirected into striving for access to those who have benefits to confer. Congruent with the definition of power as power to give (as well as to withhold), display before competitors is redirected towards the conferring of benefits upon dependents.

Thus, it is the complementary relationship of superordination and subordination between older and younger, stronger and weaker that is crucial to getting ahead; the relationship to equals is minimized (ibid.: 309-10).

There may be group activity, but it is in direct contradiction to what is desired in community development:

...there is a considerable amount of collective, helpful activity -- a number of people working together help one person in the achievement of his immediate goal. The group works for one individual for his ends, not with him for a common end of benefit to all (ibid.: 311).

This analysis is important to consider when working out strategies to ensure lasting development. Metraux's study, which began with a consideration of the political instability that has characterized Haiti since its independence, concludes that this instability relates to "...the intense individualism with the emphasis both upon personal achievement and the desirability of getting into a position of being able to confer benefits upon others (ibid.: 328)."

A 1962 report by USAID community analyst Richard P. Schaedel highlights the same issues:

From the value attributed to power and authority, it is not strange that notions of hierarchy in organizational structure are pervasive

from the family unit up to the presidential palace. Even the newly formed "community councils" without any officially recognized status soon engage in squabbles over the title and prerogatives of their presidents. Great significance is given to the term chef and all titles of office. The principle of hierarchy and subordination to authority is a phenomenon of mass discipline. In most societies it is at the opposite ends of the spectrum to self-discipline... Usually where the notion of hierarchy is strong, the obligation to public discipline tends to free the individual from concern about disciplining himself. It follows from this that a sense of individual responsibility is weak in the Haitian temperament (Schaedel 1962: 106).

Another important issue in community development work in Haiti is the peasant's lack of or restricted access to land and water. It is often stated in the literature on Haiti that, in contrast to much of Latin America with its heritage of latifundia, Haiti does not have a problem as far as land ownership is concerned since most peasants own some land. But the land they own tends to be the least fertile, lacks water, and is on steep hillsides. Thus peasants are often forced to rent or sharecrop additional, more productive land under unfair terms. The fact that the peasants often are tenants, sharecroppers and even (in contradiction to the anthropological definition of a peasant) landless laborers in societies whose various systems--social, economic and political--do not operate in their favor is exemplified in a type of rental situation provided by McGuire (1979) in Bottom-Up Development. McGuire gives the example of Le Borgne where State land:

...is commonly rented by blocs of say 30 acres to someone from the village who in turn rents small parcels to peasant farmers -- at a 100 percent profit.

Rents must be paid each year. In years of drought or too much rain, peasant producers borrow money at usurious rates -- 100 percent or more -- from money-lenders to pay their rent. If they do not pay promptly, their chances of renting good land the next year are lessened. Under this system, it is obvious how peasants are kept in debt and dependent on those with some control over land and capital (McGuire 1979: 38).

Local police and judges usually side with the landowners -- very often they are the landowners--so the peasants lack protection from the law. The issue of justice is uppermost in the peasant's mind. McGuire makes reference to this issue and states that the peasants themselves identify justice as one of their felt needs.

To survive in this situation which encourages feelings of powerlessness, passivity and fatalism, peasants have used various mechanisms. One has been the emphasis on kin ties, and as will be shown in a later chapter, kin ties appear to play an important role in effective community development in Haiti.

More study is needed on the importance of kin ties. An early investigation of them in relation to the Haitian marketplace was undertaken by Legerman in 1961 and is discussed in her article "Kin Groups in a Haitian Market." Legerman refers to Sidney Mintz who had previously found that the main kin relation functioning in the market situation was the mother-and-daughter unit. Legerman found that the degree of economic cooperation among poultry-sellers who are related is much greater than that found in general in the market place. Basing her statements both on her own observations and the explanations of the women she interviewed, Legerman makes various statements about the rights and duties among these women:

They say that it is good to have family selling together because they live together, and they love one another. If one has family, they will protect each other; they will lend each other money without interest; they will buy for each other and sell for each other if one is sick. And family will not rob each other....All the women say that one does not pay interest on loans from kin (Legerman 1971: 389).

Legerman feels that kinship is considered so important it causes women who are working together to become ritual kin:

There is a tendency for women not related to the group to try to claim cognatic ties with someone in it: within the group itself, women who are distantly related affines also may try to create fictitious cognatic ties...instances of ritual kin ties where one woman becomes the co-parent of another by baptizing her child. The ritual ties are between two women who stand in an affinal relation to each other, and between a woman and a member of the group with which she has a working relationship but no cognatic ties (ibid.).

Legerman found one case of strong friendship between a member of the kin group and a woman who sold next to her who was not related. But they had become ritual kin and this had given the woman various privileges. In summing up, Legerman states:

These first-generation full-time urban sellers have found economic advantages in using kin ties. In a situation where there are no strongly established business ethics, these market women are using bilateral kinship networks for security and trust in carrying out commerce (ibid.: 390).

As will be seen, kinship networks also are being used in the formation of groups in several successful community development projects.

CHAPTER IV

ATTEMPTS AT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN HAITI

An example of the type of ineffective community development work that is generally done in Haiti, as described in Smucker's doctoral dissertation, is reflected in the history of a foreign agency working in a community in northern Haiti. This agency's first community development work, in the early 1960's, concentrated on health, literacy, and agricultural extension. A fruit-canning cooperative, which the outside agency had thought was a classic example of "aided self-help," ceased operation following a technical problem; however, it was felt that the departure of a strong administrator just prior to this was no coincidental factor. Smucker states:

The effect of these projects was to perpetuate traditional forms of paternalism while establishing new dependencies on new institutions (1982: 389).

The foreign agency then went on to train community organizers and to organize new community councils. Again, later analysis showed that the councils took "the outer forms of community organization but without substance or activity (ibid.: 392)."

Much debate has centered on the use of the community council model in Haiti. It originally was thought to be a way communities could organize themselves to work with donor agencies. But recent studies have shown that, in general, this model has not been successful.

Smucker makes the following points:

In sum, the origins of the community council in L'Artichaut* reflect a confluence of several specific interest groups including Protestant missions, a foreign community development agency, townspeople, the Haitian state, and the residents of L'Artichaut. The initiative for council formation came from outside the community. For local residents, the importance of the council resides in these ties and dependencies. As a result of community development efforts, the presence of outsiders has been institutionalized in new ways (ibid.: 403).

Also:

...the rhetoric of community development is subverted by community councils whose "felt needs," or perceived interests, are not the project but the work it generates.

...council meetings and activities focus primarily on the programs of outside agencies. The interest of council members in these programs takes the form of wage labor and material aid (ibid.: 406-08).

The outside agency's "policy shift in orientation from various projects to the process of community development founded on old patterns of paternalism (class) and peasant personalism (special ties)" (ibid.: 409). Finally:

In the guise of compliance, the council assumed the outward forms of a self-sustaining local organization while remaining dependent on DEV** in various ways (ibid.).

Most importantly, capturing the very essence of a community council as practiced in much of Haiti, Smucker states that the community council defines its very existence in terms of special relations to outside institutions and material aid.

The report prepared in 1979 by Lowenthal and Attfield, Integrated Rural Development in Haiti, addresses many of the issues confronted here. The

* Fictional name for locality Smucker lived and worked

**Fictional name for outside agency

report attempts to define how USAID can work with local organizations in regional planning/watershed management.

Lowenthal also previously found fault with the community council model in an earlier paper for USAID. Concerning the issue of participation in community councils, he stated:

There are different kinds of council members, and they differ precisely in terms of their degree of participation in a variety of council functions and affairs. Membership and participation, then, are not the same in practice (Lowenthal 1978: 4).

Most councils have a high number of occasional members who emerge whenever remunerated labor opportunities (for wages or food-for-work) become available. This is the only time they participate, as they are never involved in decisions on community development or in any planning of what projects should be done.

Lowenthal attended many community council meetings and observed:

In all council and federation meetings observed, the number of members who actually contributed to the meetings, who raised questions and discussed issues, were very few indeed. Most people remained silent throughout the proceedings, even during that part of the session known as "general interest," when the floor is open for the comments of all in attendance. This problem is reported consistently (though there are, apparently, exceptions) by most of those with whom I have talked about the functioning of community councils.

The problem of participation, then, is not simply to have each household represented by a member, nor even to make all adult members of the community members of the council. Rather, the task is to encourage active participation by council members in terms of both work and planning of community projects.

The standard community council organizational model now in use around the country does not seem to be conducive to this kind of a transformation....

...it should be noted that membership in an enduring group of this size, with a proposed set of common interests, is an experience with no real precedent for most peasants. Normally peasants make management decisions and conceive of benefits accruing to labor in the context of the individual household... Finally, the individual peasant, for whom the very notion of "community" is a new one, may not find it easy to transfer allegiance directly to a group of such size, especially where he seems to have no specifiable role or position beyond that of "member" (ibid.: 7)

Turning to the issue of participation, Lowenthal states:

In terms of participation in planning and decision-making, the large body of the council presents even greater problems. Such a group meeting once or twice a month, as is most common, does not seem to provide an appropriate forum for the development of the skills and attitudes necessary for making independent, individual contributions to public discussion debate, nor, as is the case with voluntary labor, encourage the view that one's individual contribution is necessary to the successful functioning of the group (1980: 8).

Lowenthal explains the reasons for this:

Cultural patterns of respect and deference, and the avoidance of open public conflict or disagreement, when combined with the heterogeneity of the council with respect to socio-economic status, authority, age, etc., make the expression of individual opinions unlikely. This is especially true on the part of the poorer, younger and less powerful who may be in attendance. The sheer size of the group, and time limitations for the duration of the meeting further limit the opportunities for individual participation (ibid.: 10).

Lowenthal then looked for alternative models that had more success in Haiti. He found the model in two projects--Gros Morne and Papaye--which, although they have many differences, are both based on the principle of organization of small groups called groupements. In Lowenthal's report, Integrated Rural Development in Haiti, he not only described these two projects in great detail and proposed that USAID start a project based on these models, but went one step further. The new project would establish a resource and training center (RDRC) whose services would be available to interested projects throughout Haiti.

The project materialized as the CRS-sponsored Groupement Pilot Project which began in September 1980. It is described in the OPG proposal as follows:

The Groupement Pilot Project (GPP) represents an attempt to apply comprehensive technical expertise to the problems of local-level development programming for rural Haiti. The Project is based on the

premise that such programming will be appropriate -- i.e., suited both to Haiti's needs and her current potential -- only insofar as it emerges from a process of direct, continuous and long-term interaction between selected technicians and a representative target population, under field conditions.

Until recently, even the mode of organizing such an extended, open encounter, with implications for program design, remained beyond the grasp of Haiti's development planners. The lack of enduring, indigenous local groupings beyond the level of the family, and the inherent unsuitability of the widely-used community council organizational model, have often rendered the community development process in Haiti a one-way externally-imposed, dependency-provoking affair. In such a process, invaluable inputs from the target group can neither be formulated nor forthcoming. The result is that program design is predetermined, with the peasant simply posited as the recipient of development and its benefits. Currently, due to the efforts of two local agronomists working independently of each other on small-scale projects, this formidable impasse seems to have been overcome.

The Gros Morne Rural Development Project, supported by AID through an OPG to Catholic Relief Services, and the Papaye Cooperative Movement, supported by the Catholic Diocese at Hinche, are basically projects in peasant organization and education. ...In both projects, small groups (10-15 members/"groupements") are formed around the principle of capital-generation and reinvestment. Starting capital is raised by equal donations, in small amounts from each member. These common assets are then invested in one or more profit-making "projects" by the groupements. Such activities require common work and decision-making on the part of all group members. From the beginning, group assets are impartible and may only be used for reinvestment purposes.

This simple organizational format galvanized even the most inexperienced peasants around a common, goal-directed, group activity. When such groups are firmly in place, further development-oriented interventions may be organized around them and their emergent capacities and disposition for group effort, full individual participation, and self-management. In effect, the groupements become the basic building blocks, or units of local development efforts.

...the key to successful development efforts in rural Haiti is the reorganization and reorientation of the peasantry. In the simplest terms, the characteristic divisiveness, individualistic competition, and lack of group participation skills that currently render concerted local action so difficult to engender and to sustain must be overcome as a first step in any local development program. Once such initial advances have been made, effective technical assistance, animation, and non-formal education may be initiated. A substantive local development program may then emerge out of the ensuing process of interaction between trained development personnel and Project participants. ...

The formation and support of groupements of the kind described above, then, represents an organizational strategy for use in rural Haiti which, while relatively untied to any specific substantive interventions, can adequately set the stage for truly local, self-managed development programs (Lowenthal 1980: 1-3).

...the groupement strategy has two basic strengths. First, the groupements are small groups based on pre-existing ties of kinship, neighborhood and friendship. These prior bonds between members provide a base upon which to build stronger, goal-directed, working relationships. Second, the limited size of the group, and its mandate to undertake its own capital-generating projects in common, demand a high level of participation and commitment from all members.

Cooperative interaction within this framework provides members with the opportunity to develop necessary skills for participation in larger groups and projects of many kinds, and stimulates individual contributions and potential leadership capacity among participants. Each member is constantly aware of the importance of his/her contributions to the group, both in terms of ideas and in effort; he/she is held responsible, by what is essentially a peer group, for a continuing commitment to group and project success (ibid.: 28).

It can be seen that this project, in contrast to most others in Haiti's development history, considered at its very inception the basic issues involved (at the grassroots level) in Haiti's lack of development and tried to deal concretely with them.

A recent evaluation of the project was undertaken by Creative Associates at the request of USAID/Haiti. The evaluation states that although the evaluator had many serious criticisms of the project, he:

...considers the GPP to be, in many ways, a great success. It has made significant progress toward its stated goal. The emerging peasant groupements have good training, great potential, and already occupy an important position within the social structure of the target area. Their mortality is surprisingly low while their spread is so rapid as to suggest that these groupements do fill a need. In comparison with the long string of failures in Haitian development work, this project is indeed a good success and may even be one of the best ever to have been undertaken in Haiti (Locher 1983: Pt. III, 6).

Specifically referring to the successes of the GPP, the evaluator says:

...a significant number of peasants have (a) engaged in collaborative agricultural activity, (b) formed social and material bonds which will help better protect them from abuse and exploitation, (c) started to bring some of the pests affecting local agriculture and animal husbandry under control, (d) engaged cooperatively in the upgrading of land (dry walls), various other agricultural chores, and the marketing of products, and (e) experienced a measure of control over their destiny in an environment that generally invites a fatalistic attitude towards life (ibid.: Pt. III, 58).

Thus, this project is succeeding where others have failed in overcoming some of the most important constraints to rural development in Haiti. It is felt that the last achievement--gaining some control over their environment--is especially important because the peasant's feeling of powerlessness in facing his world is one of the most important problems that rural development specialists must face.

Two facts relevant to rural development efforts were noted in Lowenthal's original study of the groupements of Gros Morne and Papaye. One was the high incidence of kin composing a single groupement. The other was that they consist of people who had exchanged labor or been members of work squads together before forming groupements. Thus, it is felt that these groupements are pre-existing natural, social units framed and reoriented within and by the context of their individual larger projects.

The fact that groupements have made use of traditional forms within them was also noted by Locher in his part in the evaluation for Creative Associates:

Members work in the garden of one member according to the traditional bout kod arrangement for about one-half of the going rate.

Many other fund-raising arrangements have been observed but they all engage in the common practice of putting a traditional technique of labor mobilization (such as job, bout kod and kolonn) into the service of this innovative form of peasant organization (ibid.: 33).

Thus one:

...direct benefit of GPP comes from the time group members spend on other members' fields...Most frequently, however, the groupement will perform an activity -- such as clearing a field -- as if it were a traditional work gang. However, we have also observed the construction of drywalls for soil protection, an activity which traditional work gangs would not normally undertake (ibid.).

It is important to note here that groupements are undertaking, on their own initiative, soil conservation measures.

Lowenthal stated in his original study of Gros Morne:

An attempt to repopularize exchange labor, with an eye toward capitalizing on the underemployment and under-utilization of own labor resources in peasant agriculture, is thus a part of the Gros Morne Development plan. Over the course of a year, groupements average nine (9) days of exchange labor within the group per month. This figure is highly seasonal, and at time of peak agricultural activity (field preparation, weeding, harvesting), some groupements sampled organized up to 22 days of exchange labor per month among their members (Lowenthal & Attfield 1979: 49-50).

CHAPTER V

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE CENTRAL PLATEAU

Although the Central Plateau is a relatively isolated area whose resources have been less developed than some other regions, it is fairly typical of the rest of Haiti in the variety of local organizations that exist. These range from isolated priests and pastors working with little or no organizational structure through work being sponsored by church and secular people who are simultaneously attempting to work with and build up local structures that could continue after their departure.

In this section, the organizations are described and evaluated. These descriptions are composed of personal observation, comments made by project personnel, or are taken from documents provided by the personnel. The next chapter will provide an analysis of these projects, set up a typology and will list criteria that should be observed when setting up a new project.

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

BOUCAN CARRE

A Catholic priest, Father Jean Edner Laurent, has worked in Boucan Carre since 1979. This area has a population of 60,000 and is extensive. He can spend up to six hours on horseback visiting areas within his jurisdiction. Father Laurent said that one of the biggest problems of the area is the lack of roads; he was instrumental in having a bridge built to improve the road from Mirebelais to Boucan Carre. Jean-Claude Lucas of USAID had visited and approved an SDA grant for \$4,800 to improve the road, although it is still

unfinished and funds are needed before the next rainy season to finish the work. Father Laurent had also received \$6,000 from COHAN, a Dutch agency, to buy and transport drains. Father Laurent estimated that the work done so far is worth \$15,000, but \$6,000 is needed to complete it. The concept of the "limited good" is revealed in the emphasis Father Laurent put on the jealousy of a neighboring village. According to him, that village receives almost all benefits entering the zone. He said ODBFA could not do anything for Boucan Carre because of the authorities in this neighboring village. (Two men with very high political connections in Port-au-Prince are from the competing village, Dufailly, which is located between Mirebelais and Boucan Carre.) Father Laurent kept stressing that the only way Boucan Carre could be helped would be by bypassing the government. He says he works mainly with community councils. His awareness of the need for and function of an animator is limited; he said he needed an animator to run a bulldozer.

CONVENTION BAPTISTE D'HAITI (CBH) IN LASCAHOBAS

The Convention Baptiste d'Haiti, or CBH, is running a reforestation project in Lascahobas. It is headed by forester Mark Rutledge and is working in conjunction with the Pan American Development Foundation reforestation program. The main goal of the project is to provide trees for use as a cash crop. The secondary benefit is soil stabilization--protection of the soil from wind and water erosion. The project has been conceived as a five-year test period with assured continuation if successful. Fast-growing trees are used but not fruit trees. Rutledge is very aware of the importance of animation, but this aspect has not been successful so far. The one animator on the project was fired after a year for having done very little, and Rutledge feels that three effective animators are needed.

CBH is working in cooperation with the Pan American Development Foundation on a massive tree-planting campaign. Their project is to cooperate with the government and various other organizations attempting to stop erosion. They want to plant trees on a massive scale, not only to stop erosion, but also to provide fast-growing trees for use as firewood and charcoal. This project, then, will attack the erosion problem, create income for the farmer, provide a source of fuel, and create a source for lumber. One of the tree species will also provide food for cattle and increase the soil's nitrogen content. Thus, the immediate goal is to develop a tree demonstration farm and nursery. As their sources of trees grow, they will enter into the extension or outreach part of the program. Farmers will be invited to the site and technicians will be sent to interested farms that may want to establish their own tree production. They will also help in the preparation and marketing of charcoal.

CENTRE EMMAUS IN PAPAYE

Perhaps the best work being done in Haiti by any indigenously-produced local leader in his own community is by Chavannes Jean-Baptiste at the Centre Emmaus in Papaye, just outside of Hinche. His work began approximately ten years ago under the auspices of the Diocese of Hinche and has expanded to the point where there is now a cooperative of 3,000 peasants--formed by 200 groupements--which is engaged in the following activities: (1) livestock-raising; (2) agricultural production; (3) storage with a silo that can hold over 200 tons of cereal; (4) a credit program; (5) a ceramic center; (6) a community store which sells such things as tools and insecticides.

The groupements serve several purposes. They generate capital through common work and investment in agricultural production. Members contribute

initially to acquire land for a common garden and to buy seed and other inputs. Another function of the groupement is technical extension. There is an attempt to disseminate simple, low-capital-input technological improvements in peasant agriculture. The Papaye groupement also attempts to reorganize the peasantry with the hope that new values and perspectives will ensue.

Mr. Jean-Baptiste has trained animators from projects in the South as well as in the Central Plateau, specifically for the Mennonites and the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee at Pignon. He has also shown active interest in the problem of soil erosion and has written and had published three books in Creole on the subject: Konnin te ou (Know Your Land), Koriye te ou (Encourage Your Land), and Proteje te ou (Protect Your Land), all published by Bon Nouvel.

CHRISTIAN REFORMED WORLD RELIEF COMMITTEE IN PIGNON

The Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) has been working in Pignon since 1975 with the Missionary Church Association. Their staff consists of three agriculturalists, one nurse, and one administrator, Jim Zylstra. The CRWRC is working with sixty groups of local farmers on improved agricultural techniques and preventive health measures, with credit available when people begin to work their land, mainly in January and February; an agricultural supply store has tools and fertilizers.

The CRWRC works in the following way. A church committee would name someone as an animator who would start a class with fifteen to twenty people. There is a fifteen-lesson course on agricultural techniques. These classes then turn into agricultural groups. Since the CRWRC did not have much success with their health activities, they have recently integrated the health and agricultural activities; there are now twenty central committees (made up of

representatives of the sixty groups) which work in agriculture with a health component; the animators and health workers are employed by the central committees, with CRWRC-supported salaries for three years. The animators are trained at the Centre Emmaus in Papaye, with four people there this year.

The administrator said that land tenure in the area is more of a problem than he had at first thought. There are a lot of absentee landlords who have sugar cane planted on their land because it does not require much supervision. Generally, the most frequent crops are corn, millet, various types of peas, and manioc. There are some vegetables, mostly cabbage, beets and tomatoes. The peasants irrigate them by carrying water by hand and fertilize their vegetable gardens with bat manure which is abundant in nearby caves.

There are prospective staff changes. The administrator, Jim Zylstra, will be leaving in May, 1984. Marv De Vries, who will replace him, will arrive in March 1984, leaving them two months to work together.

ST. MICHEL DE L'ATTALAYE - PASTOR LUBIN OF THE CONVENTION BAPTISTE D'HAITI

Pastor Lubin of the Convention Baptiste d'Haiti (CBH) has worked in St. Michel since 1957. He is a very dynamic man who has done some good work in the following areas:

Health - He has built a hospital with \$4,000 received from overseas and with community participation, each family donating \$5. The hospital has two doctors, one Haitian, one American (Dr. Wood), and seven practical nurses trained by Mrs. Lubin, a nurse. Their work includes vaccinations against tuberculosis, typhoid and tetanus; Dr. Wood does cataract surgery.

Family Planning - The family planning program has concentrated on the IUD for women and vasectomy for men. The vasectomy is performed by Dr. Wood on men who have at least three children.

Education - A school which goes from first to eleventh grade is housed in an old church. The teachers are paid by the church. Each family pays \$15 per child per year. Pastor Lubin received money from World Vision to buy books, which are lent to the children. The school is in French, follows the method of the Department of National Education, and is recognized by the State. There is a maximum enrollment of 750 students.

Organization - There is no organization which will be able to carry on Pastor Lubin's work when he leaves. He indicated that he was tired and wanted to be with his family, who live in Petionville. When asked how his work will continue, he replied that God will provide, that God sent him to St. Michel, and he is sure that God will take care of finding his successor. He has trained several people but they left to go to the United States. He has one young man working with him now whom he trained, sent to school, and pays \$180 a month, but Pastor Lubin seemed doubtful the young man would stay.

Construction - Pastor Lubin has built a road from St. Michel to Nan Paul for \$11,000, and has also extended his activities to Nan Paul, a community to which the Department of Agriculture is paying a lot of attention. It would be worth USAID's while to find out why.

NAN PAUL

We met Pastor Lubin on the road he was having constructed from St. Michel to Nan Paul. He accompanied us to Nan Paul and was with us during our conversation with some of the members of the community council. He made our conversation difficult because he often corrected what the peasants said and they would then agree with him and change their original remarks.

Their Remarks

There is a 300-member community council with an eight-person committee directing it. The community council has been there for the last 15 years. The

population of the area is 15,000 and is located in 15 localities. Each locality has a groupment. They stated that there is no state land in the area. In the past, they received some help from HACHO in the form of tools to build and/or repair roads.

They listed their needs as: (1) roads, (2) potable water, (3) a hospital or dispensary, (4) irrigation, and (5) schools.

Malnutrition in the zone is more a result of lack of knowledge than of poverty. The area is not poor, according to the peasants, as they have good land and animals, including cattle. When asked about illness in the zone, they said the area didn't have a lot of tuberculosis because there was a lot of food. Latrines are needed, as many children die of diarrhea. Children are weaned at two years of age, after which they tend to get sick and die. They said there are many cows and adequate milk available in the zone, indicating they felt the children need not die from lack of good nutrition.

The area has been devoid of services. There have never been any agricultural technicians or Department of Health personnel in the area. Soil conservation is not addressed because they have no agronomists to help them. A reforestation program will begin in April with potential help from the Department of Agriculture.

In this area, those who have more land than they can work by themselves rent it out. There is no de moitie (sharecropping). We must inject at this point that when this was said by several persons at once, some peasant in the background said, "No de moitie?" with an incredulous tone of voice. He was quickly told to be quiet. The incident pointed out what was felt during the entire conversation, that is, that I could not count on the reliability of what was being said.

The peasants said that there were few large landowners in the area. Some people--maybe five or ten--may have about fifteen carreaux. On the other hand, some people don't have any land at all and only rent. When asked about the cost of renting land in the zone, they responded:

very good land (where rice can be planted)	\$300 a year
very good land in mountains	\$100 a year
average land	\$40 a year
"bad" land	\$20 a year

ST. MICHEL DE L'ATTALAYE - CENTRE ETUDES ET COOPERATION INTERNATIONALE (CECI)

CECI is another group which is working in St. Michel. CECI is a Canadian NGO (nongovernmental organization) based in Montreal. This project is funded by CIDA, the Canadian Government's aid organization. It is a project of the St. Michel parish, where there are three members of the Belgian Scheut order, two priests and one lay person.

The project aims to work in three areas: agriculture, health and animation. In agriculture, they are now working on experiments with many different crops. They have set up an experimental station where they are experimenting with some local cereals and vegetables. Since the objective of the ten hectare farm (which is on church land) is not commercial, insecticides and fertilizers are not used as the peasants cannot afford them and they are trying to replicate the peasants' circumstances. An unfinished monastery on the land will eventually be used as a training, documentation, animation, and nutrition center. They have planted the following on the experimental farm: cabbage, tomatoes, sweet pepper, Chinese cabbage, broccoli, carrots, onions, beets, turnips, eggplant and cucumber. Four thousand trees have been planted on the

experimental farm and 110,000 trees in the mountains. Work is done in collaboration with Mark Webb, the PADF employee for the area. They have planted nime, chene, eucalyptus, acasia, leucena and acajou. They were planting leucena near corn in the experimental garden because corn can give a harvest of 240 percent more when it is planted near leucena. They are testing soya obtained from the Chinese at ODVA. CECI does much work in soil conservation and has sent eleven people from the area to Limbe to be trained at the FAO center there.

They work in three rural sections, mainly in the mountains, and are forming local animators. Two are currently being trained at IDEA (Diocesan Institute for Adult Education) in Cap Haitian. The animators work to form groups about common interests, for example, fish ponds.

The staff consists of six Canadians, one of African origin, who came in March 1983 and expect to stay for two years. There are two agronomists, two health personnel, one specialist in appropriate technology and one coordinator.

State land is extensive in the area, they said.

MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE - MOMBIN CROCHU

The Mennonite Central Committee, which works in more than fifty countries, has been in Haiti since 1959. Its various activities cover the ones of Mombin Crochu and Grand Savanne in the north; La Chapelle and Deschapelles in the Artibonite. These activities include reforestation, animation, and nonformal education in primary health care and agriculture. The MCC's strategy is to train community leaders and the general population by using small group formation. These peasant associations have from fifteen to seventeen members, and are lead by an animator.

Between Deschappelles and La Chapelle, the MCC has established an integrated project of reforestation, soil conservation and augmentation of agricultural production in the mountains on the south side of the Artibonite River. At Deschappelles, the MCC has provided several professional volunteers as well as medical supplies for the Albert Schweitzer Hospital.

In collaboration with MEDA, the Mennonite Economic Development Associates, MCC will launch a pilot project of production and exportation of cacao in the regions of Grand Riviere du Nord and Port Margot. This project will be administered and executed by MEDA and the Jean-Baptiste cooperative.

MEDA is an international organization particularly specializing in the development of small businesses. It furnishes financial and technical assistance to production associations set up in several Latin American countries. MEDA also grants credit to small agro-industrial enterprises.

The MCC lists its priority goals in Haiti as:

- 1) Help to improve the production, conservation and utilization of basic food crops by means that are appropriate for the rural milieu.
- 2) Encourage the formation of peasant associations which could serve as forums in the communities for interventions in nonformal education concerning agricultural techniques, primary health care, the Haitian Rural Code, sources of potable water, education, community development, and so on.
- 3) Encourage and assist the establishment of small enterprises at the level of community-based groupements which could demonstrate the profits to be made from such activities which put together human and financial resources.
- 4) Furnish technical and financial assistance to projects conceived by rural communities which could improve the quality of life in the areas of health, education, economics and the social and spiritual domains.

5) Collaborate and encourage dialogue with other integrated rural development programs in Haiti.

6) Furnish material and technical aid to different groups, especially the Mennonites, working in close collaboration with independent religious leaders in Haiti.

7) Encourage dialogues and the exchange of information among the above-mentioned groups in order to have more rational development projects which could better contribute to the national development objectives of the Haitian Government.

8) Provide technicians and professionals to groups carrying out programs which are compatible with the objectives and general goals of the MCC.

In 1979 the Mennonite Central Committee, after twenty years of experience in development in Grand Riviere du Nord, accepted the invitation of the Missionary Church Association of the Central Plateau to establish a ten-year program of integrated rural development in the regions of Mombin Crochu and Bois Laurence.

The MCC lists its goals as the following:

1. Assist the formation of peasant associations which could become aware of peasant problems and help them find rational and appropriate solutions.
2. Establish nonformal education programs to disseminate information on agriculture, primary health care, nutrition and community development.
3. Undertake activities which could show the possibilities of increasing production, facilitating their conservation and of extracting a profit from the agricultural products of the zone.
4. Undertake educative, practical projects which could improve the hygiene and primary health care of the above-mentioned groups.

The MCC lists the concrete objectives of this ten-year program as follows:

1. To engage animators responsible for the formation of peasant associations in various communities.
2. To assure the good training of these animators.
3. Collaborate in the administration of the community silos.
4. Help groups in capping springs for potable water.
5. Establish demonstration gardens to show methods of soil conservation and to increase production.
6. Organize seminars and meetings for local leaders on various subjects in order to promote dialogue and find common solutions.
7. Establish demonstration projects in methods of raising chickens and rabbits.
8. Furnish an initial capital and aid in the administration of a cooperative store.
9. Encourage the establishment of nurseries and the planting of trees.
10. Help the two immunization projects in the zone as well as the health education programs.

The MCC plans to contribute the following:

1. Send an average of eight foreign voluntary technicians during the ten years, all of them either agronomists, nurses, nutritionists or administrators.
2. Engage twenty animators, all of them recruited in their respective communities.
3. Provide tools, techniques, vegetables seeds, chickens, and so forth at a very low price.
4. Furnish capital for a revolving fund for community projects.

The total budget of the rural integrated project of mombin Crochu - Bois Laurence for ten years will be approximately \$475,000.

Some of the results so far include the formation of twenty-five peasant associations at Mombin Crochu. Their main work together has been in cooperative gardens. Eleven Haitian agents, who were all trained by Chavannes

Jean-Baptiste of the Centre Emmaus in Papaye, work along-side the MCC staff to train and help function these peasant associations. The MCC has also bought a silo for storage, set up a store to supply agricultural products and organized a system of loans to groupements. In health, the MCC collaborated with the Catholic medical center of Mombin Crochu; its effort concentrates on primary health care and preventive medicine.

CROIX FER - CHADEV

Some years ago, the area of Croix Fer was chosen by the Haitian Department of Agriculture as a site for one of its "Ilots de developpement," but because of financial constraints little was accomplished. In 1975, the Presbyterian Church of Mecklemburg, North Carolina, decided to have an agricultural project in Haiti, and after consultation with the then Minister of Agriculture, who proposed several sites, the zone of Croix Fer was chosen. The "Comite Haitien de Developpement (CHADEV) was created in order to serve as an intermediary between the Mecklemburg Church, on one hand, and Haitian institutions, official as well as local, on the other. It was CHADEV who signed a contract with the Haitian Government in July 1978 for the execution of the project. The Director of CHADEV is Bernard Etheart, a Haitian sociologist, who has been with the project from the beginning.

The zone of Croix Fer is situated on the southeast border of the Central Plateau; it constitutes the southern part of the territory which is bounded to the south by the Chaine de Lascahobas, to the east by the Dominican border, to the north by the Macassia River, and to the west by the Peligre Lake. Administratively, it is part of the commune of Belladere. The area has good economic potential; six different rivers (Renthe Mathe, Laguas, Onde Verte, Roche Plat,

Sagouhait, Roche Grande) descend the Chaîne de Lascahobas and go through the area before reuniting to flow into Peligre Lake. Unfortunately, deforestation has lessened the flow of all these rivers, and only the Onde Verte River has, at the present time, a strong, regular flow.

The Croix Fer project has a double goal:

- a. the construction of an irrigation system, with a large capital investment (it represents more than half of the total sum that the Presbyterian Church proposes to give to the entire project);
- b. community development to enable the population to direct all the activities (including the irrigation system) which can improve their lives.

The second goal, although less important in terms of financial investment than the first, is seen by CHADEV as the more important by far. This is related to the basic philosophy of the project, which was, from its very inception, not just to provide assistance to the target population (either in the form of services, goods or money), but rather to find a way to help the people help themselves, in order to improve their self-esteem.

In order to attain its objectives, CHADEV believes that it must carry out three different kinds of activities: organizational, social and economic.

Organization: CHADEV is trying to strengthen the organizational structure so that the local population can become a partner of the donor organization. The project works through community groups, which now number 30, gathered in three federations. The Federation of Croix Fer covers 12 villages,* the Federation

* Croix Fer, Botoncy, Passe Pomme, La Seve, Riaribe, Carpente, Calaroché, Oulian Depeigne, Sagouhait, LosPoetes, Moliere, Laguas

of Dos Palais covers 13,** and the Federation of Roy Sec covers 5.*** CHADEV was able to achieve this work in its seven years of operation by the hiring of well-trained, experienced, non-local animators. One of these, who began in 1976 and has been project administrator since 1981, had been trained at IDEA (Diocesan Institute for Adult Education) in Cap Haitian. Two other IDEA trainees (a married couple from Pilate) were hired in 1980. In order to guarantee continuity when outside funding ends, local persons have also been trained in animation techniques and are currently working alongside the original animators.

Social: In the social sector, CHADEV offers education and health services to the population.

In education, CHADEV is emphasizing adult literacy; there are 27 adult literacy centers. CHADEV paid ONAAC (National Office for Alphabetization), a government agency, to train local literacy instructors. For the construction of the literacy centers, the population of each community which wanted a center had to donate local materials and their labor; CHADEV only provided those materials which the community lacked and specialized labor. Although CHADEV does not work in formal education, it helped the Croix Fer community acquire land for one of the schools the World Bank is building all over Haiti. (The World Bank required community participation in the form of donated land.) CHADEV started a 4-H program at the very beginning of the project. There are now thirty 4-H clubs, each with a membership of between seven and fifteen youngsters.

** Dos Palais, Bois Pin, Cannot, Pitoron, Kolora, Dos Mayard, Saroyite, Roche Grande, Nan Mango, Pernal, Dos Pomme, Lagoune, Platanal

*** Roy Sec, Terre Blanche, La Domate, Colora, Roy Cannot

four young women trained to run the dispensary and provides their salaries as well as that of a doctor who comes from Belladere once a week; CHADEV also provides medicine.

Economic: In the economic sector, CHADEV is working: (a) to train the population to be able to undertake various profitable activities; (b) to improve production; (c) to improve commercialization; (d) on a large-scale irrigation project to further increase production; (e) in reforestation.

(a) Training - CHADEV has sent six peasants outside the community to be trained, two to La Borde, three to an agricultural school in Belle Anse. The project has seven animators, five from the community. All the animators went through IDEA's nine-month animator-training program. Two young girls are being trained in artisana in the South. When they return, they will open a small center to train peasants from the various communities in artisana. CHADEV also has an iron workshop; two young men were trained at Damien and may get further training at the Camp Perrin workshop in the South.

(b) Production - Although CHADEV is not directly involved in agricultural production, it is trying to help farmers improve their production methods through agricultural groups. There are 16 groups of ten members each who collectively work a piece of land they have rented together. They work under the supervision of the agricultural technicians. CHADEV lends the groups money which they must repay after selling their harvest. The agricultural groups are not only engaged in agricultural production. Some women, for example, joined together in a group for commercial purposes; there are several all-women groups. CHADEV is planning to raise chickens in cooperation with COOPEP (chicken producers who received a grant from the Inter-American Foundation to

train peasants in modern chicken-raising systems). The surrounding area has many markets and it is believed that the peasants could sell approximately 250 chickens a week, since this zone has no meat.

(c) Commercialization - CHADEV realized that one of the peasants' main problems is their lack of control over the commercialization of their crops. The project therefore built storage facilities so that the peasants would be able to take advantage of the fluctuations in prices. The two storage depots are almost finished and will be managed by two cooperatives.

(d) Irrigation - The irrigation canal--which covers 200 hectares, owned by 150 families--is CHADEV's main effort to improve agricultural production in the Croix Fer area. From 1979 to May 1983 (date of latest exact figures), CHADEV spent \$77,699 for supervision and \$44,220 for digging, for a total of \$121,919. During this time, according to the engineers' reports, 30,751 cubic meters (331,028 cubic feet) of earth were dug, which equals \$3.96 per cubic meter or \$.37 per cubic foot. It is estimated that the irrigation system will cost \$300,000 more. Of the \$800,000 that the Presbyterian Church granted CHADEV, \$500,000 remains after seven years. However, if \$300,000 is spent on the irrigation canal, only \$200,000 will remain for development activities. CHADEV raised the question of getting money from USAID to finish the irrigation work, so that the money from the Church could assure them of continuation of the project for a number of years.

(e) Reforestation - The reforestation program started in 1982 after CHADEV acquired the personnel to handle it. In its first year, more than 14,000 seedlings were planted.

Hydroelectricity

A hydroelectric plant opened near Croix Fer in October 1983 and is run by ECEM, a Haitian company. It supplies electricity to Lascahobas and Belladere but not to Croix Fer. Only one of the two turbines at the plant is working. There could be a third one, but there are not enough customers for the available power.

II. PROJECT ASSESSMENTS

Considering each project in the context of what has been stated here concerning effective rural development, the following assessments are made:

Boucan Carre - USAID should not get involved. The reasons are: (1) There is no organizational structure and/or strength; (2) The priest is too dominant; (3) The area is too highly political.

Convention Baptiste in Lascahobas - This group is worth further investigation to see if it might be able to absorb funds in a soil conservation effort in the Central Plateau region. USAID's effort here might be to provide support for more well-trained animators, the lack of which is a major problem. These could be trained at the Centre Emmaus. CBH has churches throughout this area and if it could be helped to coordinate its central effort at Lascahobas with these outlying churches, it might be able to make a strong contribution to erosion control.

Centre Emmaus - When this Centre is mentioned, it is specifically the work of Chavannes Jean-Baptiste that is being referred to. The work being done is superb, especially in the training of animators. Mr. Jean-Baptiste already directs the work of several organizations and more should not be offered to him. However, the training of additional animators from the

Central Plateau at Centre Emmaus would probably not be too much of an additional burden.

Christian Reformed World Relief Committee at Pignon

Mennonite Central Committee at Mombin Crochu - Both of these organizations are doing interesting, effective work in the Central Plateau. (Their animators are trained by Chavannes Jean-Baptiste.) They are working to build peasant organizations and have a strong participatory philosophy. They are also working towards enabling the peasants to have additional income. USAID should support their work.

St. Michel de l'Attalaye

Nan Paul - It is strongly advised that USAID not get involved in either of these two areas for the following reasons: (1) the pastor dominates the groups; (2) the existing groups appear to be run by the better-off peasants; (3) this is a highly political area. It is surmised that one or more influential persons own or rent State land in the zone, and sublease it to the peasants. USAID should consult CARE; they have worked in the zone and appear to understand the underlying situation and can give more exact information.

CECI (St. Michel) - This group is doing interesting work on its experimental farm to see how crop production might be increased by the poorest peasant. They are also interested in animation work. They probably do not need funds since they are a Canadian NGO, but their work should be supported if funding does become a problem.

CHADEV (Croix Fer) - This organization is doing very effective work. It is recommended that USAID consider giving them funds to complete the irrigation project, so that they can count on their remaining funds to continue their other work for several years.

Peres Scheut - The Belgian priests known as the Peres Scheut (Scheut Fathers) are doing effective work throughout the Central Plateau, especially in Thomassique. Their work should be supported by USAID.

Oblate Fathers - This order of American priests is working with results in the upper watershed (Carice and Mont Organize) and its work should be encouraged by USAID.

CHAPTER VI

CRITERIA FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

The model found to be most effective and is being recommended is the groupement model. It has been used in the Central Plateau since 1973 at the Centre Emmaus, under the sponsorship of the Diocese of Hinche. It is logical to investigate how USAID could work more closely in the Central Plateau with the Centre Emmaus and Caritas/Hinche, or more specifically, Chavannes Jean-Baptiste, who directs this work for both. There already is coordination between the Centre Emmaus and at least two other projects, the Mennonite Central Committee at Mombin Crochu and the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee (CRWRC) working in Pignon.

Throughout the Central Plateau, there also is the Belgian Scheut Order, a group of priests with a strong commitment to actively working with the peasantry to improve both the material and spiritual aspects of their lives. Perhaps the best example is Father Marc Fivez, who works in Thomassique. There are the Oblate Fathers, an American order, who work mainly in the South, but who also are active in the upper watershed, specifically Carice and Mont Organize.

The above-mentioned groups have strong organizational frameworks and they could be the core of an effort to coordinate work in soil conservation in the upper watershed.

In strong contrast are groups which have very weak organizational structures, such as Pastor Lubin in St. Michel de l'Attalaye and Nan Paul, and Father Laurent in Boucan Carre. Both are dynamic and well-intentioned persons who would need a lot of direction and training before they or their groups would be capable of absorbing any kind of material assistance. The groups

which surround these men have no organizational strength and probably are not really organizations. Both men dominate the workings of their respective groups.

The groups that should be supported as being able to absorb material aid are groups which have functioned long (meaning years) and well without material aid, who have concentrated, in their training of animators, on what people can do for themselves, and who, in fact, have been very reluctant to receive external aid. External aid is useful and even necessary, but only at a certain point in the cycle. If brought in too soon, too fast, it becomes an anti-development mechanism. This cannot be stressed strongly enough.

The positively-evaluated groups manifest the following characteristics which have been pinpointed in this report as being indispensable components of effective rural development:

1. They consist of small peasant groups who:
 - now are working towards being self-generational,
 - are trying to actively involve all peasants in the decision-making process,
 - emphasize cooperative tasks, including the purchase or renting of land which they work together.
2. The following exist or will in the near future:
 - warehouses - to help the peasants gain more control over their production
 - credit at fair rates - so that the peasant will not be forced, in times of crisis, to either borrow money at usurious rates or sell his land
 - dissemination of improved production techniques - to help the peasant produce more in order to nourish himself and his family better, and to be able to gain income by selling surplus

income-producing activities such as artisana, the preparation of honey, etc.

The above should be the criteria for judging existing projects with which USAID might wish to work. The main point is that these organizations should have solid foundations already and not be dependent on USAID.

In setting up a new project, USAID should keep in mind the following:

- There is often no "community" as such whose population has a unity of purpose or interest.
- There is an extreme overemphasis on the superordinate-subordinate relationship and a lack of importance of relations between equals. This too often leads to dominance of a group by one person; an effective project--effective in the sense of producing self-generational long-term permanent change--must include mechanisms to counteract this natural propensity of Haitian culture.
- The Haitian idea of success may be in direct contradiction to the goals that a rural development project is trying to attain.
- Kin ties are probably very important in the setting up of local organizations.

To summarize the main points made in this report as they relate to the components, steps and processes necessary in the establishment of a rural development project, the following have been found to be important:

1. One of the main components of successful rural development is the organization of peasants into self-sustaining groups.
2. These groups should not be formed or controlled by the government, either overtly or covertly.
3. Local organizations should consist of members with relatively equal income and assets.
4. All members of local organizations should be actively involved in the decision-making process.
5. Tasks which require cooperative work should be emphasized.
6. Landless peasants should be assisted with loans so that they can buy a small piece of land.

7. Increased access to credit at fair rates should be available to even the poorest peasants.
8. USAID must constantly monitor whether a dependency situation is being created. The goal must be self-generational local organization.
9. USAID should not work with community councils. If it is to make an exception to this general rule, the council in question should be thoroughly investigated in order to ascertain that the various weaknesses and liabilities mentioned in this report do not pertain.
10. USAID should try to encourage the groupment model (as practiced in the Groupement Pilot Project, Papaye, Gros Morne).
11. USAID should avoid working with individual priests, pastors, etc., who are too domineering and who are not working towards building groups with a self-generational capacity.
12. Before engaging in community development in any area, a careful cadastral survey should be made. This is particularly important in the Central Plateau where there is a lot of state land. Much of this may have been leased to influential persons who have rented it out to peasants.
13. Before investing money in infrastructure--irrigation, roads, etc.--animation work with peasants should be carried out in order to encourage them not to sell their land even when under extreme duress. A credit system should be in place which would enable them to borrow money and thus not sell their land. It is counter-productive and only accentuates the already existing problem to invest time, money and energy in infrastructure whose main purpose is to enable the poorer peasants to receive additional income and then to have the land on which these improvements were made wind up in the hands of those who are already in a more favorable economic position.
14. Much care should be put into choosing staff. They should be dedicated to their work, not their titles or salaries. They should have a dedication to improving the lives of the peasantry, and should, as much as is possible and practical, be of the peasant class, especially at the level of animator.
15. Since approximately 50 percent of the peasantry is female, no special emphasis has been placed on activities for women, but rather all comments in this report should be construed as applicable to the entire peasant population. This is especially true for staffing. Great effort should be put into hiring female animators.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

It is felt that the technical determinants of Haiti's soil erosion problem are too frequently overemphasized, just as they are in analyses of other Third World countries. Although we recognize the validity of this approach from other researchers' point of view, it is felt that too little attention has been paid to other less tangible constraints. The Haitian problem, first and foremost, is a human problem. Zuvekas agrees with this point of view. After reviewing the activities contributing to soil erosion problems in Haiti, he goes on to say:

These activities, though superficially important...should not be regarded as the underlying reasons for Haiti's soil erosion problem. They explain how the soil resource is destroyed, but not why and on such a massive scale...the real reason for the destruction is not simply that ignorant peasants are mindlessly destroying the basic resource providing their subsistence. No one...farms a 60-degree slope because he likes to. Rather...subsistence farmers have no alternative.

Virtually all studies reviewed pointed directly to Haiti's social, political, and economic framework as the ultimate cause of disastrous destruction of its soil resource base. Land ownership patterns, together with an oversized and growing population, constitute the most frequently cited combination of circumstances conspiring to perpetuate the present rate of soil erosion (Zuvekas 1978: 192).

Zuvekas cites various other researchers including Lothier, Ewel, Thiesenhasen, Franklin and Snyder. They all emphasize the socio-political situation, population density, problems in social organization, economics, and land tenure rights as the real reasons for Haiti's soil erosion problem. He then mentions Eckholm, and quotes him as follows:

Eckholm (1976:169), in his worldwide survey of the extent and causes of destructive soil erosion, concludes that economics, politics, and land ownership are underlying factors in virtually every case of severe nationwide erosion damage. He cites Haiti specifically as being in a particularly advanced state of environmental destruction and points to its inequitable distribution of land ownership, economic opportunities and social services as underlying causes (Zuvekas 1978: 192-93).

In discussing how appropriate measures would be carried out Zuvekas states: large extension effort would be needed to explain appropriate techniques of soil conservation to small farmers and to involve them intimately in the soil conservation effort (ibid.: 193).

In order to carry out effective extension work and rural development in general, communities must be organized. As has been shown, in Haiti the notion of "community" is a foreign notion. Peasants' loyalty is to their "habitation," not to their community. This idea--which the Haitian child grows up with--must be changed. Community organization--in and of itself--must be one of the goals of rural development projects. This will not guarantee change, but will create a structure conducive to it.

The important question is, "What is the proper structure?" As discussed earlier in this report, community councils, although sometimes effective in certain tasks such as providing labor for road-building, have few active members. The number of members who actually contribute to community council meetings is very small. Too much emphasis is placed on the food received as payment for work, and a dependency situation is often created. The aim is to encourage active participation in planning as well as work. The lack of this active participation in planning might not bother those who are mainly interested in seeing visible, tangible results. But the end result of rural development work should not only be physical change: the main goal is internal change. It is obvious that if tomorrow, Haitians and other Third World nationals did not have the attitudes that are concomitant with underdevelopment, the problem would be less immense.

Therefore, the structure used and needed for extension work should also be used as an appropriate microenvironment to begin to change attitudes, because as Zuvekas and Ewel both point out, there is a "need to regard peasant farmers as being as much a part of the ecology of a watershed area as the soil, water,

and vegetative cover." Thus there is a need to change the way these peasant farmers think and act. This is an enormous task, even without the time factor constraint, given the current rate of soil erosion in Haiti, and because it is essential to change attitudes that exist as a result of both historic conditions and the current situation. In addition, this current situation which perpetuates unproductive attitudes, at the same time, is a result of these attitudes.

As detailed previously, the local organizational structure that has been most successful in rural Haiti in carrying out a variety of tasks--including extension work and attitudinal reorientation--is the groupement. Based on this conclusion, the following recommendations are made:

Recommendation One

USAID should consult with the staff of the Groupement Pilot Project to decide jointly when the GPP would be ready to help in training staff and preparing materials for a Regional Development Authority. USAID's research on community development in Haiti culminated in the GPP. The logical next step would be to use the project's projected RDRC--Research Development Resource Center--for all future rural development efforts.

Recommendation Two

USAID should encourage the groupement model in all areas where USAID works. Chavannes Jean-Baptiste, Executive Director of the GPP and head of the groupement movement at Papaye, has trained groups from the South as well as in the Central Plateau.

Although this recommendation is being made, it is with a great deal of hesitation. It is not certain whether the groupement model, as it must be

practiced, and the manner in which USAID is often forced to work, because of various constraints and pressures for results, are really compatible. The groupement approach has been shown to be successful, but it takes time.

Groupements must be given enough time to develop naturally; otherwise, the form but not the substance will emerge, and results will be negligible. Forcing peasants in groupements to engage in soil conservation work before they themselves are interested in doing it will be counter-productive. As soon as the project stops, the peasants will stop. What should be aimed at is a self-generational capacity to be aware of what is needed, being able to organize to get the job done, knowing how and where to find the necessary money and/or materials, and technical advice and/or help.

It is hoped that when these groupements gain strength, they can join together and form cooperatives or other organizations, in other words, community-based, legally recognized organizations which will defend peasant interests. These organizations should be a basic component of the Regional Development Authority and will help diminish the peasants' impotence in facing a world they can never control. Only in this way can their so-called "fatalistic" attitude, (which more appropriately should be called realism of the highest order) be at least diminished, if not dispelled.

There is much rhetoric about participation in recent writings about development in the Third World, including Haiti. Participation, however, is not going to do anything for peasants unless, as a result of this participation, they begin to feel that they have some control, however small, over their destiny. What contributes to the peasants' feeling of impotence or lack of control? Insecure land tenure. Lack of credit. Lack of storage facilities. No recourse to injustice.

Recommendation Three

In order to enable the peasant to have greater control over the productive, economic aspects of his life, USAID should include the following components in any regional plan:

- means to help peasants attain more secure land tenure;
- access to credit at fair rates;
- access to storage facilities.

Recommendation Four

In order to lessen injustice and exploitation, USAID should include some sort of legal advice service and provide legal assistance. This may seem too highly political and controversial; however, in order to convince the peasant that a new regional development scheme is going to make any difference in his life, some legal help should be available. It can be and probably should be very small-scale and low-key; but it should be there. Additionally, USAID should encourage community-based legally recognized organizations which will defend peasant interests.

Recommendation Five

Nonformal education for children and teenagers should be provided. The emphasis should be on those issues dealt with in this paper which are within the child's grasp. It is difficult to change people when they are adults, whether they be uneducated peasants or highly educated sophisticated urban dwellers. Habits and beliefs are well entrenched by the time any individual reaches twenty; therefore, education in soil conservation should begin with the young child. Groupements of children and young adults should be encouraged, perhaps under the supervision of adult groupements. The Gros Morne project started a pre-school, nonformal education program six years after it began its

work with adult groupements. Its experience in this area could be of use to USAID. (Gros Morne was funded by USAID under two OPGs from 1977 through 1983; it just received a grant of \$300,000 from the Inter American Foundation for 1984-1985.)

It cannot be emphasized enough that any valid attempt to get the peasants to organize themselves in rural development projects must be seen as indigenous attempts. Although funding may come from USAID or other foreign donors, the project must be institutionalized as a Haitian project. One reason why the USAID/CRS-funded GPP and Gros Morne projects have been successful is that they have done just this. The projects are run by dedicated Haitian rural development specialist, not by foreigners. However, the projects are closely supervised and monitored by the donors who spent much time in carefully choosing the exceptionally qualified Haitian staff.

Recommendation Six

Highly dedicated and technically qualified Haitian staff should be chosen and placed in high management positions in the project.

In conclusion, it is felt that USAID either should not work at all in the Central Plateau, or only work there on a very small scale, supporting individual projects of proven merit. What needs to be done in the Central Plateau is being done--strengthening local organizations, and training animators. Too much money at this time might actually be harmful to this process.

It is also recommended that USAID not get involved with ODBFA at the present time. ODBFA is a new organization and therefore should not be overburdened until it has set up a qualified and experienced organizational structure. ODBFA has already planned large-scale projects with the OAS and the FAO. It would not be possible for it to have enough trained staff to work also with USAID. USAID should closely follow the implementation of any projects ODBFA is involved with in order to be able to judge the organizational capacity of ODBFA.

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