

creative associates, inc.

COMPARATIVE EVALUATION OF THREE HAITIAN
RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Requested by: USAID/HAITI

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1. INTRODUCTION TO THE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The comparative evaluation of the three Haitian rural development projects had the following goals:

- 1) assess the social, economic, and technical impact of the project inputs;
- 2) evaluate the ability of the projects to produce benefits for a broad spectrum of the local population;
- 3) assess the relative effectiveness of the non-formal education methodologies employed in bringing about attitudinal changes in the rural population;
- 4) measure the monetary value of financial inputs against benefits accruing to the target population.

The evaluation team did its field work during April, 1983, in Haiti and submitted its report on July 1st. The present executive summary does not cover the whole of that massive report. But it does do three things: it presents the conclusions and recommendations concerning each of the three projects; it provides a comparison of the three projects along the lines of the four goals cited above; and it characterizes the three projects in summary fashion.

It must be emphasized that the short summary assessments in section two have only one aim: to provide the reader with selected background material as a context for the following sections. They cannot do full justice to either the projects themselves or the appropriate chapters of the full report.

Within the given limitations, however, we hope that this summary can give an informative, though overly brief account of our work. Once more we would like to express our appreciation to the project staff, our admiration for the peasant animation professionals involved, and our respect for what we consider to be, despite some shortcomings, some of the best rural development work in Haiti.

2. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT OF THE THREE PROJECTS

2.1 GROS-MORNE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The basic feature of the Gros-Morne Rural Development Project is the formation of groupman - all facets of the project depend on this basic organizational unit. These small groups constitute the building blocks of inter-group activities leading to cooperative formation. The goal of this project is to help the rural peasantry organize small self-assistance groups and work collaboratively to generate savings and undertake small-scale commercial and production activities.

The project may be assessed in terms of the evolution of the groupman movement and the effective use of credit as a developmental tool. Credit is disbursed through the groupman movement and addresses the primary function of groups: to carry out income-generating activities as a group through an uninterrupted chain of investment, savings, and reinvestment.

The number of groups has grown remarkably although there has not been a steady pattern of growth. Further, a high rate of group dissolution has somewhat impeded the progress of the groupman movement. Staff estimate that three hundred groups may have formed and subsequently dissolved between 1977 and 1979. Overall, as many as eight hundred groups may have been organized in the course of this project. By this measure, the 459 groups existing at present constitute about 57 percent of all groups organized over the years. The project has clearly been successful in meeting its goals for an expanding group movement with increasing assets.

Part of the explanation for the dual pattern of dramatic growth and high rate of group dissolution lies in the deferred character of benefits accruing, at least in the short-term, to group members. A key principle of group investments is their indivisibility where each group member holds a share in group assets. However, access to these assets for personal use cannot be gained except by leaving the group. Given the periodic crises in peasant households, the existence of private but unattainable assets threatens the very existence of groups as the contingent nature of agriculture constantly hinders the accumulation of any peasant savings.

The drive to increase revenues is one of the fundamental objectives of the project. Given the economic basis of groupman, perhaps the most tangible measure of effectiveness is the increase in group assets. With the spurt of growth, group assets increased

by forty percent (40 %) in 1981 and then by seventy percent (70 %) in 1982. The amount of assets invested in money-bearing projects increased from 61 % in June 1982 to 82 % in the first quarter of 1983.

Total assets of all 459 groups are estimated at 137,000 gourdes. Assets combined with credit amount to approximately 230,000 gourdes, with credit making up 40 % of the total. This brings the average per group up to 553 gourdes or 73 gourdes per individual peasant. The growth in assets reflects the sudden increase in groups during 1982. However, the rate of economic growth is significantly higher than the growth in the number of groups. This reflects the growing use of credit. Investments focus more on commerce (46 %) than on production (36 %). Investment in livestock (24 %) is far more significant than garden projects (7 %). The credit program devoted 69 % of its funds to commerce and storage projects in 1982. It should be noted that the rate of reimbursement of credit is close to 100 %.

The major production area is animal husbandry. There have been three major distributions of breeding cocks combined with a long-standing vaccination campaign against Newcastle's chicken disease and two major vaccination programmes for livestock.

The strength of the agricultural extension programme lies in the effective diffusion of storage technology. This has had the effect of increasing production by reducing losses to pests (rats, insects, molds). Even more important, effective storage reduces loss to the market, permitting delayed sales to take advantage of favourable prices. Perhaps most important of all, storage protects local food and seed supplies and thus retains them for use within the community. The best projects have built on the existing expertise of peasant farmers. This suggests an area in need of strengthening - a more detailed knowledge of local agricultural strategies. This would point up problem areas and key pressure points in the local economy.

The strength of this program is the groupman philosophy. It should be of interest to any program desiring to organize in rural Haiti. Underlying principles of groupman stress its independence as a social unit, its basis in ties of friendship, neighborhood, labour exchange, kinship, and its focus on investment in revenue-generating projects.

The ideology of groupman stresses an expanded vision of community as that extending beyond the bounds of a particular group. Where several groups exist in close proximity, there is the possibility of creating a network of relationships bringing many people together and opening up the possibility of collective action on a wide and significant scale. Small numbers within each group allow

for the maximum participation of all members in both the labour and decision-making activities of group life.

The basic goals of groupman relate to capital accumulation through production, storage, and marketing - familiar modes of action in peasant economy. The movement has enjoyed good success in mobilizing savings and generating rising levels of investment. The idea of secure savings is tremendously attractive to peasant farmers. To a certain extent, the lack of immediate access to savings is perceived as an advantage. The hard-earned savings are thus protected. Further, farmers are excited about increasing capacity for storage of grain and bean crops - the key harvest of the region. Recent changes to the credit programme give farmers personal access to credit at reasonable rates of interest.

The problem of group dissolution could be addressed more strongly by closer monitoring of groups. There are severe limitations on this procedure, however, in light of the low ratio of staff to groups. It may be that staff size should be increased, or that staff members should reside in closer proximity to the zones of concentration. In general, the next stage in the development of the groupman movement is crucial in light of long range goals for a self-sustaining community movement. The key consideration should be to assure a solid financial base as the only realistic basis for independent action.

2.2 GROUPEMENT PILOT PROJECT (GPP)

The distinctiveness of GPP as compared to other rural development projects consists in its use of the "groupement" as the organizational unit carrying out "development". Groupements are small groups of peasants that take part in common income-generating projects whose proceeds are ploughed back into group assets and reinvested. The thrust of GPP's work is to develop, test, and improve upon methods of creating such groupements.

Not a single one of the thirty-one groupements founded thus far by GPP has gone under (although personality conflicts have in a few instances led to the creation of new groupements). In addition to the thirty-one groupements that are fully in operation, there are presently thirty-eight inchoate groupements undergoing preliminary training and most of which will have begun full-scale activities by the time this report is circulated.

The GPP groupements are still young and nothing definitive can be said about their performance. But a few observations may be made. Their mean size is almost twice as large as the target size proposed in the project paper, whereas the number of groupe-

ments is far smaller. The number of peasants organized into these groupements is therefore not far off the targeted level. The groupements start out with very little capital which in the case of poorer groupements is raised in the form of workdays contributed to a groupement project. The level of capital accumulation, although respectable, is on the low side: \$4.50 per person, a sum which is not much after all the effort expended on the project. It is, however, a significant beginning.

The construction of the GPP center at Cator, begun in August 1981, was ordered halted in March of 1982. This was the one project activity which followed an approach that GPP tried constantly to avoid. This aspect of the project had fallen under the direction of a Port-au-Prince civil engineer, an out-of-town contractor, and a third man, the lone foreigner on staff. These three officials had undertaken to build a structure according to foreign concepts and proceeded to overrun their budget by an enormous amount. As a result, construction was finally brought to a halt by the combined action of CRS and AID and has yet to be resumed.

The design and test of non-formal educational materials concerning such topics as farm and household management, health, rural economics, etc., has made limited progress. Rural economics and local development are themes in the very effective series of pictures shown to peasants and in the well-structured groupement training meetings. Some health and household management topics are treated systematically, especially by the female animators, but non-formal educational materials are not yet extensively used there. The biggest health issue in the project paper, the latrine program, has simply been dropped from the agenda because of poor acceptance by the target population and on the basis of the staff view that use of compost to upgrade soil fertility was non-essential. (The main problem at Bayonnais is water, not soil fertility.)

The objective to improve agricultural technology has been given some attention but needs much more work still. Some farmers have tried new seeds and different spacing techniques, but the production system is essentially the same as it was in 1980. Haitian peasants are generally only willing to adopt new technology if the risks and pay-offs appear reasonable. GPP is still some distance from making significant progress towards upgrading the inefficient local production system.

The savings accumulation of twenty-seven groupements could be documented up to January 1983. It amounted to a total of \$1640, or about \$61 per groupement (with a range from \$12 to \$170). One can venture to estimate that this figure will rise to \$7900 by the end of 1983.

All the monetary cost of the project has so far been borne by foreign donors, mainly the U.S. government. Long-term multiplier effects may well offset this cost, dollar for dollar, in the future. However, it would be unreasonable to expect this to happen within the operational lifespan of the project. Although there have been some costly errors, especially in the construction programme, the money seems generally to have been spent wisely. The administrative personnel have been honest and accountable and only one foreigner has been hired. This allows for an enormous savings on salaries, accommodations, equipment, etc., and represents a departure from the great majority of foreign development projects where foreign staffing is one of the largest budget expenses. If the project succeeds in institutionalizing effective peasant organization, then it will have achieved most of its objective. If it also provides meaningful agricultural extension services within this institutional framework, the increased dependency of foreign inputs will be far outweighed by the increased earnings made possible by foreign technology. At this point, however, we do well to take into account increased dependency as one of the potential liabilities of the project.

Conflicts reported by animators and groupement presidents invariably involve groupements standing up for the "little guy" who has been victimized by official abuses, exploitative credit arrangements, or just plain bad luck. GPP has an excellent track record as far as the spread of project benefits is concerned. Groupements are expected to function in a democratic and egalitarian fashion, to be open to members of all economic strata, and to counterbalance existing local hierarchies. The lengthy process of training preceding the formation of each groupement stresses these elements and illustrates them with visual material prepared by the project artist. There can be no doubt that the members accept this egalitarian orientation with enthusiasm.

2.3 PROJECT DE DEVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE DE CHAMBELLAN (PDCC)

PDCC attempts to combine a variant of the traditional "bricks and mortar" approach to community development with elements of organizationally-centered approaches which emphasize the roles played by the formation, training, and motivation of peasant groups in the development process. Founded on the assumption that "community development" is a long-term process which mobilizes both human and material resources in order to satisfy basic needs, the project seeks to alter existing infrastructure and technology by means of material inputs. PDCC further emphasizes the non-material inputs of education and training and thereby increases the capacity of individuals and community institutions to act as change agents. PDCC emphasizes the importance of community initiative, self-help, and self-determination.

PDCC is designed to address the basic human and material needs of poor peasants in the commune of Chambellan, an area of 250 square kilometers, with a population of 16,523.

Most PDCC activities became fully operational during 1981 and 1982. PDCC devoted considerable time to the formation of community groups (groupman Komunote) in order to gain access to the peasant population prior to the formation of "strategic groups". The project has sought to provide material and technical assistance to a minimum of thirty of the strategic groups. Each of these groups is composed of eight to fifteen peasants whose similar backgrounds and interest establish a basis for the identification, analysis, and solution of shared problems.

Chambellan was subdivided into four nuclei, territorially-defined zones which are anchored by an especially active community group and include several neighbouring groups. Twenty-three of the twenty-five community groups in the four nuclei were organized with the assistance of the project. Assistance took the form of training local peasants in the purpose and organizational structure of the community groups. Other assistance included the provision of funds and materials for the construction of social centers.

PDCC also upgraded the status of its women's development and rural youth programmes by hiring staff to be responsible specifically for these concerns. These staff members trained field personnel, or worked directly with groups of women or young people in order to address the specific needs of these sectors of the local population and to involve them more fully in other areas of project activity.

In the case of project staff, despite their general qualifications, certain staff members have experienced difficulty adjusting to either working conditions in Chambellan or to the specific requirements of their jobs. There are also doubts among staff members about the skill, work habits, and commitment to project goals of their colleagues.

The location of the staff center in NORE, just outside the town of Chambellan, and thus away from most sites of project activity, as well as the atypical design and construction materials of its buildings, create physical and social distances between the staff and the local community. Moreover, the high construction costs of these various facilities, as well as their numerous flaws indicate the limitations of inadequately planned and supervised experiments in "appropriate technology".

The most successful PDCC activities have been:

- (1) Construction of a potable water system which has upgraded peasant living conditions by providing sources of clean water and by training peasants in simple techniques for capping springs, installing pipes, and constructing fountains.

- (2) The training of PDCC field personnel. The sixteen organizers and animators were considered to be "pillars" of the project whose training and dedication transformed them into agents of progress.
- (3) Agricultural extension. By upgrading traditional farming techniques and introducing new techniques, improved seed varieties, fish farming, rabbit breeding, and vegetable cultivation, PDCC has contributed to better local resource utilization and improvement of the local diet.
- (4) PDCC has further served to raise the consciousness of the peasant, stimulating greater awareness of problems of ecology, family size, health, etc, and provided the sort of education that will enable peasants to overcome local problems.

Problems experienced in the PDCC program would include the great dependency of strategic groups on PDCC personnel and resources. Neither current levels of training nor the experience of strategic groups presently enable them to initiate and implement projects independently. Further, agricultural extension activities have failed to produce any substantial increases in profits. Most peasants have harvested only one traditional or newly-introduced crop using PDCC agricultural techniques. Although people who had planted vegetable gardens had begun to eat cabbage, carrots and egg plant more frequently, very few had sold any of these vegetables for profit. There is also great doubt that the possibilities for commercial production of vegetables would be at all promising even were PDCC to accelerate its extension work.

3. COMPARISON OF THE THREE PROJECTS

The three rural development projects under review here have very different histories of conceptualization, funding, and goal implementation. They share in common not so much an objective as a strategy. Indeed, there is considerable disagreement over the nature of the legitimate objectives of such projects. This disagreement has led to some low-level conflict between the GPP and Gros-Morne leadership. Perhaps a vague statement about the stimulation of local initiative and the improvement of local living standards and infrastructure is the best that can be said in description of common areas of project agreement.

All three projects have undergone significant changes over the years. At GPP, these alterations have been associated with a de facto change in leadership. But the most significant changes have, predictably, taken place at Gros-Morne, the eldest of the three projects. This project began as a rather conventional rural development effort with the objective of improving conditions by building upon existing institutions where the key stimulus comes

from outside and above. Gros-Morne has since evolved into an innovative experiment pursuing largely economic goals without relying much upon the existing local leadership.

In the case of PDCC, it can be generalized that at this point PDCC pursues largely conventional goals by conventional means. Its list of goals reads as if it were drawn up as a model project following early 1970's AID guidelines. PDCC appears to have few qualms about strengthening the local institutional power structure despite recent studies produced by AID that have alluded to the role established local institutions play in perpetuating economic inequality.

Gros-Morne has shelved this conventional approach in favour of an alternative strategy to pursue essentially conventional goals by innovative means. The conventional goal is economic - the mobilization of savings - but the means for achieving this is no longer to involve reliance upon community councils, neither as an administrative tool nor as a recruitment base. Even the training of groupements has shifted away from a centralized staff and facility: policy has now moved towards the practice of training groupements by groupements themselves.

GPP appears to be the most radical of the three projects. Peasant autonomy, consciousness-raising, and the testing of methods to achieve these ends have been declared to be the paramount objective of this "pilot" project. Everything else is seen as secondary. The instrument for the realization of this goal is the powerless peasant himself - only in this way can he be given a sense of his own worth, self-determination, and the capacity to better his living conditions. No aid is disbursed, only advice is given. It can thus be said that, in the context of development aid, this project is pursuing an unconventional goal by innovative means.

There are significant differences, however, between rhetoric and action and this results in a higher degree of convergence between the three projects than generalizations about means and ends might otherwise imply. There is, for example, considerable pressure upon GPP to "deliver", i.e., to achieve the more conventional goals simply because they are less elusive, more tangible and more directly measurable. These sorts of traditional results are more readily seen as compelling evidence of "success" in the eyes of some agency personnel in Port-au-Prince and abroad. PDCC, on the other hand, seems to have learnt that the policy of satisfying the wishes of local leaders (by providing infrastructure on a food-for-work basis) may well do more for the leaders than for the target population itself.

Although GPP has achieved considerable progress of late, in some respects it remains behind schedule. Although it has developed

and tested a very successful technique of peasant mobilization, many of the activities planned for the technology section have only barely begun, the center remains incomplete in key respects, staff is one short of the planned contingent, and several project goals have quite simply been abandoned. It is nevertheless quite likely that GPP will reach its fundamental objective and that the quality of the groupements will surpass even the most optimistic of expectations. In overall terms, however, GPP has made no more than normal progress, a situation that derives mainly from a series of administrative errors and bottlenecks. This is in itself a considerable achievement, for all other aid and development activities in the Upper Bayonnais Valley (ONAAC, Fonds Agricole, et al.) have proven far less successful.

At Gros-Morne, the pace of advancement has been more spectacular. Some 800 groupements have been formed, more than 450 of which are said to be functioning at present (conservative estimates put the number at around 300). It is quite evident from the results of the present evaluation that on the basis of several objective measures (number of groupements, amount of credit extended, agricultural extension activities, non-formal education), the Gros-Morne project has achieved good progress. It has been able to attain certain objectives ahead of schedule on occasion and has generally proven to be a successful enterprise.

It must be added immediately, however, that Gros-Morne groupements have very different characteristics from those found at Bayonnais. The work at Gros-Morne can be very short-lived while at GPP the achievements are seen as permanent. Gros-Morne groupements are permitted to limit their activity to a single commercial venture that, although it may be financed jointly, may actually be carried out by one individual alone. Meanwhile, all GPP groupements demand a much more regular, dedicated, and time-consuming involvement on the part of their members. The training of Gros-Morne groupement members can take only a few hours (although this is not necessarily the rule) whereas training at GPP requires six to twelve weeks.

As is the case with most other "young" projects, PIXC does not attempt to accomplish everything at once; rather it begins by emphasizing certain tasks ahead of others. This initial period of emphasis has come to favour its construction programme. To date, eight kilometers of road have been completed while a slaughterhouse and several social centers have become operational. Further, many peasants now have access to potable water where they did not have it before.

The pace of groupement formation at PIXC is more difficult to assess. The project "works with" the existing community councils and groups and only the "strategic groups" can be considered to have evolved from PIXC stimulation. These strategic groups become involved in the usual spectrum of activities that seek to upgrade

agricultural production techniques and the like. But it remains uncertain how far these groups have advanced or whether PDCC has succeeded in enhancing a significant portion of its members' economic activities.

Given the high degree of economic inequality found in the Haitian countryside, it is important to see how far these three projects reach into the heart of their respective target populations. There are some indications that they have experienced limited success in incorporating poor peasants into groupements and "strategic groups". At GPP, poor landowners have benefitted from rotating work arrangements which have reduced their costs for a variety of activities by as much as 50 %. At Gros-Morne, groupements have purchased products from their own members at harvest time and thus provided a guaranteed market. In the case of PDCC, group members have obtained temporary employment in infrastructural construction work.

But this is not the whole story. While the emphasis on manual work and the discouragement of commercial ventures have dissuaded better-off residents from becoming groupement members in GPP, the Gros-Morne emphasis on commerce has in fact attracted many of the more well-to-do peasants to that project's groupements. With respect to PDCC, close cooperation with the Conseils d'action communautaire has made it quite likely that the well-to-do peasants and the local elites rank as the chief beneficiaries of that project. Indeed, it is the conventionality of its approach and its smooth insertion into the existing system of stratification that leads us to expect an inegalitarian spread of project benefits. Road construction, rural infrastructure improvement, and agricultural extension activity are undertakings whose top-down organization will always tend to benefit farmers in direct proportion to the quantity of land owned. It is clear that better-off peasants would be expected to reap far more from such a structure of activity than the mass of poorer peasants. It would be very surprising were this not to be the case at PDCC.

GPP, on the other hand, has no official involvement with the local authorities and the Conseils d'action communautaire, and it also has an effective mechanism for the exclusion of well-to-do peasants from membership. GPP's level of goal attainment, savings accumulation, and application of new technology will have to be understood on the basis of such a deliberate policy of bottom-up development. Of all the three projects, GPP is the one which appears to be most closely "on target" in terms of reaching and organizing the rural poor.

All three projects seek to have a direct economic impact on three separate levels:

- (1) improvement in productivity
- (2) raising income of project participants
- (3) raising of incomes and general improvement of living conditions in the target area

In addition to these objectives, the three projects also aspire to attain several other objectives which will have an indirect but nevertheless substantive economic impact. These aims would include the upgrading of staff skills, the location of service centers far from the capital city so as to have rural multiplier effects, improvement of local literacy levels and thereby increase residents' earning potential, and the general improvement of area health conditions, thereby increasing the active rural labour force.

At Gros-Morne, productivity has been increased in a variety of ways, principally in the area of animal husbandry. Although no data is available to document the precise extent of such gains, the relative age, breadth, and stability of the project would lead us to expect that the productivity improvements run well into the tens of thousands of dollars.

For GPP, we can make some more precise determination of additions to productivity. The savings in the campaign against Newcastle chicken disease came to \$3640 during the first campaign and can be expected to rise to \$10,920 during 1983. The technology section also estimates that the combination of using improved varieties of seed and better spacing of crops can increase corn yields by 10 to 25 percent during the first year. Indeed, controlled experiments have been run among several groupements with excellent results.

In the case of PIXC, there is no adequate information available at this time with respect to productivity increases and savings accumulation. Given the more conventional nature of this project, one would expect certain agricultural extension activities to work rather well. It should also be added that it is likely that the larger landowners have profitted disproportionately from the availability of such services.

Gros-Morne has taken the lead in both storage and credit projects. Although it is not possible to determine the number of farmers profitting from the storage silos already installed and the proportion of their produce that goes to the silos, we can at least assess the role played by credit schemes under project guidance. During the first four months of 1983, over \$13,000 has been injected in the form of credit. This is merely the latest result of an expanding credit programme that has witnessed enormous yearly increases in the amount of credit extended to peasants in the project area, averaging about 530% per annum since 1981. If this programme is continued, it will prove of great benefit to all groupements and have a major impact in augmenting household incomes.

PIXC and GPP have yet to introduce their planned storage and credit programmes, hence we have no systematic information on the potential for raising incomes in their project areas. However, the productivity increases discussed earlier are bound to increase earnings within the target populations. Of course, these projects have little chance of catching up to the Gros-Morne level of achievement in this regard even with another three years of activity.

In the area of income and other conditions of peasant livelihood, it is found that PDCC, more so than Gros-Morne and GPP, is the project which is most clearly oriented towards the target area population, benefitting the regional population at large rather than just the newly created peasant groups themselves. The ongoing collaboration with ONAAC, the Department of Agriculture, and local community groups gives a good indication that PDCC intends to generate benefits for the area as a whole in addition to helping its participating "strategic group" members. Whether this dual ambition will be realized remains to be seen.

Some of the activities in all three projects will necessarily benefit the entire regional population. A slaughterhouse, potable water supplies, and the control of various animal pests will certainly enhance the living conditions of area residents in general and not simply the members of groupements. It would be naive, however, to interpret this general benefit as the most important output of these projects. The GPP and Gros-Morne projects are both dedicated to mobilizing peasant participation in a way that appeals to the self-interest of the peasants themselves. Tangible benefits that arise from such participation provide a powerful motive force and must therefore continue to remain visible and attainable if the movement is to endure. The activities of the three projects must assume the nature of self-help efforts rather than the indiscriminate doling out of goods, services, and "foreign aid". In this way, peasants come to appreciate their own capacity for improving their living conditions and remain actively engaged in their own developmental effort.

Three issues must be raised concerning the social impact of the three rural development projects: (1) do they upgrade social conditions and relations among groupement participants?; (2) do they foster more egalitarian conditions in the target area?; and (3) will the project efforts enjoy a lasting impact?

Upgrading social conditions may mean as little as reducing competition, friction, and hostility at the village level or as much as creating an integrated system of cooperative production and marketing and the replacement of a caste system by more democratic forms of organization. All three projects have achieved some measure of improvement in social conditions. GPP has introduced a truly novel intermediate social structure in an area where most relations outside the family had previously been monopolized by the state. There is a great process of social awakening underway - a situation which is noted frequently and enthusiastically by peasants and animators alike. Groupement solidarity has protected members against usurious intermediaries, defused conflicts and arguments before they reached the attention of the magistrate, and undermined the legitimacy claims of those who enjoy power but lack a sense of responsibility. Farmers are regaining a modest amount of control over their economic and social destiny.

At Gros-Morne our evaluation had detected a similar tendency towards an awakening of peasant consciousness, self-confidence, and autonomy, although such events are probably less visible in this project. The focus here is less on production and more on commerce. Groupements are more often short-lived, smaller, and more directly oriented towards more immediate and tangible economic gains. Yet via this mechanism, the social standing of groupement members is enhanced. The very fact that economic success is tangible must create a powerful motivating force for future collaboration.

PDCC must be viewed more critically in this regard, for this project works so closely with the established structures of social and economic power that cooperative peasant mobilization is more a matter of hope than reality. This project sees foreigners disperse "goods" in collaboration with all the representatives of state authority, a situation which clearly fails to promote the cause of an autonomous peasantry. Our evaluator points to the continued and complete dependence of the local participants upon the initiative of outsiders. This, together with the rather inegalitarian distribution of goods and benefits, leads us to doubt the capacity of this project to upgrade social conditions. The most that can be said for PDCC is that its strategic groups have a long way to go before they reach the levels of self-confidence and autonomy attained by groupements at GPP and Gros-Morne.

The creation of more egalitarian conditions in the target area is a goal that is a long way from realization in each of the three projects. Economic disparities are probably being decreased in Bayonnais; but they are certainly not being diminished by the approach taken by PDCC. The evaluation of Gros-Morne has found that the project staff has kept a discrete distance from the CAC without having taken a public stand against the organization. CAC handles public works projects while the GPP groupements serve as channels for personal investment with the aim of accumulating and reinvesting savings collectively.

Little can be added with respect to the PDCC operation. It is evidently connected in many ways to the community councils, the very organizations that are seen widely as prime impediments to achieving a more egalitarian distribution of resources in rural Haiti. The project would need the most radical restructuring of its activities were it truly to seek a diminution in local inequalities.

In order for project activity to achieve a "lasting impact" upon social structures, peasant groups must be able to function independently once project work has been terminated. It will be most instructive to see whether the Gros-Morne groupements, with their low training levels but compelling record of achievements, will stand the test better than their counterparts at GPP which

boast of higher levels of training, solidarity, and motivation, but also a much poorer list of accomplishments. Any new social formation will require a solid material base - the economic foundation upon which the long-term success of groupements must rely.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 GROS-MORNE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

4.1.1. Organizational strategy. The Gros-Morne project has created an innovative method of organizing peasant farmers. This groupman strategy evolved over a period of time as an experimental approach to peasant mobilization. The strength of this approach is its basis in pragmatic organization around the twin themes of savings and investment, with a long range focus on production.

4.1.2. Funding. Despite setbacks in certain areas, the success of the groupman strategy justifies a third and final phase of major funding. The groupman movement has now reached the stage where it has the potential to sustain more sophisticated levels of collective action and economic impact. The benefits of this program will be lost unless the project is able to follow through on the next logical steps in a cycle of organization and investment under the supervision of the GREPIN staff. This would require renewed funding by the end of 1983.

4.1.3. Documentation. The program should strengthen its information function in order to maximize feedback and analysis. Better information control is needed in the following areas:

- (a) the existing report form for groupman activities is fine, but special efforts should be made to have reports from all groups submitted on a quarterly or semi-annual basis. This procedure could be incorporated into normal verification activities. It should monitor group longevity and dissolution patterns.
- (b) Special studies should be commissioned to gain better knowledge of the social composition of groups, the nature of investments, and the distribution of benefits.
- (c) The credit programme should be studied for better information on the use and distribution of individual drawing rights and emergency credit.
- (d) Special studies should be undertaken on local agricultural strategies, the range of crafts skills and the range of micro-climates and soil types in the area. Such information can aid planning and make better use of highly-trained technical personnel.

4.1.4. Administration. Communications channels with CRS and Caritas should be reviewed and improved. This can help to safeguard the basic interests of the project and protect its funding. In the interest of fairness and efficiency, it would be appropriate

for CRS to establish a policy of parity in salary and expense arrangements among its groupman projects.

(b) There should be closer supervision of staff by project administrators. This would help ensure the advancement of the project in the pivotal final stages.

4.1.5. Focus. Maximum uses should be made of the strengths of the project, i.e. a competent staff, integration of technology with credit and non-formal education, and the groupman model itself, focused on savings and investment. This can be accomplished by maintaining a disciplined focus on realistic goals. There should be greater focus on production in the next stages of the project.

4.1.6. Community organization.

(a) The current strengths of the project should not be sacrificed prematurely to the long range goal of local autonomy. As a time-limited program, the GREPIN project should maintain close supervision of the groupman movement in order to have maximum impact. Groups should be monitored closely, especially new groups, with a view towards reducing the rate of dissolution. In the coming stages of the movement, there should be heightened focus on the ties between groups, local animation functions, associations, and regional meetings.

(b) There should be careful review of the function of groups as economic units and as service units. Is the group movement fundamentally an economic scheme with a cooperative orientation toward the investment of labour or funds? Or, is it a public works programme for health and educational services? In the short run, it may be expecting too much for groups to generate funds for economic development as well as managing a network of schools. Above all, the groupman movement should protect its basic source of strength - the creation of a solid economic base.

(c) The groupman movement is now entering a stage of particular vulnerability. Group associations are voluntary and private in nature. With the development of highly visible ventures such as mango exports, they become vulnerable to competitors and politicians. This problem should be monitored carefully with a view to the future when the GREPIN center will no longer be present as a protective umbrella.

(d) In general, the next stage of groupman development is crucial in light of the long range goal for a self-sustaining community movement. The key consideration should be to assure a solid financial base as the only realistic basis for independent action.

4.2 GROUPEMENT PILOT PROJECT (GPP)

4.2.1. Nature of project. First, the basic ideological orientation of GPP as developed in the papers leading up to the project paper should be retained, i.e. small-scale, cooperative, relatively autonomous peasant groups engaging in common economic ventures and capital accumulation. These "groupements" are a promising tool for rural development in Haiti. Second, given the availability of foreign aid funds, it is likely that GPP will survive in any event. These recommendations are thus aimed not at saving

the project but rather towards helping it achieve its original objectives. Third, there is always a hierarchy to recommendations. The first recommendation is so preeminent that, were it to be followed, the others become irrelevant by comparison. Conversely, should it be disregarded, then the other recommendations will hardly be of much use. For this reason, these recommendations are of a general nature.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROJECT MUST BE COORDINATED BY ONE PERSON, BACKED BY A BOARD OF GOVERNORS, ENJOYING BROAD POWERS, CLEARLY DEFINED LINES OF COMMUNICATION, SPECIFIED SHARES OF AUTHORITY, AND SUFFICIENT RESOURCES AT HIS DISPOSAL.

This coordinator is not to be placed in competition with the Executive Director, but rather is to become his collaborator. There is no way in sight of making the current executive director work even approximately full-time for GPP. Yet there must be one person who will implement decisions, follow up on policy changes, has at all times a precise idea of the major developments and alternatives, and has access to adequate resources.

Much of the bureaucratic nonsense, the frustration and anger, and the inefficiencies and delays in GPP could have been avoided if lines of communication had stayed open, if decisions had been implemented, and if mistakes had been caught before they became too costly. CRS is preoccupied with its own problems and other projects; meanwhile, the one person at CRS who enjoys the complete and steady trust of the GPP team is overextended. There is one person who combines the required personal and intellectual qualities and the trust of all sides: Carl Mondé. A new job description should be drawn up for him.

4.2.2. The combination of GPP and RDRC in one project should be abandoned. It involves too many contradictory needs and it is by no means sure that anyone will ever need an RDRC beyond the successful continuation of GPP.

4.2.3 The new board of governors is to endorse the re-written project paper as submitted by the executive director. If he has not yet submitted it formally, then he should receive energetic help in doing so.

4.2.4. The connection of Marc-Antoine Noel with the project should be terminated officially. This is to be done, in recognition of his considerable service to GPP, in an atmosphere of gratitude and festivity.

4.2.5. A schedule should be drawn up for all remaining evaluations of GPP including a mechanism for the rapid communication of results and for compelling and enforcing the necessary changes that the evaluations deem to be important.

- 4.2.6. The relations between groupements and the local community councils and other established centers of power and authority should be monitored closely. GPP has moved into a phase where members and groupements may become targets of outside pressures. Such problems must be anticipated so that the appropriate responses can be devised ahead of time. Further, good relations with politicians and church officials should be maintained at all times.
- 4.2.7. The data collection activities of the project must be strengthened.
- 4.2.8. A follow-up to the original baseline study should be carried out (as planned) by an individual possessing the necessary skills and experience. The collaboration of the analysis section should be solicited in this regard. The entire operation should be made clear and straightforward, and the results of the study should be made available as soon as possible at the end of the fourth year of GPP financing.
- 4.2.9. The technology section should limit its activities to a small number of experiments promising low risk and high return. It should receive the necessary budget and infrastructure for these activities as soon as possible.
- 4.2.10. The upgrading of animators should be continued with particular attention to training of female animators since they carry out a mission almost unknown to the area.
- 4.2.11. The project should push ahead with plans for agricultural credit and storage facilities, and a cooperative store. It should not, however, seek to provide a full range of extension services.
- 4.2.12. The construction of the center at CATOR should be terminated at once, leaving a functional structure. Highest priority should go to those items necessary for the operations of the technology section.
- 4.2.13. The financing of GPP should be extended at approximately current levels (indexed for inflation), contingent upon:
- a satisfactory solution to the administrative problem.
 - the continued monitoring of all groupements and the creation of a sufficient number of new ones (as specified in the revised project paper).
 - the continued maintenance of close relations and exchanges with similar projects.

4.3 PROJET DE DEVELOPPEMENT COMMUNAUTAIRE DE CHAMBELLAN (PDCC)

In general terms, PDCC may be considered successful in that it has mounted a partially effective campaign of infrastructural improvement and peasant group organization. While furnishing support for infrastructural development, it has made peasants more aware of the possibilities for collective action by providing many of them with their first experience with collectivities other than household and traditional work groups. It has further provided training for some peasants in the organization of activities of potentially great social and economic benefit.

PDCC's resistance to the expectation that it is to act as a substitute for inputs by the Government of Haiti and the residents of the localities is a laudable aspect of its development philosophy. This attitude is exemplified by the refusal of the project to build schools and dispensaries, or to provide electricity for private homes in Chambellan, thereby reinforcing the principle that the project assists the community to meet its own needs. Nevertheless, PDCC's emphasis on need satisfaction and the very slow progress of groups toward self-sufficiency conspire to undermine in fact what the project attempts in theory to achieve. Given the Haitian socio-economic and political context, community development projects like PDCC run the risk of becoming institutionalized despite the best intentions of their sponsoring agencies and staff. The risk is especially great when projects yield to bureaucratic pressure to view community development merely in terms of "landscape changes" (roads, buildings, etc.). This inhibits the project from evolving into a long-term and well-monitored process of ideational and organizational change rooted in socially-defined rather than territorially-defined communities.

In this connection, PDCC has two major weaknesses. First, communication among staff members in Chambellan and Port-au-Prince lacks the candor which would permit the discussion of problems and divergent viewpoints on the substance of community development activities. Second, the limited internal documentation of the formation, composition and activities of groups of "poor peasants", coupled with the inadequate training of field personnel, leaves PDCC unable to gauge one of its greatest potential contributions to community development in Chambellan. This involves the wedding of concrete material outputs with the mobilization of less concrete, but fundamentally more important, human beings.

Recommendations are as follows:

4.3.1. Should the AFD - DANIDA agreement be changed, it should be stipulated that the chief administrative position in the project field office be filled by an Haitian who is on equal footing with the Port-au-Prince co-director in terms of responsibilities for defining goals, implementing decisions, etc.

- 4.3.2. Decrease staff time and project resources devoted to infrastructural projects and organization of community groups, in favour of:
- (a) increased attention to formation and monitoring of strategic groups; and
 - (b) exploration of traditional associations (e.g. soxi) as a means for recruiting strategic group members.
- 4.3.3. Develop the capacity of the project field staff and personnel to conduct ongoing applied research on the social and economic conditions in Chambellan, and the process of intervention by the project, including the documentation of technical information and animation techniques, and feedback from peasants.
- 4.3.4. Devote more staff time to ongoing training of project field personnel using instruction techniques more suited to their capacity to understand and retain information.
- 4.3.5. Increase communication between field staff members as well as between project offices so that there can be:
- (a) a formalized mechanism for exchange of ideas about project objectives, roles of Haitian and foreign staff, and differences in perspectives on development based on nationality, sex, previous experience, etc. - i.e. animation work with staff itself.
 - (b) regular communication with community groups in order to counteract latent perception that development is a PDCC affair.
- 4.3.6. Integrate various sectors of project activity more closely (e.g. women's development, pre-school program, etc.) and add more women to project field staff and field personnel.