

CORNELL UNIVERSITY

RURAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE



Monograph Series

Feasibility and Application of Rural Development Participation: A State-of-the-Art Paper

Norman T. Uphoff
John M. Cohen
Arthur A. Goldsmith

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Norman T. Uphoff

John M. Cohen

Arthur A. Goldsmith

*Rural Development Committee
Center for International Studies
Cornell University*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS		iv
INTRODUCTION		1
	RURAL DEVELOPMENT PARTICIPATION	1
	Popularity Without Clarity	1
	What Kind of Participation?	5
	Who Participates?	6
	How Participation Occurs.	7
	Purpose of Monograph.	8
PART I. PARTICIPATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT: PAST EXPERIENCE, OBSTACLES, AND OPPORTUNITIES		
Chapter One	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANIMATION RURALE: IS DEVELOPMENT PARTICIPATION NEW OR OLD WINE. Origins and Approach of Community Develop- ment and Animation RURALE	13 14
	Community Development, Animation RURALE Compared with Rural Development Partici- pation.	21 28
Chapter Two	TRADITIONAL COOPERATION, VOLUNTARY ASSOCIA- TIONS AND LOCAL PARTICIPATION	33
	The Importance of Local Organization.	33
	Indigenous Organization	36
	Introduced Organization	51
	Implications for Programs	55
Chapter Three	LOCAL ELITES, DECENTRALIZATION AND PARTICI- PATION.	59
	Local Elites.	62
	The Pitfalls of Decentralization for Participation	68
	Implications for Participation.	82
PART II: ANALYZING PARTICIPATION FOR SPECIFIC GROUPS		
Chapter Four	PARTICIPATION BY THE LANDLESS AND NEAR- LANDLESS.	91
	Who are the Landless and Near-Landless?	93
	Extent of Landlessness and Near-Landless- ness.	95
	Implications for Project Design	102

Chapter Five	WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT.	118
	Issues Concerning Women's Participation	122
	Implications of Women's Participation	135
Chapter Six	PARTICIPATION BY DISADVANTAGED ETHNIC, CASTE AND PARIAH GROUPS	144
	Ethnic Groups: Culture, Language, Religion and Race.	144
	Low Caste and Pariah Groups	149
	Increasing Outgroup Participation	153
PART III: SUPPORTING PARTICIPATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES		
Chapter Seven	PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	163
	Reassessment of Agricultural Systems.	167
	Reassessment of Rural People's Practices.	169
	Reassessment of Agricultural Research	172
	Implications for Agricultural Research Projects.	175
Chapter Eight	PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION EFFORTS	185
	Agricultural Extension.	187
	Participation in Credit Programs.	194
	Organization for Increased Production	198
Chapter Nine	PARTICIPATION IN WATER MANAGEMENT	213
	Water User Associations	215
	Issues Relating to Irrigation Participa- tion.	222
	Current Examples.	231
Chapter Ten	PARTICIPATION IN RURAL HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS	235
	Issues in Health Services Bearing on Participation	236
	Primary Health Care	240
	Paraprofessional Health Personnel	244
	Community Participation	250
	Participation Beyond the Clinic	253
Chapter Eleven	PARTICIPATION IN RURAL PUBLIC WORKS	257
	Decentralized Planning and Implementation	259
	Issues Affecting Participation.	265
Chapter Twelve	EMERGING GENERALIZATIONS.	279

Appendix One	PARTICIPATION AND DEVELOPMENT: FROM POINT FOUR TO THE CONGRESSIONAL MANDATE.	286
	Participation and Development: Changing Views.	286
	Political Participation.	289
	Development Participation.	293
Appendix Two	GETTING SPECIFIC ABOUT PARTICIPATION: ANALYSIS FOR PROJECT DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION	301
	Rubric Rather than Concept	301
	Dimensions of Rural Development Partici- pation	303
	Contexts of Participation.	333
	Participation for What?.	336

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Introduction

RURAL DEVELOPMENT PARTICIPATION

Popularity Without Clarity

Concern with problems of "participation" in rural development has been growing in recent years. Ever more documents and pronouncements proclaim the virtues of participation. The UN's Economic and Social Council has now recommended that governments should "adopt popular participation as a basic policy measure in national development strategy" and should "encourage the widest possible active participation of all individuals and national non-governmental organizations, such as trade unions, youth and women's organizations, in the development process in setting goals, formulating policies and implementing plans."¹ In what is commonly known now as "the Congressional mandate," the U.S. Congress in its 1973 Foreign Assistance Act has made clear that American bi-lateral development assistance is to be extended in ways that involve the intended beneficiaries in the planning and implementation of project efforts, as well as in the gains of development.² Other donors take the same

¹Commission for Social Development, Report of the 24th Session, January 1975, Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 58th Session, Suppl. No. 3, UN Document No. E/CN.5/525, para. 4. This resolution was in response to a report by the UN Secretary General on "Popular Participation and its Practical Implications for Development," UN Document No. E/CN.5/496, August, 1974. See also working paper, Popular Participation in Decision-Making for Development (New York: United Nations, Department of Economics and Social Affairs, 1975).

²For discussion on this, see Implementation of "New Direction" in Development Assistance (Report Prepared by AID for Committee on International Relations on Implementation of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1973, 94th Congress, 1st Session, July 22, 1975).

position.³ As the strategy of development moves to what is called a "basic needs" approach, we find participation identified as an essential element of this strategy.⁴

This recent interest in participation reflects dissatisfaction with the paradigms that dominated development thinking from the end of World War II until the late 1960s. These paradigms, and the subsequent shift toward a new model, are discussed at length in Appendix 1. Briefly, earlier theories of development tended to emphasize capital and technology over labor, and industry rather than agriculture. With the exception of community development and animation rurale programs, most development plans adopted at that time allowed little role for the majority of people (see Chapter 1). In the dominant view, policies were to be decided upon by university-trained technocrats, and carried out by new, rationally organized bureaucracies. While many theorists hoped the developing countries would eventually adopt liberal and democratic political systems, they tended to think popular involvement in politics and administration should be restricted, at least temporarily, to protect fragile governments from excessive demands.

³See, for example, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Rural Development: Sector Policy Paper (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1975); and United Kingdom, Overseas Development: The Changing Emphasis in British Aid Policies (London, HMSO, Cmd. 6270, 1975).

⁴Paragraph 3 of the Programme of Action, adopted by the 1976 World Employment Conference, states: "A basic-needs-oriented policy implies the participation of the people in making the decisions which affect them through organizations of their own choice." International Labour Office, Meeting Basic Needs: Strategies for Eradicating Mass Poverty and Unemployment (Geneva: ILO, 1977), p. 25; also Employment, Growth and Basic Needs: A One-World Problem (New York: Praeger, 1977). "Participation is by itself a basic need of people and must be included as a critical consideration in any development strategy." ILO, "Structure and Functions of Rural Workers' Organization: Participation of the Rural Poor in Development." (1978), p. 2.

By the late 1960s, however, growing evidence suggested the conventional development strategies had not worked as expected. While some countries had indeed achieved major increases in GNP, in most, output per capita had remained relatively stagnant, while the number of poor people had increased, and disparities in income had grown wider. Forced to reappraise past policies, some academicians and policy makers began to emphasize a larger role for agriculture in national development, stressing the need to increase employment and consumption in rural areas, and the necessity of finding technologies appropriate to local resource constraints. The emerging paradigm posits a more central and active role for the majority of citizens than was previously thought desirable, by giving greater attention to decentralized administration and flexible planning, to efforts to raise output in the small farm sector, and to providing the poor majority with better food, shelter, health care, and education.

As a consequence, concern with participation is currently popular, and one can hardly be against the concept, broadly conceived. When the meaning of development is said to include aspects of popular participation, promoting this becomes good by definition. Participation is often endorsed unambiguously on normative grounds even if the empirical basis is not as clear. A real danger is that with growing faddishness and a lot of lip service, participation could become drained of substance and its relevance to development programs disputable.

Unfortunately, there is little systematic knowledge to draw on in the social sciences concerning developmental participation. There is even little consensus on what constitutes political participation, despite much more work and writing on the subject. Nevertheless, various studies have contributed to an understanding

of developmental participation over the years.⁵ The various pieces of reporting and analysis provide ingredients for gaining a better understanding of the role and possibilities of popular participation in development. This may be an area where practitioners and politicians have been ahead of the academics. The enactment by Congress of Title IV in 1966, amending the existing foreign assistance legislation to support more participatory approaches, lead to an encouragement of scholarly concern rather than reflecting such concern (See Appendix 1).

Anybody dealing with problems of participation in development quickly finds that the term itself is very ambiguous. Yet, those who study participation are under pressure to define it, often so that indicators measuring it can be generated. We have been more concerned about developing a practical way of thinking about participation and have sought to avoid definitional efforts. For us, asking "What is participation?" may be the wrong question, since it implies that participation is a single phenomenon. It appears more fruitful and proper to regard participation as a descriptive term denoting the involvement of a significant number of persons in situations or actions which enhance their well-being, e.g., their income, security or self-esteem. This definition is a general one, but it encompasses the range of things people refer to when

⁵There have been many studies of community development or local government institutions in various countries, but not many relating kinds and amounts of participation in specific developmental outcomes. Among anthropologists, the work by Allan Holmberg and associates in the early 1950s introducing participatory operation of a hacienda at Vicos, Peru was pioneering in this respect. See Henry Dobyns, Paul Doughty and Harold Lasswell, Peasants, Power and Applied Social Change (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1971).

discussing participation in the abstract.⁶

We find it more instructive, however, to think in terms of three dimensions of participation: (1) what kind of participation is under consideration? (2) who is participating in it? and (3) how is participation occurring? Moreover it is necessary to consider closely the context in which participation is occurring, or intended to occur. This calls for careful attention given to the characteristics of the rural development project and the ways the historical, societal, and physical environment conditions the kinds of participation that are more or less likely. This analysis of participation was the subject of an earlier monograph,⁷ and is discussed at length in Appendix 2, below. Here it is only necessary to briefly summarize what we see as the what, who, and how dimensions of participation.

What Kind of Participation?

We identify four different kinds of participation: (1) participation in decision-making; (2) participation in

⁶A recent definition, no less general, suggested by Reuben C. Baetz is: participation in development means how community members can be assured the opportunity of contributing to the creation of the communities' goods and services. Development and Participation: Operational Implications for Social Welfare (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975). This is fairly similar to a definition of the ILO Rural Employment and Policies Branch, Employment and Development Department: participation involves active, collectively organized and continuous efforts by the people themselves in setting goals, pooling resources together and taking actions which aim at improving their living conditions.

⁷John M. Cohen and Norman T. Uphoff, Rural Development Participation: Concepts and Measures for Project Design, Implementation and Evaluation (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, January 1977). It may be obtained from the publications office, Center for International Studies, 170 Uris Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York 14853.

implementation; (3) participation in benefits; and (4) participation in evaluation. Together these encompass a potentially integrated set of rural development activities, although a complete or consistent cycle of participatory activities is probably uncommon.

Participation in decision-making (and perhaps evaluation) is what political scientists most often conceptualize as participation, whereas administrative specialists concentrate on participation in implementation. Participation in benefits has been of greatest concern to economists, particularly those interested in improving the well being of the rural poor. These different disciplines, it is apparent, have often had different conceptions of participation--a source of much confusion over the term. Our scheme attempts to eliminate some of the ambiguity by incorporating these varying conceptions into a larger framework. Thus we emphasize the need for caution in discussing participation in global terms, concentrating instead on the specific kinds of participation that can occur.

Who Participates?

The participation of greatest concern to governments and development agencies is that of the "rural poor" or the "poor majority." Such categories are too broad, however, to capture what is a large and heterogeneous group of people. The rural poor, while sharing a common poverty, are comprised of many social groups, differing in occupation, location, sex, status, religion, and so on. As with the what dimension of participation, we argue for a more disaggregated approach to analyzing who participates.

We suggest four general types of participants, whose characteristics warrant specific attention. Depending on the setting and goals of the project under consideration, certain characteristics would, of course, be more significant than others. We would distinguish: (1) local residents (a large and heterogeneous

category); (2) local leaders, including informal leaders, association heads, and office holders; (3) government personnel; and (4) foreign personnel. Particularly in the first category, it will be important to further disaggregate the population according to (1) age; (2) sex; (3) family status; (4) education; (5) occupation; (6) income; and (7) residence. These characteristics may not be equally relevant for all projects, and additional ones may be needed in some circumstances; nevertheless, some combination of such characteristics will be useful to ascertain who is participating in the various phases of development activities.

How Participation Occurs

The how dimension incorporates qualitative evaluation into the analysis of participation. The amount, distribution, and trends of participation can be assessed by looking at the who and what dimensions, but we would also suggest that consideration be made of the way in which participation occurs. It would be useful to know, for instance, (1) whether the initiative for participation comes mostly from administrators or local communities; or (2) whether the inducements for participation are voluntary or coercive. It may be relevant to analyze and compare over time (3) the structure and (4) channels of participation, for instance whether it occurs on an individual or collective basis, with formal or informal organization, and whether participation is direct or involves indirect representation. Further, consideration should often be given to (5) the duration and (6) the scope of participation, whether it is once-and-for-all, intermittent or continuous, and extends over a broad or narrow range of activities. Finally, it will be useful to consider (7) empowerment, that is how effectively people's involvement in decision-making or implementation leads to the results they intend.

These different how characteristics can help illuminate the dynamics and consequences of participation, if applied appropriately to the assessment of who participates in what rural development activities. In suggesting the how dimension, we want to call attention to the ways in which participation by certain groups in given activities can differ.

Purpose of Monograph

Our concern with specifying what is meant by "participation," and what kinds are productive and possible, stems from being asked by USAID's Office of Rural Development in 1976 to review the literature and indicate what might usefully be included under this term. Discussions among persons from various disciplines on what should be the indicators of "participation" for project evaluation had revealed how little agreement there was. We produced a monograph,⁸ which was shared with USAID and with colleagues in many institutions, overseas as well as in the U.S. Following this, the Rural Development Committee at Cornell entered into a cooperative agreement with the Office of Rural Development in 1977, to begin a four-year program of applied research and consulting, as well as knowledge generation and dissemination on "rural development participation." This state-of-the-art paper is an output of the project.

In the earlier monograph we limited our analysis to elaborating the elements of participation that could be helpful to development specialists thinking through or implementing development projects. We did not go into theoretical justification, propositions about causes or effects of participation, or predictive statements, finding too little basis for such ambitious sorties. In the further review of literature for this paper, we have been able to prepare a more comprehensive treatment of the subject, but still find the existing body of theory too abstract or unfocused to be of much help, and the wealth of case materials too diffuse and uneven for

⁸Ibid.

a well-grounded theoretical argument. Useful works from various disciplines and reflecting experience in many countries do exist. We have drawn on them to illustrate how participatory concepts and approaches relate to operational development work. But this remains a state-of-the-art paper, reflecting the incomplete but accumulating knowledge gained from many fields.⁹

In this paper we begin in Part I by reviewing the experience with community development and animation rurale, two strategies presumably predicated on popular participation. We go on to consider some of the institutions, roles and group factors that affect the possibilities for rural development participation, often adversely, but possibly affirmatively. Opinions run strong in this area, perhaps because experience is diverse. We cannot examine all obstacles to and opportunities for participation, but we do assess the context in which such efforts take place.

A major reason for concern with participation is to be specific about who is participating, in what ways, and with what effect? To highlight this concern, in Part II we consider sets of rural persons whose participation is often overlooked in project design and implementation: the landless and near-landless, women, and disadvantaged ethnic groups. Others could have been discussed but we thought these were usually the most important groups for project purposes.

⁹We have not written this as a review of the literature nor have we made it a bibliographic work. As part of the process of starting this project we undertook an extensive perusal of the literature to locate books and articles that would be relevant for this paper. The materials covered in that exercise are listed in: John M. Cohen, Gladys A. Culagovski, Norman T. Uphoff, and Diane L. Wolf, Participation at the Local Level: A Working Bibliography (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, October 1978). This bibliography complements the discussion and analysis presented here.

Then in Part III, we look at experience with participatory approaches (or the lack of) in specific kinds of activities: agricultural research, agricultural production and extension efforts, water management, rural health care, and rural public works. We have taken these as representative of the range of rural development activities in which LDC governments and donor agencies are involved. With more time and space, many more activities could have been assessed in terms of participatory possibilities and problems, but an understanding of what we present in these chapters can be extrapolated to other kinds of development work.

Finally, we have included two appendixes. The first reviews issues and approaches to participation, leading to our present perspectives on the subject. In the second, we discuss in some detail our framework for analyzing rural development participation.

Part I

PARTICIPATION AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:
PAST EXPERIENCE, OBSTACLES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

Chapter One

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ANIMATION RURALE: IS DEVELOPMENT PARTICIPATION NEW OR OLD WINE?

Every group of development policy makers, planners and project designers should include someone whose experience goes back thirty years or more. This should help keep them from reinventing the wheel and provide for some learning from the successes and failures of the past. In this regard, it must be asked whether participation in rural development efforts has just been discovered or rediscovered. As we noted already, there have been previous programs and doctrines that stressed rural people's participation in community-based activities. Some persons could argue that rural development participation is merely an updated version of community development or animation rurale approaches. In as much as judgments on the success of such programs are now most often negative, it is appropriate to inquire whether rural development participation is old wine in a new bottle.

This is a valid question, and one which is being examined at greater length in connection with our project.¹ Here we present the results of our literature review, characterizing community development and animation rurale, and contrasting them with what we are calling rural development participation. We outline

¹Two studies are being undertaken on community development and animation rurale respectively, by Harry Blair of Bucknell University and Robert Charlick of Cleveland State University, both of whom will be associated with our rural development participation project in the coming year as visiting professor at Cornell. They are engaged in comparative assessments of experience with community development in South Asia and with animation rurale in West Africa and the Caribbean and will make some assessments of differences between the two approaches and of experience with similar efforts in the U.S. Their conclusions will be shared with others as part of our knowledge generation and dissemination tasks under the cooperative agreement.

experience gained from the earlier approaches, and indicate the apparent differences and advantages of the new strategy for meeting the long sought goal of involving local people in development efforts that affect their communities.

Origins and Approach of Community Development and Animation Rurale

The emergence of both community development and animation rurale is connected with the "winning hearts and minds" concerns of the cold war period, and with the "winds of change" that were ultimately to bring independence to Africa and Asia.² Community development as a strategy was rooted in British and American experiences with local government, municipal planning, adult education, and social welfare work. These domestic efforts, and some international experience by the British Colonial Service and private American voluntary agencies, came to the fore in 1948 when the community development strategy was explicitly forged at a Cambridge Conference on the Development of African Initiative. Community development was selected there to help prepare the colonies for a

²Of particular assistance in assessing the foundations and principles of these two strategies were: David Brokensha and Peter Hodge, Community Development: An Interpretation (San Francisco: Chandler, 1969); United Nations, Popular Participation in Development: Emerging Trends in Community Development (New York: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, ST/SOA/ 106, 1971); Lane E. Holdcroft, "The Rise and Fall of Community Development in Developing Countries, 1950-65: A Critical Analysis and Annotated Bibliography" (East Lansing: Michigan State University, Department of Agricultural Economics Rural Development Papers, October 1977); Yves Goussault, "Rural 'Animation' and Popular Participation in French-Speaking Black Africa," International Labour Review, 97 (1968), pp. 525-550; Robert B. Charlick, "Rural Development in Francophone Africa: Administrative Demonstration or Induced Participation?" (Paper Presented to African Studies Association Meetings, Denver, 1971); and Jeanne Marie Moulton, Animation Rurale: Education for Rural Development (Amherst: University of Massachusetts, Center for International Education, 1977).

peaceful transition to independence, by supporting the emergence of stable, self-reliant rural communities. Likewise, animation rurale emerged as a coherent strategy in the mid-1950s, as part of the French effort to promote rural modernization as a prerequisite for transferring power from the metropole to independent states.

We will make more systematic comparisons between the two approaches later in this chapter, but here identify the basic structural features of each. Community development proceeded from the (correct) assumption that no government could afford, or find the trained manpower, to place teams of specialists in every village. Hence its aim was to supplement the regular line ministries and agencies with a special ministry or program, having a cadre of multi-purpose village level workers (VLWs). These persons, from outside of the village and having at least secondary education, were government personnel charged with organizing the community, getting it to identify common "felt needs," and mobilizing social action to raise resources and involve people in providing for these needs, with whatever technical and financial assistance from outside was appropriate. While trained in community organization skills, the VLW was not given a rigid set of guidelines, since the proponents of the strategy believed in flexible, dynamic efforts and the avoidance of standardized programs. The VLW was to live with villagers, gain their confidence, organize village groups and stimulate identification of village projects that could be acted upon. He was aided in this process by matching or other grants from the national government, funds for which often came from international donors.³

³For a detailed statement of the strategy and training patterns, see Brokensha and Hodge, Community Development, pp. 47-97. The philosophy guiding VLW activity is well-stated in Stanley Heginbotham, Cultures in Conflict: The Four Faces of Indian Bureaucracy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975).

Conversely, the French approach followed a more rigid and predetermined strategy.⁴ The Animation Service would select areas where potential for local self-help was promising. Through an elaborate procedure, staff led the villagers to identify problems it would like solved, and to pick a local person who would receive training to meet the specific needs identified. These trainees, often young respected farmers, would then receive practical training at one of the regional training centers set up for this purpose, and become an animateur (animator). The training emphasized learning by doing, technical skills, understanding national institutions and goals, and how to carry out local projects. Once trained, animateurs returned to their communities to put their new knowledge into action. Consequently, animation rurale avoided some of the problems of community development, whose VLWs were urban, educated staff with no local ties and an interest in moving up the agency hierarchy to a posting back in the city. Corollary difficulties existed, however, for animateurs, as local people, could be identified with local factions or beholden to local powerholders.⁵

⁴For a description of such techniques as group dialogue, group self study and needs-inventory methods, consciousness raising techniques, and specialized training for volunteers who will perform specific technical roles, see Yves Goussault, Integration structurelle des masses africaine en developpement (Paris: Institute de Recherches et d'Application des Methodes de Developpement, 1964), and his study, L'animation rurale dan les pays de l'Afrique Francophone (Geneva: International Labour Office, 1970).

⁵See study of animation rurale in Niger by Robert Charlick, "Induced Participation in Nigerien Modernization," Rural Africana, 18 (1972), pp. 5-20.

The British began some national community development projects around 1950, as did international agencies. These tended to be small scale efforts, with few implications for national development, and little prospect for diffusing innovations to other communities. By 1952, the most famous of all community development efforts began in India under larger scale funding from the Ford Foundation and the United States.⁶ The philosophical roots of community development, and its aim of self-reliant democratic village communities, could be traced back to the influence of Gandhi and Tagore, who had faith in the common villager and small scale efforts; but the major proponent of the strategy was a group of American social scientists, educators, and welfare specialists led by Albert Mayer, Carl Taylor and Douglas Ensminger. They and others served as consultants to programs, trained people to run them, attended a series of international conferences between 1956 and 1961 to exchange experiences with community development and induce interested governments to start programs, and published numerous articles in the subsidized and widely distributed journal, Community Development Review. At least with regard to India, a cynical interpretation of that government's reasons for supporting community development appeared in retrospect. Its plans stressed accelerated capital formation, with investment mostly in industrialization, neglecting agriculture and the rural sector. Community development could be seen as a sop to the rural people, urging self-reliance for them while concentrating domestic and foreign resources in urban areas.

⁶This has been analyzed by Gerald Sussman in: Lessons for the Third World: Integrated Rural Development in India (forthcoming), and "The Pilot Project and the Design of Implementing Strategies: Community Development in India," in Politics and Policy Implementation in the Third World, edited by Merilee S. Grindle, (forthcoming).

Community development efforts were launched in the early 1950s also in the Philippines and then spread to other countries in Asia, Africa and finally Latin America, largely through the Alliance for Progress. Between 1953 and 1959, the U.S. government was largely responsible for the emergence of programs in some 25 countries, most of which had some strategic importance to the West.⁷ It did this by sending experts to help interested governments develop programs, and by providing long term technical and capital assistance. The U.S. expended \$50 million through the Community Development Division of its aid agency between 1952 and 1962, and channeled additional funds to another 30 countries, primarily through the United Nations. As men, money and machines flowed into these countries, the emphasis on self-help declined and government extension workers increasingly displaced local people as "change agents." This new approach brought highly visible showcase projects that, at best, fulfilled very uncertain "felt needs" of villagers.

By 1960, over 60 LDCs had community development programs. But before the decade ended, most had been drastically reduced or terminated. A major blow came in 1963 when USAID abolished its Community Development Division in Washington, terminated most of the division's field offices, and subsumed its activities under agriculture or rural development activities. Many country community development ministries were abolished and absorbed into ministries of interior, social welfare, or agriculture. Donors and host governments were disillusioned with the effectiveness of this approach to development.

⁷These included Iraq (1952), Afghanistan, Egypt, Iran and Pakistan (1953), Lebanon (1954), Philippines (1955), Ceylon, Jordan and Nepal (1956), Indonesia (1957) and Korea (1958). A major U.S. supported community development program was initiated in South Vietnam as rural insurgency began to spread in the early 1960s.

The concern in the 1960s with resources and the urban sector, put community development strategy in an unfavorable light. Cost-benefit analysis, with its emphasis on quick returns because future ones were discounted by an explicit rate of interest, attributed little value to the unmeasurable capacity which might be generated over time for mobilizing local resources. Efforts directed at the grass roots were not seen as important, on the assumption that planners and technicians could create a development momentum that would pull rural villages into modernization. Planners, adopting market prices as the standard of all value, paid little attention to whether or not the things provided by government were what rural people wanted. It assumed that whatever would show up in GNP was good and assigned zero value to other things. But perhaps the major reason for the decline of community development was that few had realized the complexity of the development process, and how long it would take to show results. This blind spot resulted from the absence of knowledge about the rural sector, and the inapplicability of many Anglo-American notions of group mobilization in different social settings. Community development succumbed to impatience as much as anything else. Only after the rush to accomplish development through resource transfers--but without creating an organizational base--had failed to achieve desired results, were planners and administrators prepared to consider again the local organizational aspects of development strategy.

Animation rurale emerged under French tutelage, largely from the cooperative efforts of the Institute de Recherches et d'Application des Methodes de Developpement (IRAM) and Institute de Recherche et Formation pour l'Education et le Developpement (IRFED) in Paris. Initial efforts to implement the strategy occurred in Morocco between 1955 and 1956, where IRAM was given the opportunity to test its approach. While the program failed to reach its goals, its underlying theory became attractive to

leaders of other Francophone colonies, who soon invited IRAM to begin projects elsewhere. Despite large provision of human and financial resources, animation rurale does not appear to have been very successful. Based on the evidence of 15 years, one French rural development expert, Albert Meister, dismissed the strategy as ineffective.⁸

The philosophical underpinnings of the French approach can be traced back to socialist literature and development notions held by the French Catholic humanist school of thought. Leading theorists of animation rurale included the first secretary-general of IRAM, Yves Goussault, and staff members Roland Colin and Guy Belloncle. Much of their writing is in a characteristically French manner, which seems to Anglophone readers to confuse theory and practice. Three journals published wide ranging articles about the strategies, origins, and effects of animation rurale: Developpement et Civilisation, Tiers-Monde, and Archives Internationales de Sociologie de la Cooperation.

Both the community development and animation rurale strategies have generated a wide and disparate literature, dominated by a handful of well-known academics and development specialists.⁹ Despite the number of publications, neither has been very systematically documented and evaluated, much less compared with the

⁸ Albert Meister, "Developpement Communautaire et l'Animation Rurale en Afrique," L'Homme et la Société, 18-20 (1970), pp. 129-145. See also his book criticizing the strategy, Participation, Animation et Developpement (Paris: Editions Anthropos, 1969).

⁹ Special sections on community development and animation rurale are included in the bibliography by John M. Cohen et al., Participation at the Local Level: A Working Bibliography (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1978), pp. 71-89 and 91-103.

other.¹⁰ Nevertheless some assumptions and operating principles associated with each can be delineated, and contrasted with the approach to rural development participation being examined here.

Community Development, Animation Rurale Compared with Rural Development Participation

Similarities between community development and animation rurale can be readily identified. (1) Both relied administratively upon separate ministries or services that paralleled the regular line agencies of government. In principle they were coordinated at all levels, but the main focus was at the field level. (2) Both depended on specialized roles--"catalyst agents" of sorts. The VLW was to work with both local leaders and the field staff of other ministries to support and implement programs serving the felt needs of rural people, while the animateurs selected from rural communities and trained by the animation staff were to facilitate program implementation for the ministries. (3) Both ignored the heterogeneity of rural communities, assuming in the first approach, that communities could have common felt needs all would help to satisfy, and in the second, that cooperation was a matter of "reaching" rural people with technical information and resources. Conflicts of interest typically were not considered significant. (4) Both tended to ignore the existing stratification of rural society, with the result that the benefits could be easily "captured" by powerful local groups. (5) Both emphasized self-help efforts at the local level, called investissement humaine under

¹⁰An interesting evaluation of the community development strategy is Glynis Cochrane, "Strategy in Community Development," Journal of Developing Areas, 6, 1 (1969), pp. 5-12. Two good critical case studies of animation rurale are Robert Charlick, "Power and Participation in the Modernization of Rural Hausa Communities" (Unpublished Ph.D. diss., University of California at Los Angeles, 1974), on Niger; and Moulton, Animation Rurale, pp. 62-163, on Senegal and Niger.

the French system. (6) Both often became tied to existing cooperatives or extension services, to service other government programs, thereby losing some of their own identity. The problems associated with such features will be discussed below.

Some of the differences between these two strategies, perhaps less significant than their similarities, can easily be pointed up: (1) Community development aimed at local communities, with a view to increasing their capacity for self-help, whereas animation rurale sought to get villagers working hand-in-hand with national development efforts. (2) Community development attached positive value to local independence and autonomy, stressing "felt needs," while animation rurale sought to integrate the base level into higher levels as part of national programs. (3) Community development relied on a professional multi-purpose village-level worker, in contrast to animation's use of village volunteers in specialized roles (backed up, to be sure, by trained technicians). (4) Community development placed faith in spontaneous community will to remove obstacles to development, whereas animation rurale tried to educate villagers to develop community consciousness. As suggested above, neither tackled the question of resource distribution, as is considered necessary with rural development participation.

The problems experienced with the two approaches were numerous and often cited as reasons why "participation won't work." In fact, we need to analyze the problems and see if any are avoidable, and how they might be surmounted.

Both community development and animation rurale were essentially top-down systems, no matter how much rhetoric about felt needs or popular mobilization may have been spoken. Not that purely bottom-up approaches would have been more successful; but it is important to distinguish the rhetoric from the practice, for in fact participation was quite restricted. Time and again programs were formed and targets set from above, having little

relation to people's willingness or capabilities, and when not met were judged a sign of failure.

As programs, they became fairly quickly overloaded. Heginbotham has well described the many activities pressed on the VLWs in India. This was compounded by their being given so many reports each month, they could hardly be in the field promoting and of dozens of mandated activities, let alone addressing "felt needs" of rural people. He became an agent of the government, not a facilitator for the community.¹¹

All too often, the community development programs were not based on improvements in economic production, which would have direct and tangible benefits to participants, but on community services, some of which were of doubtful value. This was not the way community development was intended to operate, but resulted from the dichotomization of community development ministries and all the others, which had a bureaucratic interest in keeping community development out of agricultural programs or public works construction.¹² The result was amateurish agronomic or engineering advice, because VLWs or animateurs got into programs where they lacked technical competence, although the advice given was often no worse than that given by agents of technical ministries. This would discredit them in the eyes of rural

¹¹See Heginbotham, Cultures in Conflict, p. 107 ff. He counted as many as 35 schemes which VLWs were supposed to be assisting at the local level.

¹²Sassman's analysis of the community pilot project in India shows the great and sophisticated concern in the initial efforts at Etawah to build on a social agricultural base, introducing potatoes, peas and improved varieties of wheat with some success. However, this agricultural component was dropped in the expansion of community development to the rest of India, for reasons of bureaucratic territoriality which are well-known. "The Pilot Project," *passim*.

people. A related criticism is that the focus on "felt needs" was not backed up by skillful collection and analysis of facts, so that reliable and valid solutions could be found.¹³

The demand for quick results which invariably built up led VLWs and animateurs to rely on local elites to mobilize labor, put on demonstrations, make contributions, and so forth. The result was that programs were not able to reach lower groups, who were the intended beneficiaries.¹⁴ The goals of building local capacity and assisting less-advantaged groups were given lower priority, as pressures mounted for demonstrable "successes." The pressure for meeting "targets" and the evaluation of performance according to such measures led VLWs to distort information, so that eventually management and planning became meaningless token exercises.¹⁵

Although inconsistent, at least with community development principles, one of the failings of both approaches was the arbitrary review process that stunted and even thwarted local initiative. The result was a predictable waning of what participation emerged from the rural majority, as local decisions were not respected, but overridden by administrators. Charlick says that

¹³This criticism is expressed by Edgar Owens and Robert Shaw in Development Reconsidered (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1972), pp. 17-22.

¹⁴This is well shown in the case study by Charlick, "Induced Participation in Nigerian Modernization," pp. 5-20. The Nigerian government had intended to build a broader base of rural support through animation rurale but failed in this objective.

¹⁵The careful study of HYV adoption in Tamil Nadu by John and Barbara Harriss and their collaborators showed that only about one-third of the area reported as planted in HYVs actually was. B.H. Farmer, ed., Green Revolution: Technology and Change in Rice-Growing Areas of Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka (Boulder: Westview Press, 1977).

rural people in Niger described the animation rurale meetings, as situations where "they tell us what they want us to do."¹⁶ In his research on the panchayat system in Andhra Pradesh, India, Haragopal found civil servants disallowing even a one rupee expenditure to replace a broken water glass--because the pieces of the broken one were not turned in with the voucher.¹⁷ One can question whether either approach in practice represented rural "participation" in anything more than a perfunctory sense.

A criticism that applies to community development, though not necessarily to animation rurale, is the focus on the community, rather than on the rural sector as a whole. Community development has been characterized by Owens and Shaw as looking "inward, not outward," emphasizing the reconstruction of the village, not of rural society.¹⁸ In many ways, the village may be too small for self-contained development, though some small, reasonably homogeneous unit may be needed as the base for development action. Something is to be said for area development, for evolving a hierarchy of larger and smaller arenas of action, according to central place theory.¹⁹ Community development certainly did not have this strategy in view, and while animation rurale did involve a hierarchy of institutions from the village to the national center, it was unable to integrate arenas of action.

¹⁶See Charlick, "Induced Participation in Nigerian Modernization," pp. 5-20.

¹⁷Reported in seminar given by G. Haragopal at Cornell University, May, 1976.

¹⁸Owens and Shaw, Development Reconsidered, pp. 17-30.

¹⁹On this, see E.A.J. Johnson, Organization of Space in Developing Countries (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

Most of the problems just presented pertain more to the practice than to the theory of these early approaches. The last problem is inherent in assumptions that communities are relatively homogeneous and not beset by significant conflicts of interest, these strategies were unprepared to deal with such conflicts and ripe for "capture" by relatively powerful segments of the community. Based on his analysis of the Indian experience, Sussman has identified eight lessons 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.²⁰

Other development practitioners, seeking ways of gaining more effective participation by local people in rural programs, have reached similar conclusions. What we are calling here rural development participation is an outgrowth of experience, often assessed more intuitively than analytically, of many persons. The elements of this approach have nowhere been institutionalized completely, but they are becoming clearer. Four major features can be identified, that contrast with community development and animation rurale.

²⁰These lessons are outlined in Sussman, "The Pilot Project."

The rural development participation approach entails some combination of: (1) administrative decentralization, bringing the institutions and personnel of government closer to the rural sector and reorienting them to the needs of rural people; (2) establishing or working through existing local organization, which can act on behalf of rural people and involve them in different aspects of development work; (3) placing local leaders in a central position to bridge the community and government; while insuring that they represent the interests of all the community; and (4) recruiting and training a set of paraprofessionals to provide greater access to services and inputs for rural people (VLWs may or may not be considered part of this set, depending on who fills this important role).²¹

Such a system of institutions and roles in the rural sector creates more balanced and reciprocating relationships between the government and rural communities. It does not have the same "top-down" structural dynamic as with the earlier approaches, and has more scope for integrating services and activities, because the institutions of "participation" are not specialized, outside of the mainstream of development work. The new approach to participation has more roles into which local people can move for more active involvement in development efforts, or with which local people can interact for getting things done on their behalf. There is no formula or doctrine implied in this scheme that

²¹The president of the World Bank has described the needed new approach to rural development in similar terms, noting it is not possible "for governments to deal directly with over 100 million small farmer families. What is required is the organization of local farm groups...smallholder associations, county or district level cooperatives, various types of communes...Experience shows that there is a greater chance for success if the institutions provide the popular participation, local leadership and decentralization of authority." Robert S. McNamara, Address to the World Bank Group, Nairobi, September, 1973 (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1973), pp. 17-18.

dictates roles or responsibilities. Rather, the purpose is to open opportunities for more active and effective participation by rural people in the process of their own development. The institutional framework for participation has to be defined and implemented according to the specific conditions and feasible objectives in a particular country.

Lessons Learned

Four general principles emerge from an assessment of community development and animation rurale experience and of the rural development participation alternative. First, "participation" should not be viewed as a separate program or sector for rural development, but rather as an approach to be integrated as feasible in all activities. Rural development participation envisions no ministry or agency for people's participation. All parts of government should be attuned to the possibilities and advantages of participation. It should not be relegated to the project level, though it may be most concrete and effective there. Ways should be sought for representing people's views, for example, with regard to agricultural price policies, since these affect the incentives and benefits people have more often than do projects.

Second, rural development participation should emphasize local organization, which can give rural people more voice and also more involvement in programs. This was largely lacking with the community development and animation rurale approaches. It appears desirable to work with a variety of organizations, some heterogeneous in membership such as local government, to encompass the whole community and provide a forum for expressing conflicting interests, and some homogeneous, particularly for disadvantaged groups, so they have vehicles to pursue their otherwise neglected interests. The purpose of organization is to empower local people to enter into program activities and direction

on more nearly equal terms with the administration than they can as unorganized individuals. Where people are not organized, the minority of powerful persons in the community will likely dominate all activities. They may attempt to control local organizations too, and may succeed. But the possibilities for average persons to have some influence are nevertheless enhanced by organizational channels, especially if there are separate organizations, as discussed in Chapter 6, for women, laborers, and other such groups.²²

Third, some attention must be given to the distribution of assets in furthering participation, because we know by now that the more unequal the distribution the more difficult it is to have broad participation in decision-making and in benefits. Community development and animation rurale did not generally dwell on the fact of conflicting interests within rural communities, which reduced their effectiveness for assisting the majority. Rural development participation proceeds with an appreciation of the biases inequality introduces, and seeks to countervail these by designing programs to involve and benefit certain groups, and by using or encouraging special organizations for those otherwise left outside the ambit of development at the local level.²³

²²"Joined in well-tailored organizations, the rural weak will be able to participate in local decision-making, to contribute in development efforts, and share in their benefits." Bernard van Heck, The Involvement of the Poor in Development Through Rural Organizations (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rural Organizations Action Programme, June 1977), p. 27.

²³In another Cornell study it was found that there was a very strong association between the degree of effective local organization and some relatively more egalitarian income distribution. Cause and effect cannot be readily sorted out, but no cases were found of effective local organization where there was marked inequality of income and assets. Norman T. Uphoff and Milton J. Esman, Local Organization for Rural Development: An Analysis of Asian Experience (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1974).

Finally, the emphasis in promoting rural development participation is not on local autonomy but on linkage between national centers, regional centers, and local communities on terms that are mutually determined. Reciprocation, a theme prevalent in both anthropological literature and organization theory, is necessary to building and maintaining participation in any social or economic enterprise. A central point of Meister's critique of animation is that relying on grass roots initiative without clear, reliable access to central technical and capital resources is not likely to succeed.²⁴ Rural development participation seeks to build on the resources and strength both of the local community and of higher levels of government.

So we find that rural development participation has benefited from some lessons of the past, and moves beyond the theories of community development and animation rurale. The concerns that informed these earlier approaches are shared by contemporary advocates of "participatory" development, but some of the strategic assumptions of community development and animation rurale have proven mistaken and been set aside. Rural communities rarely are harmonious units waiting for some outside catalyst to move them. Deep social cleavages and other structural factors often explain why more development activity has not been undertaken. Approaches to participation need to proceed from an understanding of this fact, and to circumvent or allow for its effects, if possible. Separate ministries or agencies for participation may not be advisable, but separate organizations for the disadvantaged may be. In addition, existing social organizations have a logic and strength that must be accommodated when trying to introduce new relationships and practices of any sort.

²⁴Meister, "Developpement Communautaire," p. 126.

No ideal solutions exist for getting both greater productivity and equity, but some step-wise solutions, involving greater participation along the way, following the structural principles just outlined, appear promising for promoting the kind of rural development most often advocated at present. Community development and animation rurale are not alive and well, but the experience they generated in the 1950s and 1960s is of value in trying to make progress in the 1970s and 1980s. The implications of this conclusion are, to be sure, broad and manifold, warranting examination of many facets of rural development participation, particularly of problems it may encounter and of specific ways it may be applied.

Chapter Two

TRADITIONAL COOPERATION, VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS AND LOCAL PARTICIPATION

Having outlined some of the issues and approaches for more participatory rural development efforts, we need to consider some of the obstacles and opportunities for moving in this direction, since feasibility is as important a consideration as desirability. A full-scale review would go well beyond the bounds of this state-of-the-art paper, so we will have to limit our discussion. In this Chapter we begin by assessing institutions that apparently present more opportunities than obstacles, such as locally developed formal and informal organizations, and more "modern," extrinsically introduced forms of organization. The subsequent chapter addresses roles and institutions for which the ratio of opportunities-to-obstacles is generally less favorable: local elites and administration. The purpose of these two chapters is to assess how it is possible to proceed in planning and implementing rural development programs with greater likelihood of eliciting effective popular participation, than if these various institutions operating in the rural sector are either misunderstood or ignored.

The Importance of Local Organization

Earlier studies by Cornell's Rural Development Committee give strong support to the view that participation tends to be ineffective outside of an organizational context, and that local organizations are a crucial factor in rural development efforts:

The individual smallholder, tenant or laborer is powerless without organizations to provide essential services, to express his needs, and to have his grievances attended to. Through organization the scarce administrative capabilities of the state can be multiplied as local structures retail through their channels the information,

credit, fertilizer and other inputs provided by the state. In performing these allocative functions, in regulating conflicts, and in providing feedback to governmentally-initiated activities, local organizations can bring specific local knowledge to bear on problems and can tap the latent managerial abilities of local people. In sum, they can activate the energies of rural people, afford them entry into the system or network of services and exchanges provided by government, and gain for them a measure of collective influence over their own destinies.¹

We consider local organizations, whether long established or recently introduced, locally created or introduced from outside, to be potential vehicles for broadening the base of participation in the community, for increasing the locality's access to development resources, and for promoting technical change, particularly in agriculture. Nevertheless, the fact is that little is known about local organizations, and dispute exists over their capacity to stimulate both development and participation.

For example, the Cornell studies of local organization in 16 Asian nations concluded that in those countries with more organizations reaching down to the local level, and where such organizations were accountable to local people and involved in rural development functions, there was greater accomplishment of rural development objectives.² In support of this view, yet moving beyond it, Development Alternatives, Inc., concluded, after studying 36 rural development projects in 11 African and Asian countries,

¹Norman T. Uphoff and Milton J. Esman, Local Organization for Rural Development: Analysis of Asian Experience (Ithaca: Cornell University Rural Development Committee, 1974), p. 67.

²Ibid., p. xi. For a summary of this large study see Norman T. Uphoff and Milton J. Esman, "Local Organization for Rural Development in Asia," Development Digest, 13, 3 (1975), pp. 31-46.

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."³ The study identified the existence of functioning local organizations, controlled in large part by small farmers, as the key to small farmer involvement.⁴ However, another USAID funded study by Huntington and Nelson, concluded that local level organizations yield limited opportunity for participation to affect the allocation of resources or the distribution of decisional power.⁵ This pessimistic view of participation and local level organizations is backed up by other, more specific, studies.⁶

For these reasons it cannot be assumed that local organizations must promote participation in decision-making or evaluation, or even in implementation and development benefits. Further research is essential on the feasibility of engendering participation through various types of local organizations, and on the relationship between participatory base-level organizations

³Development Alternatives, Inc., Strategies for Small Farmer Development: An Empirical Study of Rural Development Projects (Washington, D.C.: DAI, May, 1975), executive summary, p. 1.

⁴Ibid. The other two variables found to be positively associated were an effective two-way communications flow between project participants and project management staff, and the specificity of the agricultural information offered by the extension service (p. 13).

⁵Samuel P. Huntington and Joan M. Nelson, No Easy Choice: Political Participation in Developing Countries (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 134-147.

⁶For example a UN study took a very pessimistic view of cooperatives: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Rural Cooperatives as Agents of Change: A Research Report and a Debate (Geneva: UN Series on Rural Institutions and Planned Change No. 8, UNRISD, 1975).

and the rural development process.⁷ Nevertheless, drawing on a number of studies which have been done, we argue throughout this state-of-the-art paper that such organizations can help facilitate broad-based social and economic change. In the remainder of this chapter we consider the implications for participation of indigenous local organizations, and of newer organizations introduced from outside the local community.

Indigenous Organization

Development specialists may have a lesson to learn from the wily merchant in the tale of Aladdin who gave away new lamps for old. There can be considerable participatory magic in many long established traditional organizations, yet they are largely neglected in project design and implementation. Instead, new and often alien arrangements are offered as a better way of organizing a community and involving its inhabitants in development. It is true that data are often lacking or incomplete on existing local organization. Many of these organizations are informal and thus outside the scope of legal definitions, and at times are unrecorded in official or scholarly annals. Yet, under certain conditions and for various tasks, project designers miss substantial opportunities to increase participatory elements in projects by failing to link them to supportive traditional organization.

⁷At Cornell the Rural Development Participation Project will give particular attention to local organizations and three other topics (local leadership, decentralization, and paraprofessional) over the next few years. The local organization team is composed of Norman Uphoff, Milton Esman, Robert Charlack, Arthur Goldsmith, Harvey Blustain, and Harry Blair, among others. Development Alternatives, Inc. is also undertaking a study of local organizations. See DAI, "A Research Proposal to Identify Alternative Organizational Strategies to Involve the Rural Poor in Development and Determine How AID Can Help Implement These Strategies" (Mimeographed Proposal, Washington, D.C., February 12, 1976). Both studies are funded by the Office of Rural Development and Administration, USAID.

An example of this can be found in the Minimum Package Program (MPP), designed by the World Bank, USAID and SIDA for post-revolutionary Ethiopia and costing more than \$100 million. Mutual-aid team farming is a long tradition in many plow areas of the country. Yet the government chose to create new peasant associations, implemented by urban organizers with little sensitivity to established cooperative activities. The MPP was to provide agricultural inputs, to bolster farming cooperatives based on the government's territorial divisions. Farmers who once jointly plowed fields and knew each other well, were asked to enter group farming activities or form cooperative enterprises with people with whom they had never associated. The recognition of this missed opportunity in a recent project study probably came too late to redirect MPP's premises of operation.⁸

In this chapter we will explore the potential of traditional organizations for increasing participation, particularly in the implementation and benefits of rural development projects. Where such organizations are able to express members' interests and opinions effectively, they can be important vehicles for influencing project design and decisions, as well. The link between indigenous organizations, participation, and rural development is an obvious, if overlooked one. As Darling notes:

Indigenous human factors are the primary determinants of development. All development activity starts with human factors and builds from that foundation. Development is achieved through indigenous processes stimulated by indigenous motivations, guided by indigenous organization, fueled by indigenous capacities working to fulfill goals that represent indigenous values....Performing but a limited role, external resources contribute to development only where they reinforce indigenous human factors.⁹

⁸Benedict Stavis, "Social Soundness Analysis of Ethiopia's Minimum Package Program II" (Paper Prepared for USAID, Washington, D.C., July 1977).

⁹Roger Darling, "A Return to Valid Development Principles," International Development Review, 19, 4 (1977), p. 28.

We will also consider experience with the more common kind of local organization introduced for development activities, such as cooperatives, which are at least nominally voluntary and which are considered more "modern" vehicles for popular participation.

i. Range of Organizations:

Indigenous organizations can be considered in terms of their functions or their forms. Some of the major functions to be found are: (1) insurance, where all members of a group share their resources with anyone meeting personal tragedy, to meet funeral expenses, for example, or to provide food for a member hard-hit by drought, disease or pests; (2) welfare, to assist community members through redistributive practices that share the surplus with all, often without regard for their contribution to its creation; (3) reciprocity, to help break resource bottlenecks, such as exchanging labor or savings on a quid pro quo basis when, for example, field preparation must be done quickly or a dowry must be paid; (4) provision of public goods, to get all persons contributing to collective facilities or services, such as roads and schools; (5) pooling of productive assets, to expand the range of productive possibilities, whether for individual or collective production, by combining labor, capital, land or water access.

Each of these functions can contribute differently to rural development. We would not classify organizations in these five categories, however, because many organizations are multi-functional, and some functions can be overlapping. A savings club that pooled capital, for instance, could have some elements of insurance or welfare associated with it, or might deploy capital for providing public goods. The listing given above serves to alert persons to the kinds of tasks that may be performed through indigenous organizations.

The major forms of traditional cooperative organization include age-grade groups, burial societies, religious celebration

clubs, rotating celebration clubs, rotating credit and savings groups, mutual-aid teams, water user associations, among others. They can range in size from small face-to-face units to large networks based on varying patterns of kinship, friendship, or territory. Organizations can usually be classified according to one of two criteria: (1) where they are built around the sharing or use of a particular factor of production, or (2) where they are defined in terms of group member characteristics, like age, sex, residence or ethnic identification. The first set of organizations tend to have a single, if important function, whereas the latter are more often multi-functional. Which classification is more relevant for development depends on the task at hand. And there are some organizations so complex and multi-functional that they defy classification, such as the gotong rojong associations in Java.¹⁰ These can encompass death and burial benefits, village public works, cleaning and keeping ancestral graves, large-scale land improvement efforts on private land, cooperative agricultural labor, and land donation. Here we will touch on the kinds of groups having the most potential for linking up with rural development efforts.¹¹

We would emphasize, however, that many indigenous organizations are not democratic in the conventional, western sense. They may not have provisions for majority rule in decisions, competition for leadership positions, formal mechanisms for

¹⁰R.M. Koentjaraningrat, Some Social-Anthropological Observations on Gotong Rojong Practices in Two Villages of Central Java (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1961), pp. 29-37.

¹¹This subject has been most systematically assessed by Robert S. Saunders, "Traditional Cooperation, Indigenous Peasants' Groups and Rural Development: A Look at Possibilities and Experiences" (background Memorandum Prepared for the World Bank, August 29, 1977). A review of Latin America is provided by Thomas F. Carroll, "Peasant Cooperation in Latin America," in Two Blades of Grass: Rural Cooperatives in Agricultural Modernization, edited by Peter Worsley (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1971), pp. 218-225.

holding leaders accountable to members, and so forth. This fact suggests indigenous organizations may be more effective as a means for fostering participation of rural people in project implementation than as a tool for encouraging bottom-up control over decision-making. Nevertheless, where members are of relatively equal status, where norms restrain the arbitrary exercise of leadership authority, or where decisions are based on group consensus, such organizations may provide a relatively accurate expression of popular will, despite the absence of conventionally democratic procedures. Determining whether or not an indigenous group encourages participation in decision-making must be done separately for each case. While such a determination is fraught with the problems of cultural relativity, a first step can be to identify the distribution of benefits resulting from the groups' decisions and actions.

Labor-Based Organizations: Mutual plowing, weeding and harvesting organizations are common in many parts of the world, and mutual aid can extend to things like house-building or roof-re-thatching. People of the same or different sex gather together to do work for one member, and then all work for other members in turn. In some communities, very strict account is kept of labor inputs, while other groups put more emphasis on festive enjoyment than on reciprocal obligation.¹² Great variability in such organizations can be found in relatively small areas.¹³ Some are

¹²See Charles Erasmus' distinction between cooperative activities based on genuine labor exchange and those based on festive rewards. "Culture, Structure and Process: The Occurrence and Disappearance of Reciprocal Farm Labor," Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, XI (1956), pp. 444-469. See also Ronald F. Dore, "Modern Cooperatives in Traditional Communities," in Worsley, Two Blades of Grass, pp. 48-50.

¹³For example, 19 different patterns of shared labor have been identified in Liberia by Hans Dieter Seibel and Andreas Massing in Traditional Organizations and Economic Development

organized on a very egalitarian basis, while others are quite stratified, and dominated by powerful members.¹⁴ Some are relatively permanent, involving the same persons year after year, while others are quite transitory, lasting perhaps only one day. (Of course, a relatively fixed kinship network of relations may make possible the quick mobilization of exchanged labor.) Some of reciprocal labor exchange may be quite voluntary (e.g., dabo among highland Ethiopians)¹⁵ whereas other systems can be quite obligatory (e.g., basumba among the Sukuma of Tanzania).¹⁶

Labor pooling arrangements may be for essentially private benefit of group members, or may mobilize labor for community-wide activity and benefit. The basumba groups just mentioned

(New York: Praeger, 1974). See also the distinctions between donkpe and adjoulon work groups in Gabriel Gosselin, "Traditional Collectivism and Modern Associations: The Example of Southern Dahomey," in Popular Participation in Social Change: Cooperatives, Collectives and Nationalized Industry, edited by June Nash et al. (Chicago: Aldine, 1976), pp. 56-60.

¹⁴The latter form of work group in Uganda is documented and analyzed by Joan Vincent in African Elite: The Big Men of a Small Town (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971).

¹⁵ Temesgien, Gobena, "Gege, Dabo and Other Communal Labors, Mainly Among the Oromo of Western Sawa and Wallage," University College of Addis Ababa Ethnological Society Bulletin, 7 (1957), pp. 65-76.

¹⁶"Each village had a group of basumba who were available to help when there was need. The young men lived at home but were summoned by the head of the group, a person elected by the village, when there was work to be done. Failure to show up meant a fine. Work, however, was rewarded with a feast, food and beer." Warren J. Roth, "Traditional Social Structure and the Development of a Marketing Cooperative in Tanzania," in Nash, Popular Participation in Social Change, p. 48.

bridge the two, as the obligation which applied originally to communal work, such as house-building, in the 1950s, was adapted to mobilizing labor to start up cotton cultivation cooperatives. Often where collective facilities, such as major irrigation channels, common flour mills, or village foot paths, are needed, and where monetization and taxation have not become important, indigenous organizations for maintenance and construction constitute a system for in-kind tax levies of labor. It is important to distinguish whether work is performed for the benefit of the village and is voluntary, or is forced by local officials as an easy way to obtain cheap labor from villagers.¹⁷

Because of the possible misuse of labor-pooling arrangements, project designers seeking creative ways to use them as participatory channels must be sensitive to whether participants view the indigenous organizations as legitimate mechanisms or as forced-labor institutions, and also whether the work contribution sought is deemed legitimate under the accepted, if unwritten, charter of the organization. Administrators should be attuned to the decision-making processes prevailing, whether the persons contributing the labor also have some voice in decisions about its employment, and whether they benefit from the labor.

Capital Based Organizations: Another very common traditional organization is the rotating credit and savings association. These take a great variety of forms, even with a particular country.¹⁸ The typical pattern is for a group of people to pool

¹⁷Saunders notes that colonial governments were often disposed to squeezing what amounted to *corvée* labor out of such groups, citing the Indonesian tradition of *gotong rojong* as an example. "Traditional Cooperation," p. 4.

¹⁸See article by Clifford Geertz, "The Rotating Credit Association: A 'Middle Ring' in Development," Economic Development and Cultural Change, 10, 3 (1962), pp. 241-263; also Douglass G. Norvell and James S. Wehrly, "A Rotating Credit Association in the Dominican Republic," Caribbean Studies, 9, 1 (1969), pp. 45-52; Jean Comhaire, "Wage Pooling as a Form of Voluntary Association

funds on a periodic basis, with one person at a time getting the whole amount. Groups commonly form around work places, farm neighborhoods, market stalls, religious centers, kinship relations, and so on. Mutual trust is obviously critical, since if earlier recipients leave the pool before the cycle is finished, later recipients receive reduced amounts. The groups may have only a handful of persons or a large number, and can last for one or many cycles. Their function is to help members accumulate a large sum at one time, often for target expenditures such as bride price, cattle purchase or business ventures.

A related group activity involves members jointly saving to purchase equipment or materials that will benefit them all, such as when women buy a labor-saving corn mill, or men jointly invest in a small truck to get their goods to more favorable urban markets. Such groups may move into a cooperative mode, where they jointly operate and benefit from the group purchase. Forming such an organization is most likely among persons of roughly similar economic status, since wealthier people will have less need for the group savings mechanisms, and poorer people may not be able to contribute enough. Substantial amounts can be mobilized in this manner, and the bonds of mutual confidence can be bases for other joint activity. It has to be determined in each case, however, whether the membership is willing to re-orient the group to tasks other than that for which it was formed.

in Ethiopian and Other African Towns," in Proceedings of the Third National Conference on Ethiopian Studies (Addis Ababa: Haile Selassie I University, Institute of Ethiopian Studies, 1970); Andrew Manzardo and E.P. Sharma, "Cost Cutting, Caste and Community: A Look at Bhokoli Social Reform in Pokhara," Journal of Nepal and Asian Studies, 11, 2 (1975), pp. 25-44; and Cliff Barton, "Rotating Credit Associations and Informal Finance: Some Examples for Vietnam" (Paper Prepared for Conference on Rural Finance Research, San Diego, July 28-August 1, 1977).

Land or Water Based Organizations: Group management of natural resources is another important basis for indigenous organization. Land can be the foundation of well-entrenched traditional cooperative activities, particularly in areas where it is held by the village or clan as a corporate unit. Since corporate tenures are often associated with shifting cultivation in fallowing systems, people tend to have established cooperative patterns for clearing forest and brush for new farm land.¹⁹ In African corporate communities, indigenous social organizations are common that regulate access to land. One can also find cooperation in land preparation, planting, and harvesting operations.

Collective production, however, is rare, most often linked to group water use when found.²⁰ More "modern," but nevertheless indigenous, are the cooperations set up by entrepreneurial cocoa farmers in Ghana in the earlier part of this century to acquire

¹⁹This relationship is interestingly presented in Hiroshi Akabane, "Traditional Patterns of Land Occupancy in Black Africa," Developing Economies, VIII (1970), pp. 161-179. Land clearance is frequently not compensated, being based on mutual assistance and solidarity. These values underlie concepts of equal access to and equitable distribution of land. For example, see description of work groups among the Minyanka of Mali in Gilles Sautter, Les Structures Agraire en Afrique (Paris: Centre de Documentation Universitaire, 1969), p. 168.

²⁰De Wilde finds mutual assistance groups pervasive in African agriculture. John C. de Wilde et al., Experience with Agricultural Development in Tropical Africa (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), pp. 86-87. It has been common for clan or tribe collectivities to regulate land held by constituent patriarchal or extended families, protecting the right of all members to exploit the land and enforcing customary tenure rules. See for example, concerning the Mashona of Rhodesia and the Tiv of Nigeria, Montague Yudelman, Africans on the Land (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), pp. 108-112; and C.K. Meek, Land Tenure and Land Administration in Nigeria and the Cameroons (London: HMSO, 1957), pp. 143-146.

new land and bring it into production.²¹ Such organization showed a talent for mobilizing capital, connecting group loyalties with individual ambition, and increasing production, though benefits remained mostly individual. Organizational talent exists in the rural sector. The question is whether it will be used or not.

Water user associations are particularly common in Asia, although they are found worldwide. Diverse traditional forms exist in China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan and Thailand. Variations abound even within limited regions.²² Usually they involve some number of farmers (20 to 200), cultivating between 50 to 300 contiguous hectares.²³ These traditional associations tend to be permanently established, their primary functions being to insure that water is fairly and regularly allocated among members, and that canals are maintained adequately. Since we will deal specifically with irrigation and participation in Chapter 9, it will not be discussed further here.

Organizations Based on Common Characteristics: Traditional organizations formed according to certain common characteristics are also to be reckoned with when considering the potential of indigenous organization for assisting development efforts.

²¹See work by Polly Hill, The Migrant Cocoa-Farmers of Southern Ghana: A Study in Rural Capitalism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963).

²²For example, L. Pasandaran distinguished four distinct types of water user associations in Java alone. "Group Management of Irrigation Systems in Indonesia" (Paper Prepared for Agricultural Development Council Seminar in Singapore, August 23-24, 1977).

²³Saunders, "Traditional Cooperation," p. 5. On indigenous water user associations generally, see E. Witter Coward, "Indigenous Irrigation Institutions and Irrigation Development in South-east Asia: Current Knowledge and Needed Research," Economic Bulletin for Asia and Pacific, 27 (1977), pp. 118-126.

Development specialists are only now beginning to study the traditional organizations formed by rural women. While such groups do not lend themselves to ready categorization, because they are often multi-functional or flexible in function, they can be active in self-help, disaster relief, expanded trade, savings mobilization, social enjoyment, and the like.²⁴ Because women's participation will be the focus of Chapter 5, we will not deal with them or their organizations here, other than to note that they may provide useful channels for increasing the participation of women in development projects in general, or as the foundation for efforts such as nutrition or child care which are commonly associated with women.²⁵

In Africa, at least, there are various age-grade organizations in traditional societies, where all persons of a given age band together in a group with specified leadership and assigned tasks. The basumba groups in Tanzania, referred to above, are an example. Among the Masai pastoralist, young men are identified as a specific "warrior" class (al-murrani). With an end to cattle rustling and welfare, their traditional function had declined to insignificance. One interesting project

²⁴Much of the research has been on women's organizations in urban areas. See, for example, Kenneth Little, "Voluntary Associations and Social Mobility among West African Women," Canadian Journal of African Studies, 6 (1972), pp. 275-288; Susan Middleton Keirn, "Voluntary Associations among Urban African Women," in Culture Change in Contemporary Africa, edited by B.M. du Toit (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1970); Rosemary Brana-Shute, "Women, Clubs and Politics: The Case of a Lower-Class Neighborhood in Paramaribo, Surinam," Urban Anthropology, 5, 2 (1976), pp. 157-185.

²⁵For interesting ideas about the relationship between women and such projects, see Criteria for Evaluation of Development Projects Involving Women (New York: American Council of Voluntary Agencies, December, 1975).

innovation in setting up cattle ranching associations among the Masai in northern Tanzania was to give the al-murrani "modern" tasks of herd control and disease prevention (tick-dipping), which seemed to satisfy successfully their desire for recognition and work.²⁶

Many traditional organizations center on spiritual or religious activities of the community. One of the more interesting and common of these is the funeral society, where groups of families help each other meet the sudden expenses of a death by contributing funds, food, and emotional support to the bereaved family.²⁷ Other organizations include spirit cults, religious self-help clubs, festival organizations, and all-embracing movements, such as the Muslim brotherhoods. Some students of development have argued that these can play a role in the development process.²⁸ If so, their potential for linking up with projects to increase rural development participation should be examined.

²⁶This experiment is described by Oleen Hess in The Establishment of Cattle Ranching Associations Among the Masai in Tanzania (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1977).

²⁷See, for example, the institutions of abuloy in the Philippines or ider Ethiopia. See Eftychia Koehn and Peter Koehn, "Edir as a Vehicle for Urban Development in Addis Ababa," in Proceedings of the First United States Conference on Ethiopian Studies, 1973, edited by Harold G. Marcus (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1975) pp. 399-426. Mary R. Hollnsteiner, "Reciprocity in the Lowland Philippines," in Four Readings on Philippine Values, edited by F. Lynch and A. Guzman (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1971).

²⁸For example, the potential for links with spirit healing groups and their involvement in health delivery efforts has been suggested by David Brokensha, Michael Horowitz and Thayer Scudder, The Anthropology of Rural Development in the Sahel: Proposals for Research (Binghamton: Institute for Development Anthropology, 1977), pp. 125-140.

Often more directly involved in development efforts are ethnic societies. These have been most noted in West Africa, for example among the Ibo of Nigeria, but are common in many countries, sometimes being identified with a particular area or town rather than an ethnic group as such. It is not uncommon to find groups of civil servants in the capital city working to get development projects started in their rural home areas. And case studies exist of quite active associations that have mobilized their people to build roads, start bus service, staff and furnish schools, and so on.²⁹ These tend to be recent additions to the community, however. Whether they are long established or new is not so important as that they not be neglected when thinking about mobilizing local ideas and inputs into development efforts. These groups may lack formal recognition, but often command the support and solidarity of people in a way that officially promoted organizations do not.

Some organizations have deep historical roots in the area and others are more recent in origin. Indeed, the judgment of what is an indigenous organization depends on the analyst's awareness of whether it was developed locally or imported from the outside, as well as the length of time it has been functioning in the community.³⁰ In addition, some organizations are fairly

²⁹ An excellent example of this is the Alemgana-Walamo Road Construction Association which had remarkable self-help achievements on the basis of ethnic ties. Focadu Cadamu, "Ethnic Associations in Ethiopia and the Urban-Rural Relationships, with Special Reference to the Alemgana-Walamo Road Construction Association," (Unpublished Ph.D. diss., University of London, 1962). The association built a road of 250 kilometers, runs 30 buses on it, administers capital of over E\$1 million and has over 100 employees.

³⁰ Saunders offers the following range of possibilities: (1) long established and locally developed -- sindicatos in Bolivia; (2) recent and locally developed -- subuk water user associations in Bali, Indonesia; (3) long established and imported -- ejido group farms in Mexico; and (4) recent and imported -- ujamaa villages in Tanzania. "Traditional Cooperation," p. 2.

permanent, such as burial association affiliated with an established church, or a major irrigation system run by a water users' association; others are quite transitory, such as a mutual-aid plowing team or a single effort to build a school. These variables affect an organization's position in its environment, and are important for assessing the strength and reliability of its bonds with members.

ii. Building on Traditional Organizations:

Beyond knowing whether the organization is permanent or transitory, local and long-established or recently imported from outside the local community, one should seek answers to the following questions: (1) who are the members? (2) what is the basis of their cooperation? (3) what functions do their organization perform? and (4) how are decisions reached and activities carried out? Complementing these questions are issues such as: (1) how have the functions of the group changed over time? (2) how cohesive is the group? and what are the possible sources of cleavage? (3) what are the qualities of leadership in the group? how are leaders selected and what range of roles is found in the organization? (4) what new groups have emerged in the community, and what is their relation, if any, to the older forms of cooperation? (5) how does the organization relate to wider political and economic structures? what views do members hold of these? (6) what influence does the group or its members have over the success of rural development projects? and (7) what possible roles might be played by traditional cooperative organizations, even if they have rarely linked up with new ideas or activities?

Questions have been raised about whether existing organizations, such as we are characterizing as "indigenous," can usefully be engaged in what are thought of as "modern" development tasks.³¹ Our view, based on reviewing the literature, is that

³¹Hunter in his consideration of this question concludes that one had better start with new, introduced organizations rather than try to energize and adapt existing ones. See Guy

the possibilities of engaging traditional organizations should be actively explored, making no assumptions in advance that they are incapable (or capable) of serving rural development project goals. This view is consistent with a study of over 70 World Bank projects, which found they "have not attempted to fully utilize the resource of indigenous patterns of cooperation in project design." This report argued that appraisal and design teams should: (1) identify existing informal institutions for cooperation in project areas; (2) facilitate their development as informal service organizations through appropriate project design; (3) draw on some of their members for local training programs; (4) sensitize project managers and government officials to the need to promote indigenous cooperative patterns; and (5) encourage experimentation in the design of strategies to achieve these ends.³² Unfortunately, the report took a fairly narrow view of participation, focusing on how the local groups could lend labor to public works efforts or mobilize capital.

The kinds of traditional organizations described above are on the decline. Greater monetization and the emergence of wage labor undercut the need for mutual-aid teams, as does the decline in such practices as clearing land in fallow farming systems. The penetration of bank branches into the countryside removes one reason for revolving credit and savings associations. The government's entry into irrigation management, service and marketing cooperatives, and other economic activities, displaces

Hunter and Janice Higgins, "Farmer and Community Groups" (London: Overseas Development Institute, Agricultural Administration Unit, mimeo, 1977). Carroll takes a more favorable view of traditional groups in "Peasant Cooperation in Latin America."

³²See Saunders, "Traditional Cooperation," p. 33.

traditional organizations that performed these tasks in unique ways. Finally, the gradual decline of corporate tenure patterns and their replacement by private tenure or by government-controlled schemes erodes more traditional, socially-set cooperative relations. Still, development has not proceeded so rapidly that traditional associations are hard to find. Development specialists should be attuned to their existence, functions, and fragilities, to draw upon their strengths for participatory rural development efforts.

Introduced Organization

The distinction made between organizations of local origin and those of extra-local origin may not always be clearcut, but we should generally look at organizations that have been introduced from outside the rural community in a somewhat different light. Such organizations may not be as well understood and appreciated by rural people, indeed they may be seen and treated as alien institutions. On the other hand, they may be freer of ingrained behavior and factional or exploitive domination. We do not want to draw any broad generalizations according to differences in origin, since they shed little light. Here we would like to consider some of the experience with cooperatives, these being the most common form of organization introduced for rural development, but the analysis applies to farmers' associations, irrigation associations, trade associations, and the like.

The term, "cooperative," is broad enough to include organizations with many different functions and structures.³³ Perhaps

³³Carroll distinguishes cooperatives that are purchasing associations, marketing associations, farm credit associations or multi-purpose societies from those that are engaged in production, whether cooperative farming with individual parcels, joint land management, or semi-collectives (such as asentamientos). "Peasant Cooperation in Latin America," pp. 201-213. Each of these forms may be fairly difficult from others.

more important than these differences among cooperatives are differences in style of operation. The pure model of a cooperative is wholly voluntary, launched at the initiative of its members to further their economic, social, and political interests. Most often in LDCs, however, cooperatives have been instituted at government direction and membership has in many cases been compulsory or even coerced. Often, only economic production or profitability goals are set forth. The line between cooperatives and other forms of organization can be vague, and cooperatives sometimes evolve into other forms, or themselves emerge out of other social organization.³⁴

Current opinion in development circles is critical of cooperatives, for some good reasons. Numerous studies in the last ten years show a host of failings with most coops, though a few cases have demonstrated enough results to keep alive the hopes for some success.³⁵ Often cooperatives have been only nominal operations, lacking technical, accounting, and other skills to operate

³⁴Matthew Edel documents how a multi-purpose cooperative grew out of community development organization in Colombia. "An Economic Evaluation of the Colombian Community Action Program" (Unpublished Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1968).

³⁵The U.S. Research Institute in 1969-70 commissioned research on 37 rural cooperatives in Asia, Africa and Latin America, publishing the results in seven volumes between 1970 and 1972. These findings have been summarized by Orlando Fals-Borda et al., in "The Crisis of Rural Cooperatives: Problems in Africa, Asia and Latin America," in Nash, Popular Participation in Social Change, pp. 439-456. See also other contributions to this volume, particularly by Gabriel Gagnon, "Cooperatives, Participation and Development: Three Failures," pp. 365-381, on Senegal, Cuba and Tunisia; and by Joan Vincent, "Rural Competition and the Cooperative Monopoly: A Ugandan Case Study," pp. 71-98. See also the contributions to Worsley, Two Blades of Grass, passim; and to C.G. Widstrand, ed., Cooperatives and Rural Development in East Africa, (New York: Africana, 1970).

effectively, and having little membership enthusiasm or input. Earlier hopes that cooperatives would be vehicles for introducing more modern and productive agriculture have seldom been fulfilled.³⁶ Of growing concern is the intentional or de facto exclusion of poorer groups from active and effective participation in most rural coops.³⁷ In Comilla, for instance, despite the efforts initially invested to give all access to the credit and technological benefits of cooperatives, with time they appear to have been coopted mainly by the more prosperous farmers in that area of Bangladesh.³⁸ Indeed, larger farmers appear sometimes to be using cooperatives to their own advantage at the expense of poorer ones.³⁹ From his assessment of cooperatives, primarily

³⁶An exception to this is the success of the cotton-growing coops among the Sukume, reported in Roth, "Traditional Social Structure."

³⁷See Hans Munkner, Cooperatives: For the Rich or for the Poor? (Marburg: Institute for Cooperation in Developing Countries, 1976); and articles by Uma Lele, "Co-operatives and the Poor: A Comparative Perspective," and Alexander Laidlaw, "Co-operatives and the Poor: A Review from within the Co-operative Movement," in Co-operatives and the Poor (London: International Co-operative Alliance, Studies and Reports, 1978), pp. 29-50, and 51-93; some of the reasons for this bias are examined by Goran Hyden in "Problems of Reaching the Poor: Implications for Cooperatives," (Paper Prepared for Symposium on Cooperatives Against Rural Poverty: Success and Limitations, Saltsjobaden, Sweden, July 31-August 4, 1978).

³⁸See Harry W. Blair, "Rural Development, Class Structure, and Bureaucracy in Bangladesh," World Development, 6, 1 (1978), pp. 65-82.

³⁹When credit was given on a group basis at Comilla, if larger farmers refused to pay they could block smaller farmers from getting any more credit. In a study of Maharashtra, credit cooperatives, Glenn Ames found that not only did larger farmers have a disproportionate share of total credit, but an even larger share of arrears. Poorer farmers were repaying their loans while larger ones were not. "Who Benefits from Credit Programs and Who Repays? Large Farmers in Village Level Cooperatives in Mysore State, India," Land Tenure Center Newsletter (January-March 1975), pp. 16-22.

in India, Hunter concludes "they are not a tool of first choice regardless of the stage of development, particularly in the early stages of modernization."⁴⁰

Still, Hunter and other critics concede a place for cooperatives in rural development efforts, particularly if the kinds of adverse experience are taken seriously by planners and administrators. Fals-Borda, Apthorpe and Inayatullah identify the need for administrative reforms that would provide more flexibility to respond to varied local conditions, and wider representation and participation where membership is confined to a minority. Beyond this, they see utility in having some additional new social organizations that promote peasant interests, while cooperatives concentrate on economic improvements within their scope.⁴¹

Cooperatives have registered few impressive successes, even among the poorer segments of the community. The Anand milk producers cooperatives (AMUL) have become nearly legendary now, with the World Bank helping to diffuse this model throughout India. Over two decades, the cooperative has built up membership to several hundred thousand farmers, most whom have only one or two cows. An intricate system of marketing, quality control and payment has been devised, workable at the grassroots by rural people with sophisticated technical and financial support from the top. (One blind spot in the organization, with respect to women's participation, will be discussed in Chapter 5.)

⁴⁰Guy Hunter, "Organization and Institutions," in Policy and Practice in Rural Development, edited by G. Hunter et al. (New York: Allenheld Osmun, 1976) p. 206.

⁴¹See Fals-Borda et al., "The Crisis of Rural Cooperatives," pp. 439-456.

The cotton marketing cooperatives in Gujerat, India are also very successful, like the ones among the Sukuma in Tanzania, noted above. Sixty percent of cotton in the area is now handled through the cooperative, with substantial benefits to members, as the AMUL. These marketing cooperatives appear to have successfully incorporated small producers on favorable terms because all members benefit if the cooperative handles a larger share of total production.⁴² The most successful multi-purpose cooperative societies have been the Taiwan Farmers' Associations, which cover all phases of production and marketing, though Japanese and South Korean coops have been similarly effective. In general, experience with production cooperatives has been less promising than for marketing, credit, input purchase, and other auxiliary functions, unless the factors of production have been socialized.⁴³

Implications for Programs

When it comes to designing and implementing programs with a view to getting broader participation by rural people, we have indicated that it seems advisable to consider first what, if any, indigenous organizations exist in the project area and whether they might be involved in the work of the program. This requires good advance planning, and often the services of an applied anthropologist or rural sociologist. The record for introduced organizations is on the whole not better than for indigenous ones, so

⁴²On the AMUL cooperative and participation, see A.H. Somjee and Geeta Somjee, "Cooperative Dairying and the Profiles of Social Change in India," Economic Development and Cultural Change, 26, 3 (1978), pp. 577-590. For an analysis of both, see Victor S. Doherty and N.S. Jodha, Conditions for Group Action Among Farmers (Hyderabad: International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics, Occasional Paper 19, October 1977).

⁴³On group farming experience, see Peter Dorner, ed., Cooperative and Commune (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977); and Chapter 10, below.

there appear to be good reasons to begin with the latter, provided that administrators are prepared to deal with them somewhat more flexibly and less autocratically than with government creations. Such a reorientation, of course, is appropriate for the latter as well.

The conclusions of some recent analyses of the role of local organizations in development activity apply to either new formal organizations or coopted existing ones. In her study of small farmer groups, Tendler found that building on indigenous associations is most likely to succeed when they are small and unconnected with other groups, and 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.⁴⁴ At a minimum, these four points would appear valid for working with any organization in the rural sector.

Saunders has completed a somewhat longer list, from World Bank project experience, of factors affecting the performance of cooperative efforts by rural people.⁴⁵ Activities are likely to have more success and participation if: (1) the proposed benefits are seen as valuable and direct; (2) the skills and time demanded are not too great; (3) past experience with self-help activities has not been negative, as with colonial *corvée* labor; (4) the population in the area is socially cohesive; (5) there has been traditionally a basis for cooperative action, especially if nurtured by government inputs of credit and technical assistance; (6) membership is small enough for face-to-face contact

⁴⁴Judith Tendler, Intercountry Evaluation of Small Farmers Organizations (Washington: USAID, Program Evaluation Series, November 1976).

⁴⁵Saunders, "Traditional Cooperation," pp. 20-32.

among members; (7) kinship organization can be involved in forming the groups; (8) project components are tailored to local conditions; (9) local leadership can be given significant responsibilities and also held accountable to the group; (10) domination by more powerful members can be restricted; and (11) organization and policies are not simply imposed from above. Most of these conclusions seem valid, though there can be some questions raised, such as about (7). Hamer's case study and analysis of self-help activities in an Ethiopian community, for instance, found that "genealogical heterogeneity" (not concentrating blood-relatives in the same group) could be a positive factor for participation and cooperation.⁴⁶

Systematic research needs to be done on factors affecting group formation and effectiveness for rural development. The basis of group formation, whether by social or territorial units, is very important, and the best unit for one task may not be best for others.⁴⁷ Much literature suggests the size of organization is very important, with too-large organizations lacking cohesion and purposefulness. Yet micro-groups have serious economic and technical limitations, so the question is how to get the advantages of small and large scale.⁴⁸ There are similar problems of trying

⁴⁶John H. Hamer, "Prerequisites and Limitations in the Development of Voluntary Self-Help Associations: A Case Study and Comparison," Anthropological Quarterly, 19, 2 (1976), pp. 118-119.

⁴⁷This is considered by Doherty and Jodha, Conditions for Group Action Among Farmers, with reference to irrigation. In Taiwan, the Farmers' Associations were formed with different boundaries than the Irrigation Associations.

⁴⁸This is discussed in J.M. Texier, "The Promotion of Cooperatives in Traditional Rural Society," and Goran Hyden, "Cooperatives as a Means of Farmer Grouping in East Africa: Expectations and Actual Performance," in Hunter et al., eds., Policy and Practice in Rural Development, pp. 215-232; also

to have both the permanence and predictability of formal organization, and the flexibility and vitality of informal groups in whatever institutions are brought into the rural development process. This will appear like trying to eat one's cake and have it too, but either extreme formality or informality leaves much to be desired, so some combination of characteristics is probably optimal.

A further problem, which Doherty and Jodha have illuminated, arises in using voluntary organizations for rural development. They found the norm of reciprocity, the basis of most organizations, conflicted with the goal of redistribution, proposed by some development programs. Various tasks may be accomplished under the first set of norms that will not support the latter goal. Doherty and Jodha suggest that redistribution must be backed up by government sanctions to succeed.⁴⁹ Thus, more consideration should be given to what parts of a participatory rural development strategy can effectively be devolved to voluntary local organizations, and which need continuing exercise of administrative power. Moreover, some organization of the beneficiaries may be necessary to implement redistributive policies, so the issue is not whether or not to have local organization, but rather, what kinds are effective and needed. This question, like many others, requires thought and attention during the design and implementation processes. The literature raises more questions than it gives answers to, because conclusions for specific contexts are not clear or consistent enough at this time.

Doherty and Jodha, "Conditions for Group Action Among Farmers," pp. 12-14. This question was addressed comparatively in Norman T. Uphoff and Milton J. Esman, Local Organization for Rural Development: Analysis of Asian Experience (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1974), p. 67 ff. The organizational strategy of having several tiers, such as the production team, brigade and commune in China, or the Small Agricultural Unit undergirding the Farmers' Association in Taiwan, seems generally useful in this regard.

⁴⁹Doherty and Jodha, Conditions for Group Action Among Farmers, p. 7 ff.

Chapter Three

LOCAL ELITES, DECENTRALIZATION AND PARTICIPATION

Local organization and administrative decentralization are not invariably vehicles for greater participation. Local organization can exist in form only, with little participation and little vitality, or they may be dominated by the more prosperous and privileged minority. Similarly, efforts to decentralize may not be matched by local effort and initiative, and the authority delegated to lower levels may be taken over by local elites. Decentralization may produce greater equity and participation, but may also produce neither. In considering means of fostering participation, we need to look at experience which is not always encouraging. Even if a general prescription for new institutions is accepted, specific problems need attention and action to prevent monopolization of the opportunities and benefits of participation.

Bell is correct in challenging any "simplistic assumption that all will be well if power and initiative are devolved to the local level."¹ Local power structures and their national linkages, as he puts it, dominate the balance and effects, intended and otherwise, of policy measures. The same argument is pointedly made by Griffen.² Without making too broad an indictment, one should be aware of the power certain groups in rural communities

¹C.L.G. Bell, "The Political Framework," in Redistribution with Growth, edited by Hollis Chenery et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974) p. 55.

²Keith Griffen, The Political Economy of Agrarian Change: An Essay on the Green Revolution (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974).

have to protect and advance their interests. What has been sometimes loosely called "resistance to change" at the local level, might better be seen as resistance to changing the status quo in which some benefit much more than others. The same social structure that produces traditional, often informal organization, also establishes traditional, often informal leadership which has a dominant role in community affairs.

The hazards of administrative decentralization are real, but it is also true that the present degrees of centralization in most LDCs enhance neither development nor participation as presently defined. Impressive production gains may occur in particular sectors where efforts are concentrated, but overall performance usually leaves much to be desired, as in a centralized country like Mexico, which grew rapidly earlier, but whose agriculture is stagnant now.³ As discussed below, even countries such as India, where policies were supposed to provide broad economic and political participation through institutions like the panchayats,

³Although aggregate GNP growth rate was quite good through the mid-1970s, agricultural growth was slowing from the mid-1960s owing to the highly dualistic structure of the sector. About 80 percent of the incremental production had been coming from only three percent of the farm units (large-scale, mechanized) which received almost all of the capital resources for agriculture. Between 1961-65 and 1976, per capita food production went up only four percent, and total agricultural production per capita declined by six percent in this period. Already between 1950 and 1960, employment in the rural sector had declined by nearly half, with annual real income per worker falling from \$68 to \$56, and this trend continued into the 1970s. See Roger D. Hansen, The Politics of Mexican Development (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), and Merilee S. Grindle, Peasants, Politicians and Bureaucrats (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977). These works analyze the relationship between economic and political factors. By now, about 50 percent of the population is "marginal," outside the mainstream of economic production or effective social and political participation.

very little decentralization has occurred in practice.⁴

There are different views to be considered on this subject. Decentralization is by no means a panacea, even for participation. In her comparative study, Walsh found "little evidence that local government consistently involves broader public participation in decision-making than does the central government."⁵ And in her review of the literature with regard to urban development, Bryant found arguments that participation, invariably unequal, is likely to skew benefits.⁶ Both of these conclusions point to the need to look beyond formalistic delegations of authority, to assess the dynamics of local interests and powerful groups. This granted, there is no evidence to the contrary, suggesting that disadvantaged and less powerful groups will be better able to get their needs attended to within highly centralized structures of government. The rich and powerful may be as, or more, able to protect their advantages, when decisions are made far away from the village or district center. These conflicting lines of argument need to be sorted out in any review of participation problems and possibilities.

⁴In his study of panchayats and community development, Gerald Sussman found there was no real attempt by government services to foster participation in planning or decision-making, and indeed, dependence was fostered as a consequence of the tight controls maintained by bureaucrats. See "The Pilot Project and the Design of Implementing Strategies: Community Development in India," in Politics and Policy Implementation in the Third World, edited by Merilee S. Grindle (forthcoming).

⁵Annamarie Hauck Walsh, The Urban Challenge to Government: An International Comparison of Thirteen Cities (New York: Praeger, 1969). Though her focus was on the urban sector, it is consistent with our concern for the rural sector.

⁶Coralie Bryant, "Urban Development and Participation: A State of the Art Paper" (Washington, D.C.: USAID, 1976), pp. 30-31. She cites analyses done mostly in the U.S., but the point is made also by Robert Chambers in Managing Rural Development: Ideas and Experience from East Africa (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1974), p. 108.

Local Elites

The structure of local communities is often complex, certainly if one goes beyond the individual village and deals with localities up to, say, the district level. The variety of elites is likely to be considerable, so that broad generalizations are not very useful. Local elites can be classified according to the resource bases from which they derive power and advantages, or according to the structures on which their position is based. The power resource bases of local elites are analytically separable, though often in practice the bases are cumulative. To the extent that power is multiply reinforced, it is that much greater and more secure. This is an important consideration when trying to assess the role and power of local elites as they might affect different kinds of participation.

Most often local elites are identified according to (1) wealth, having greater command over economic resources, whether land or capital (sometimes control over labor) -- landlords, merchants and moneylenders come under this category; (2) status, being identified with a prestigious family, clan or other social group able to command esteem and deference from others -- where there are remnants of aristocracy or ethnic/racial hegemony this kind of elite may be found; (3) education, being trained to perform professional roles such as doctor, lawyer, teacher or administrator; (4) political influence, having goods or services to distribute to loyal followers, as local bosses or party cadres are often able to; (5) political authority, flowing from some recognized position of power in the community, for instance that of headman or other local office; (6) moral authority, being regarded by others as deserving obedience, for example, religious leaders, or elders in a society that has great respect for age; and possibly (7) force, having control over the use of coercion against others, as, for instance, with a local military commander or police chief who can act as he wishes, or with a petty warlord, brigand, boss, or other local "strongman."

Where persons can combine, say, prestige with authority, or wealth with force, they become more dominant unless these resource advantages are offset by collective action on the part of other persons. Elites based on wealth or force are probably the most able to impede participation, because elites with other bases are vulnerable to pressure from members of the public, who may withdraw respect from those previously respected, who may acquire some education themselves, or who may resist authority unless it is exercised in ways judged acceptable. Control over wealth and force can usually be easily converted into sanctions for securing compliance. Where such dominance occurs, it should be clear that resources need to be neutralized to open the scope for participation by more representative persons.

One of the most useful analyses in the literature is Landé's contrast between two kinds of organization, each producing a different kind of leader, who will be more or less amenable to participation.⁷ Though the cases analyzed are from Southeast Asia, the concepts are drawn from African and Latin American experience as well. Landé distinguishes between associations based on some common trait of members, and followings, constructed out of vertical bonds between followers and a common leader, called patron-client relationships in much of the literature. Some of the differences are presented in the accompanying table. Both kinds of organizations can be found in most LDCs, though followings are often more common than associations. This implication for participation are very clear. To the extent that local elites base their power on associations, they are to some extent accountable to their membership, and power for the elite is likely

⁷Carl H. Landé, "Networks and Groups in Southeast Asia: Some Observations on the Group Theory of Politics," American Political Science Review, LXVII, 1 (1973), pp. 103-127.

ASSOCIATIONS	FOLLOWINGS
Grow out of some common characteristics, where common interest of members can only be attained by group action	Created by their leaders, where there are opportunities for mutually advantageous (not necessarily equal) exchanges with followers
Heads of association entrusted with authority to act by the members, enforced by sanctions imposed by the group	Leaders of followings act on their own initiative, maybe some consultation; few group sanctions, depend heavily on consent of each follower
Heads share trait with members; rank-and-file regard themselves as members with rights and obligations toward the group	Leader has superior status and other resources over followers; rank-and-file regard themselves as making claims upon and owing favors to leader
Heads must be "responsible" for actions taken on group's behalf; "responsibility" enforced by group's collective action	Leaders responsive to private demand of individual members; leaders have considerable freedom to set policies as long as members' needs satisfied
Rival associations dissimilar in composition and goals	Rival associations similar in composition and goals
Rely on collective action by members; likely to engage in conflict with opposing groups	Rely on manipulative skill of leader to play actors off against each other, woo others' allies away, and so forth
Alliances between associations relatively stable; members do not shift allegiance much	Alliances between following unstable; followers may shift allegiance often
Equality within groups highly valued	Favoritism valued and often explicit
Seek officers committed to collective goals, maintaining group control over members, and enforcing compliance with decisions	Create leaders who are sensitive to needs of individual followers, able to intercede with other powerholders on their behalf

Source: Adapted from Landé, "Networks and Groups in Southeast Asia," pp. 122-126.

to benefit members. The opposite holds for followings, where leaders often starting out with resource advantages of wealth, status, force, and so on, build up a group that multiplies leaders' personal power.

In followings, rather than associations, the rank-and-file members do not have favorable prospects for participation in decisions. Such participation as occurs is likely to be in implementing actions initiated by the personalistic leader. We do not want to argue that all associations heads are beneficent and all leaders of followings exploitative; but structural differences make it more desirable to work with associations, because their members have greater voice in group action and outcomes. Where local elites, whatever their resource base, work with and through associations they are more likely to support greater participation, than if involved in the patron-client politics of followings.⁸

One of the continuing controversies in the literature, similar to the debate over whether traditional organizations can be effective in attempting "modern" development, is whether traditional leaders -- such as village headmen, clan leaders, priests, or healers -- can be enlisted to play constructive roles in development programs. The argument can be made that "modern" (usually more educated) leaders are more in tune with development objectives and have more relevant skills. At the same time, it may be argued that "traditional" leaders are likely to have more

⁸We are not going specifically into the literature and arguments about patron-client relations but are dealing with them under more general terms. For references and analyses on patron-client relations, see pp. 41-43 in John M. Cohen et al., Participation at the Local Level: A Working Bibliography (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1978), and review article by James C. Scott, "Political Clientelism: A Bibliographic Essay," in Friends, Followers and Factions: A Reader in Political Clientelism, edited by Stefan W. Schmidt et al. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), pp. 483-507.

experience in mobilizing local efforts and more confidence from the people. There is probably no way of reaching meaningful general conclusions as to which set of leaders is likely to be more effective for promoting rural development participation. Much depends on the specific task and the specific environment. In one of the few empirical tests of the proposition, Vengroff found no significant difference between traditional and modern leaders in completing local development projects, run by Village Development Councils in Botswana.⁹ Each set of leaders had different yet equal resources, so that the traditional and more modern authorities balanced each other out.

While it may be argued there is no general difference between traditional and modern leaders concerning development, traditional leaders still must be reckoned with wherever they exist. Miller found from his analysis of Tanzanian experience, where chiefs were officially dethroned in 1963, that their influence did not end, and that the government often appointed them as local officials because of their effectiveness. This led him to view traditional leaders as indispensable bridges between the community and the government.¹⁰ In Niger, Charlick found the government

⁹See Richard Vengroff, "Popular Participation and Administration of Rural Development: The Case of Botswana," Human Organization, 23 (1974), pp. 303-309. He compared the success in completing rural development projects of Village Development Councils where they were led by chiefs, by elected ("modern") authorities or by both or neither.

¹⁰Norman N. Miller, "The Political Survival of Traditional Leadership," Journal of Modern African Studies, 6, 2 (1968), pp. 183-198. Elliot Skinner found this conjunction between the "traditional" leaders and the "modern" government not paradoxical at all because of the financial and technical inability of modern African states to implement new institutions. He cited a similar resurgence of rural chiefs in Upper Volta. "The 'Paradox' of Rural Leadership: A Comment," Journal of Modern African Studies, 6, 2 (1968), pp. 199-201.

could not bypass traditional leaders with its animation rurale program, although it tried. Traditional leaders easily gained control of cooperatives and other new institutions at the grass-roots, and the government had to accommodate to their power.¹¹

Established local power groups can seldom be bypassed, because the ability of LDC governments to control social relations at the local level is frequently negligible. Inspectors or other officials may visit villages from time to time, but the economic, social, and political power of local elites is such that relations usually revert to "normal" once the outsiders leave. It takes a revolution to shift power bases significantly, and even then, post-revolutionary regimes have found the formerly powerful still enjoying certain advantages, because of their education, residual status, or political skills.

This implies projects should take account of local power holders and brokers. Implementers might well consider how to involve them in the workings of the project, so they are at least not hostile to it. Their support is a positive advantage.¹² What are the implications of this for popular participation? There can certainly be contradictions between seeking accomodation

¹¹Robert Charlick, "Induced Participation in Nigerian Modernization: The Case of Matameye County," Rural Africana, 18 (1972), pp. 5-29.

¹²Writing about one of the most successful community development projects in India, Julia Abrahamson says: "Experience in other countries has shown that successful community development demands far more than involvement and participation by the people in the affected neighborhoods. Power groups in and out of government -- and the citizens responsible for their power -- have to be convinced that the work is important, that their participation is essential to its success, and that the results in added prestige and progress for their community make it personally meaningful and satisfying to those who make it possible." "Involving People in Community Development: The Baroda Project," Community Development Journal, V, 1 (1970), pp. 17-24.

and involvement from local elites, and getting active inputs from and gains for the poor majority. The contradictions need to be faced up to and handled under the specific conditions. As Bell points out, several factors can work in favor of the poor. First, it is possible that the elite, or some sections of it, will make concessions out of enlightened self-interest, not only because they may fear, rightly or otherwise, the revolutionary potential of the poor, but because some kinds of advancement for the poor have pay-offs to the rich. Education and health, for example, can lead to a more productive working force. "The second possibility is that the different constituent groups of the elite will have conflicts serious enough for them to seek a measure of support from among other groups of the polity."¹³ To the extent that elite groups are in competition, the different groups within the majority are in a better position to get attention and benefits, and to have some voice in policy processes, directly or indirectly. (To be sure, extensive competition among non-elite groups, will cost them what bargaining leverage they might have had.) Project implementers should be attuned to conflicts of interest within the elite, and while not necessarily fomenting these, should be prepared to use such opportunities to achieve greater influence and involvement by majority groups.

The Pitfalls of Decentralization for Participation

The problems that can arise in connection with decentralization need to be examined in light of experience. Certainly, decentralization and participation are connected in some ways. In one of the most thorough and thoughtful studies done to date on rural development participation, dealing with Zambian experience, participation is defined as "a process of interaction, organized for the

¹³Bell, "The Political Framework," p. 54.

sharing of functions between the public service and the people."¹⁴ This definition equates participation with decentralization, as it is usually understood. Such a link may be too close, since it would restrict participation to involvement in decentralized government.

It is important to be clear about what constitutes decentralization. The term sometimes is used for what can better be called deconcentration, where decisions are reassigned to subordinate levels of administration, so that fewer decisions are concentrated among officials in the capital city. But deconcentration does not give members of the public much more of a share in decision-making; at best they have more access to bureaucratic decision-makers. This may make for more participation than if all decisions remain at the center, since rural people should be better able to make claims and lobby if decision-makers are physically closer to them. Travelling to a remote capital city is more costly, not to mention more intimidating, than dealing with bureaucrats posted in the local area. Still, for increasing popular participation, devolution of authority, giving lower echelon elected officials greater power, is more promising than administrative deconcentration. Compared to bureaucrats, elected decision-makers at the regional, district, or sub-district level are much more accessible and more easily held accountable for the choices that affect people's lives.

Assessing experience with decentralization is difficult, because much of what has been advertised has been bogus, with little authority and other resources permitted to subordinate bodies. We already noted in Chapter 1 how this has been too often the case

¹⁴ Administration for Rural Development Research Project, Organization for Participation in Rural Development in Zambia (Lusaka: National Institute of Public Administration, University of Zambia, and the Free University of Amsterdam, 1977), p. 12.

in India.¹⁵ Some of the most graphic examples come from East and Central Africa, where there have been numerous experiments with what passes for decentralization (experiments in Latin America have been relatively few). Both Tanzania and Kenya introduced procedures and institutions for decentralized planning for rural development in the latter 1960s, but neither the content nor the spirit of these exercises amounted to much. The meetings at the lowest level in Kenya have "usually been a forum for earnest discussion of plans and rectification of complaints," one report said, but the next higher level

is usually addressed only by recognized local leaders, and at the Divisional/District levels the only local participation is to sit in the hot sun and clap when visiting dignitaries have finished lecturing in a strange language.¹⁶

A government staff member reportedly told local people at one such meeting:

There is a plan being drawn up for this area. As soon as it is out, we will let you know what you are expected to do.¹⁷

¹⁵ See also Guy Hunter, The Administration of Agricultural Development: Lessons from India (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970); Norman Nicholson, Panchayati Raj, Rural Development and the Political Economy of Village India (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1973); Ramdas N. Haldipur, "Elected Bodies and Agricultural Development in India," in Policy and Practice in Rural Development, edited by Guy Hunter et al. (New York: Allenheld Osmun, 1976), pp. 464-474.

¹⁶ Susan Almy and Philip Mbithi, "Local Involvement in the SRDP," in An Overall Evaluation of the Special Rural Development Program (Nairobi: University of Nairobi, Institute for Development Studies, Occasional Paper 8, 1973), p. 9.

¹⁷ Cited in W.O. Oyugi, "Participation in Planning at the Local Level," in Rural Administration in Kenya, edited by David K. Leonard (Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1973), pp. 59-66.

In Tanzania, a document called "Planning in Tanzania" reported:

An attempt was made to base the annual plan on regional annual plans and statements of regional priorities. Sixteen such plans were prepared using a basic format and approach worked out by Devplan. They were prepared mainly by the regional economic secretaries, sometimes singlehanded, in which case they could not be said necessarily to reflect the views of the people in the region.¹⁸

Lele in considering the Kenya and Tanzania experience in some detail concludes:

Even where development of local participation is an important objective of rural development and where political education in mass participation is a key element of the development strategy, as in Tanzania, programs have not developed genuine participation and responsibility among the rural people. In SRDP [Special Rural Development Programme] of Kenya, participation of the rural people in the planning and even in the implementation of programs has been very limited.¹⁹

Similar reports come from studies of Village Development Committees in Zambia and Botswana.²⁰ Almy and Mbithi describe the resistance of planners and administrators to real local involvement in rural development planning, yet they report improved performance once the consultations and committees became

¹⁸ Cited by Guy Hunter, "Organization and Institutions," in Hunter, Policy and Practice, pp. 200-201. He notes with emphasis the idea of regional planners preparing plans "sometimes singlehanded."

¹⁹ See Uma Lele, The Design of Rural Development: Lessons from Africa (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1975), p. 162.

²⁰ On Zambian experience, see Administration for Rural Development, Organization for Participation in Rural Development. John D. Holm in his analysis of "Rural Development in Botswana: Three Basic Political Trends," found popular participation to be mostly an instrument for bureaucratic domination of the village modernization process. Rural Africana, 18 (1972), pp. 80-92.

effective, and a change in government officials' attitudes.²¹ Officials responded to the initiative of local communities, and more ideas and effort were forthcoming from the local people. Chambers attributes the "failure" of most local development committees to accomplish anything to the fact that they were not given anything to do. He says activity occurred when committees were given clear guidelines or asked to recommend on development decisions. When plans prepared at district level, with assistance from above, seemed likely to receive funds, the committees were "galvanized" into action, holding much more frequent meetings, with members contributing ideas and proposals.²²

Assuming we are dealing with authentic and not spurious decentralization, a number of problems must be weighted, and avoided if possible. Some are serious; some have resulted largely from the way decentralization has been implemented. We will begin with the latter.

First, there is a fear that allowing the majority greater voice in allocating resources will overwhelm the government with excessive demands.²³ This is always a possibility, but the lack of responsibility given to local government bodies has itself encouraged "irresponsible" demands, which become rational given the context within which the bodies operate. Since the local units lack authority to determine resource uses, they stand the

²¹ Almy and Mbithi, "Local Involvement in the SRDP."

²² Chambers, Managing Rural Development, p. 92.

²³ This has been most eloquently written about by Samuel P. Huntington in Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968). This argument has been used to justify "de-participation," restricting people's involvement in government decision-making.

best chance of getting investments from above by inflating their demands. After all, they are not responsible for raising the resources involved, or even for the results of activity. When central governments are unwilling to devolve authority or taxing powers, they invite extravagant demands upon their limited resources.²⁴ Such demands are then held up as "proof" that the people are too immature or unrealistic to share more in decision-making.

Second, opponents of decentralization charge it will increase corruption in development activities; but a reasonable argument is that corruption can be controlled with more, rather than less, public participation in decision making. The ILO report on Philippine development called for the "goldfish bowl" approach, in which public exposure through information channels is used to deter diversion of public resources, rather than using elaborate auditing procedures by higher levels of government.²⁵ An instructive case study is Hadden's analysis of rural electrification in the Indian state of Rajasthan. Comparing centralized bureaucratic with more participatory, decentralized modes of allocating a very

²⁴Hal Colebatch, for example, has shown how continued central control in Kenya over local council finances, after transferring to these bodies a number of service functions, led to "crisis financing." This however, "was not necessarily a sign of financial incompetence on the part of the councils; in fact, it was the most rational response to the rules of the game as they then applied." See "Local Councils and Local Services in Kenya," Institute for Development Studies Bulletin (Sussex), 6, 1 (1974), pp. 13-24. In Zambia, Ward Development Committees were given no authority to make decisions and no resources to implement programs, so they simply passed numerous proposals upward, hoping that at least some would make it through the bureaucratic maze and be eventually implemented. See Administration for Rural Development, Organization for Participation in Rural Development.

²⁵See International Labour Office, Sharing in Development: A Programme of Employment Equity and Growth for the Philippines (Geneva: ILO, 1974), pp. 68-69.

scarce resource -- hookups for rural villages to the state electricity grid -- she found the latter approach to decision-making, introduced in 1969, with a public body of political leaders and officials making decisions among competing villages, led more often to decisions meeting stated criteria or productivity and efficiency than when decisions rested with the engineers and administrators of the State Electricity Board.²⁶ The Board's decisions were more subject to behind-the-scenes influences of MPs and business interests, than were the local officials, who had to post lists of all applicant villages and give public justifications for their decisions. There is no evidence that decentralized administration and decision-making result in more corruption than do centralized approaches.²⁷

Third, factionalism can be a serious problem, leading to immobility of governing bodies. Rothenberg gives an excellent example of how decentralizing decisions into a horizontally fragmented system can be dangerous.²⁸ This phenomenon, if not

²⁶ See Susan G. Hadden, Decentralization and Rural Electrification in Rajasthan, India (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1974).

²⁷ John P. Lewis argues that corruption should be less with decentralization: "Actually it can be argued that the fewer the hierarchical clearances upward a decision requires, the fewer are the opportunities for corruption. Beyond this, probity can be served by the requirement of maximum openness in all local budgetary and other transactions." See "Designing the Public Works Mode of Anti-Poverty Policy," in Income Distribution and Growth in Less-Developed Countries, edited by Charles Frank, Jr. and Richard Webb (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1977), p. 359.

²⁸ Irene F. Rothenberg, "Administrative Decisions and the Implementation of Housing Policy in Colombia," in Politics and Policy Implementation in the Third World, edited by Merilee Grindle (forthcoming). The case deals with housing agencies and boards beset by factional struggle over patronage jobs. Although there was electoral participation by members of the public, this has been channelled into competition for spoils of office. The officials were in no way directly accountable to their clientele, the urban poor who needed public housing.

universal, is fairly common throughout the world in one guise or another, but it is often most blatant in situations where the resources to be distributed are scarcest. There, the logic of zero-sum competition shapes people's consciousness more acutely, and maneuvering to be part of a minimum winning coalition ensues. Where politics is treated as a purely distributive enterprise, with no direct responsibility for helping to finance the benefits being allocated, factional behavior appears to pay dividends. A winner-take-all mentality leads to unfair tactics, and also to instability, when people shift from one alignment to another in hope of bettering their position.

The literature on factionalism makes clear this phenomenon is rooted in kinship, caste, ethnic, and other social distinctions. But it appears to be fueled by conditions of scarcity and encouraged by forms of government that are not fully "responsible." Where people can lay claim to benefits, not on the basis of having helped to produce them, but because they control decisions, the conditions for factional strife are ripe. One should not gloss over the problem of factionalism, as it can seriously debilitate local government. But an analysis of factional behavior suggests it is in part a consequence of non-responsible government. The "cure" often introduced for factionalism -- greater bureaucratic control over local decisions concerning resources, and less allowance of independent resource mobilization at the local level -- itself raises the "fever."²⁹

Some would point to the apathy of many people toward participation in decentralized processes as a fourth problem.³⁰

²⁹ See Haldipur, "Elected Bodies and Agricultural Development in India," pp. 472-473.

³⁰ This is pointed out by Mary R. Hollnsteiner as one of the objections raised to providing for more popular participation. "Local Initiatives and Modes of Participation in Asian Cities," Assignment Children (UNICEF), 40 (1977), pp. 11-48.

Certainly this can hinder effective development work, if active and supportive involvement is not forthcoming. Where people are apathetic, it may be attributed to their history of powerlessness, due to the monopolization of decisions by the central government or rural elites. We have already cited Chambers' account of good and effective response from people in East Africa when satisfied that enough authority and financial resources were at stake to make their effort worthwhile. While unresponsiveness can pose problems for decentralization, the solution seems to be more, rather than less, opportunity for people to participate. Getting such participatory capacity where it has been stunted "takes time to develop," according to Chambers, and also an investment of authority and other resources.³¹

A fifth objection can be the fear of delays, which officials anticipate when others are given a role in the planning and decision process. Rural development projects targeted at the poor are already slow to implement, characterized by difficult logistics and hard-to-supervise staff. In such a setting, as Chambers notes, "participation implies going at the people's pace; poor people often take time to realize what they can achieve and there are many obstacles to their becoming organized."³² Without question, there are many examples where action was held up by persons and groups who did not agree with each other or with the planners' ideas. At the same time, some of the delays may have been quite justified, when attempting to rectify planners' misconceptions or build a broad base of support for the new activity.³³ The

³¹Chambers, Managing Rural Development, p. 93.

³²Robert Chambers, "Project Selection for Poverty-Focused Rural Development: Simple is Optimal," World Development, 6, 2 (1978), pp. 209-219.

³³Hollnsteiner, "Local Initiatives."

resulting decisions and efforts may well be "better" for the delay, and even for the "subversion" of experts' initial plans. Also questionable is whether decentralization necessarily causes overall delay; while the start-up is slower, the completion may well be quicker, as well as better.³⁴

Sixth, one of the most substantial objections, raised in the first part of this chapter, is the likelihood that decentralized authority will be captured by local elites and used primarily for their benefit. This cannot be denied, and the rejoinder must be to ask whether authority retained by the center is more likely to be used for the benefit of people living in rural communities. Trusting authority to bureaucratic organization, even under radical or reformist leadership, is not more promising than devolution, according to one systematic analysis of policy implementation across the Third World -- Montgomery's comparison of land reform results in 30 cases, discussed below. Elites are going to be over-represented in any process of decision-making. The question is whether their advantages are greater when operating in the "goldfish bowl" of local organization, or in the more remote corridors and chambers of central government. Haldipur reports studies in India show increasing assertiveness and criticism from villagers acting through their local governments.³⁵ Learning to exercise the power residing in an electoral majority,

³⁴Lele suggests that an initial stages, project expansion may have to take place at a slower pace, to develop an understanding of the rural social structure and delegate genuine responsibility for administration to local organizations. "Such a participatory as distinct from a paternalistic, approach to development seems critical for the long-term viability of rural development projects beyond the stage of donor involvement." The Design of Rural Development, p. 99. We note in Chapter I the study of community experience in Tanzania, where it took a while to reach consensus on the activity for the day, but once agreed upon, work was done faster and harder than otherwise. James Erain, "A Bridge in Meru," Community Development Journal, 4, 1 (1969), pp. 17-23.

³⁵See Haldipur, "Elected Bodies and Agricultural Development in India."

gaining confidence that efforts can and will be rewarded, and developing coalitions for change at the local level require time. Alternative leadership does not spring forth automatically, but government actions to favor representatives of the poor majority and establishment of multiple channels for participation -- through local government, cooperatives, party organization, voluntary associations and other institutions -- can change power balances and reduce the likelihood of "capture."³⁶

Seventh, still more difficult to deal with are the problems of mismanagement. This already affects administration of many programs at the local level, and would probably increase with decentralization. The greater the tasks given to local organizations, the more scope there is for incompetence, as well as corruption. Fortunately, in most LDCs, where the majority of the population live in rural communities, the majority of human talent and mental capacity is also located there. But the able people in rural communities lack formal training and often literacy. Unfortunately, many of the requirements and processes for formal local organization seem to have been designed to exclude local people from any role in management. This may not be intentional, but rather the result of applying big project management techniques to small, administrative-intensive projects, not suitable to complex management or appraisal styles. Chambers' "simple is optimal" rule makes good sense,³⁷ and if implemented would

³⁶An instructive case study showing how this process can work is by Iliva Harik, The Political Mobilization of Peasants: Study of an Egyptian Village (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974). The power of the large landowner was broken in the wake of land reform, institutionalization of more active local government and separate cooperative organization for the land reform beneficiaries.

³⁷Chambers, "Project Selection for Poverty-Focused Rural Development," pp. 214-217. He describes how to do this through techniques of decentralization plus simple approaches (decision matrices, poverty group rankings, checklists, listing costs and benefits, and unit costs and cost effectiveness).

allow local people to play a role in project administration, helping conserve the limited managerial talent now available for rural development. Most organizations could be managed by people with limited education, if simplified and more appropriate methods of reporting, bookkeeping, and so on, were devised. This could better call upon local information and latent managerial ability. It sometimes appears as though educated officials imitating western practices, devise systems that assure them of full employment, to cope with the work thus created. A disposition on the part of the educated class is needed to help make a system work which incorporates able and respected representatives of rural communities into processes of decision-making and leadership.

Eighth, one of the most troublesome aspects of decentralization is the tendency to reinforce regional disparities. To the extent that responsibility for financing rural development is devolved to local units, disadvantaged localities will have fewer resources to improve their situation.³⁸ This tendency cannot be denied, but two factors can offset it somewhat. First, the central government can adopt different formulas for "matching", which require less contribution in relative terms from the underdeveloped areas. Second, greater participation and self-help contributions may be forthcoming in more remote and underdeveloped communities. Individuals there are unable to obtain government services easily and must rely upon themselves.³⁹ Countervailing

³⁸This point is well made by Chambers in Managing Rural Development, pp. 108 ff.

³⁹See Mitchell A. Seligson and John A. Booth, "Political Participation in Latin America: An Agenda for Research," Latin American Research Review, XI, 3 (1976), p. 103; see also John A. Booth, "Organizational Processes in the Growing Community: Strategies for Development," Journal of the Community Development Society, 6 (1975), pp. 13-25.

the tendency toward regional disparity often seems like trying to make water run uphill, and decentralization may make it even more difficult. But at the same time, centralized systems also usually neglect backward areas, possibly apart from some "show-piece" projects. So the important question is whether or not poorer areas are really worse off with decentralization.

The issue of decentralization is closely related to the attitudes of bureaucrats toward its promotion. As the International Labour Organization points out, the implementation of the basic needs approach:

"...requires a decentralized and democratic administrative structure to translate policies into decision and action, and mass participation in the development process by poverty groups. Non-conventional administrative procedures and career patterns are also called for."⁴⁰

Concern is justified about the widely-held and deeply-ingrained attitudes of civil servants that run against participatory goals. We cited some of these with reference to Kenya and Tanzania above. Hollnsteiner has commented on this as an obstacle in the Asian context,⁴¹ and it is well-shown in the case study from Peru by Conlin.⁴² Elite specialists commonly believe they know best, resulting in a paternalism that refuses to share authority

⁴⁰International Labour Organization, Employment, Growth and Basic Needs: A One-World Problem (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977), p. 66.

⁴¹Hollnsteiner, "Local Initiatives."

⁴²Sean Conlin, "Participation versus Expertise," International Journal of Comparative Sociology, XV, 3-4 (1974), pp. 151-166. This case deals with planning on a cooperative enterprise post-land reform, where the expert is supposed to help the peasant committee but actually preempts all decisions himself.

with those who are less educated and less well-placed socially. As Belloncle and Gentil put it, planners often look at adult peasants as big children who need constant watching.⁴³ The dangers of such paternalism are many. On the one hand, it leads officials to underestimate the capacities of rural people to help manage and improve their own affairs. On the other hand, it leads rural people to resent officials, resulting in non-cooperation and possible active resistance.

Those promoting participation need to pay attention to the relationships within and among bureaucracies, bureaucrats and clients. Participation by bureaucrats and managers within organizations has an effect on external participation. As Brinkerhoff points out

if bureaucrat/managers possess a 'top down' set of intra-organizational role orientations they are quite likely to hold a similar set applying to clients. The implications for implementation participation are clear: the probability of 'top down' administrators recognizing the legitimacy of a 'bottom-up' approach to clients is low."⁴⁴

More needs to be known about fostering participation within bureaucracies, particularly those seeking to promote rural development participation.⁴⁵

⁴³G. Belloncle and D. Gentil, cited in Lele, The Design of Rural Development, p. 99.

⁴⁴Derick W. Brinkerhoff, "Inside Public Bureaucracy: Empowering Managers to Empower Clients" (Draft manuscript, November 1, 1978), citing Ross Clayton and Ron Gilbert, "Perspectives on Public Managers: Their Implications for Public-Service Delivery Systems," Public Management, LI (1971), pp. 8-13. Brinkerhoff is working on this problem at Harvard University's Center for International Affairs.

⁴⁵For insights into this as an organization theory issue see: Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Men and Women of the Corporation (New York: Basic Books, 1977). In development projects see: David K. Leonard, Reaching the Peasant Farmer: Organization Theory and Practice in Kenya (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977); Allen D. Jedlicka, Organization for Rural Development: Risk Taking and Appropriate Technology (New York: Praeger, 1977).

Cooperative attitudes and relationships between civil servants and rural people cannot be created by decree. Positive mutual experience is needed that reinforces more favorable dispositions toward working together. The theory of cognitive dissonance would suggest that one not wait for attitudes to change before moving to decentralize some activities, since attitudes are likely to accommodate whatever behavior patterns exist. With structural reorganization to make officials accountable to rural people through their local government or other organizational units, one should expect reorientation of norms. This has been evident from the performance orientation of officials in Taiwan, once they were put under the jurisdiction of the Farmers' Associations and Irrigation Associations.

Implications for Participation

Most of the objections or cautions cited with regard to decentralization are to be taken seriously, though as indicated, the best response may not be to cling to centralized administration but to proceed carefully with some measure of decentralization. One of the few systematic, comparative studies of policy implementation is by Montgomery, concerning land reform in some 30 cases analyzed for the AID Spring Review in 1970.⁴⁶ He found the factor accounting for most of the variation in success (measured in terms of peasants' increases in income, security of tenure, and political power) was the degree of decentralization of authority for implementing land reform. The ideology of the regime, the reasons for undertaking land reform, even the previous inequality of land distribution, did not explain so well the

⁴⁶John D. Montgomery, "The Allocation of Authority in Land Reform Programs: A Comparative Study of Administrative Processes and Outputs," Administrative Science Quarterly, 17, 1 (1972), pp. 62-75.

frequency with which peasants benefitted from land reform. In the decentralized cases, local people -- elites as well as the poor majority -- had some voice in deciding which land would be redistributed, who would be eligible to receive it, and so on. Though there are reasons to expect such implementation would be short-circuited by elites, it appears that elites dominate more powerfully (or bureaucrats operate more indifferently) when decisions are retained at higher levels of government, regardless of regime ideology or policy motivations.

For reasons like this the ILO mission to the Philippines to design a country development strategy, strongly emphasized decentralization for the government to achieve needed "rural mobilization":

The Philippines is no exception to the rule that higher levels of government tend to be poorly informed of the needs of people at the local level and of the best ways...of satisfying these needs. In general, maximum progress depends on maximum participation, a situation in which all members of the society have a stake in that progress and contribute to it.

Whereas agency services and implementation of some large development projects may be better placed at the block (district) level or above, we believe that development planning should initially be focused as much as possible on the lowest unit, the barrio. The participation by the community members in decision-making (for example, on infrastructure) is the essential means of generating initiative and co-operation among the people.⁴⁷

Yet even if the efficiency of popular participation through decentralized institutions is accepted, there are still grounds for concern with its effects on equity. After noting reasons participation may not lead to greater equity, Chambers suggests

⁴⁷ See ILO, Sharing in Development, pp. 66-69.

measures to mitigate the inequity that may flow from participation:

- (1) allocating financial support from the center to those self-help projects to which all have access, such as village wells or health posts, rather than to projects from which a relative few benefit;
- (2) relating financial contributions to projects to people's economic status, so that the rich pay more and the poor pay less (though one should not do this in ways that humiliate "poor" groups);
- (3) relating policies for participation to the stage of development reached, so that incentives for individual and group action are appropriately matched to the given situation;
- (4) reorienting staff activities, persuading them to shift attention away from local elites to non-elites, through seminars, working sessions, etc.;
- (5) making the poverty in rural areas more evident to staff, because they often have failed to perceive the poorer people, by focusing attention on the circumstances and needs of these people who otherwise seem often "invisible";
- (6) undertaking continuous design, testing and modification of the procedures used, to learn from experience and redirect efforts more effectively to serve the poor majority; and
- (7) maintaining a very determined political will to reach the poorer people; a more equitable rural society is very difficult to achieve and requires sustained effort, a high level of management in rural areas and above all a credible and consistent political will.⁴⁸

⁴⁸Chambers, Managing Rural Development, pp. 110-113. In terms of reforms within the administration, among other things he suggests joint programming exercises by government staff and self-help groups, procedures that "close" low down in the hierarchy, clear specification of phases and procedures, effective two-way communication, avoidance of top-down targetry, and optimal levels of assistance (pp. 105-108).

These suggestions are well-taken, based on observation of often aborted efforts at participatory development in Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, and Botswana. Several complementary approaches have been suggested by others. Lewis emphasizes the principle that services should be financed by local authorities close to the people, so they can see a connection between services and taxes.

The obvious link between use and taxes not merely keeps use in check; but usually makes people more willing to pay more taxes in order to have services which they value.⁴⁹

Such an approach should help to keep down "irresponsible" or "excessive" demands. Accounts of insatiable public pressure for increased government expenditure come particularly from countries where local communities have been drained of responsibility, as well as resources, where people have to live with the consequences of others' decisions, and not of their own.

There is also the principle of controlled decentralization, in which authority is devolved to lower units within guidelines, intended to offset the forces for capture and corruption. Rotation in office, or strict audits of local government accounts may be required. Hadden found that when the state government of Rajasthan set reasonable criteria of productivity and efficiency for allocating village electrification connections, local decision-makers could more effectively do the allocating than did the state bureaucracy.⁵⁰ Decentralization that is open-ended may indeed

⁴⁹W. Arthur Lewis, Development Planning: The Essentials of Economic Policy (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 103.

⁵⁰ See Hadden, Decentralization and Rural Electrification. This principle is similar to that outlined by Edgar Owens and Robert Shaw in Development in a Planned Society (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1972).

play into the hands of local elites; but their role can be circumscribed by judicious procedures and guidelines. It might be foolish to try to exclude them from positions of responsibility. As Chambers notes about local leaders, they often have their position because of ability, and projects may be better managed with their participation. Indeed, under competition, they have an incentive to spread the benefits of projects to more, rather than fewer people, to gain support and legitimacy.⁵¹ Appropriate "rules of the game" can tap their talents and initiative for creating benefits that can be distributed within the community.

In the final analysis, whether local elites play a constructive or impeding role in achieving rural development of the sort now expected, depends very much on whether the government at the center wants one or the other result. There is a common fear that increasing the "power" of local government units will diminish that of the center, but this depends entirely on what the goals of the center are. To the extent that the center seeks policies and outcomes rural people do not desire, a zero-sum conflict of interests and power results -- a gain for the periphery is a loss for the center. But where the center wants what rural people also want for themselves, any enhancement of their capability to help themselves augments the power of the center to achieve its goals.⁵²

If the center bases its power on rural elites, it is unlikely to support decentralization that effectively gets authority to the majority through representatives freely advancing majority

⁵¹Chambers, Managing Rural Development, pp. 109-110.

⁵²This analysis is presented in Norman T. Uphoff and Milton J. Esman, Local Organization for Rural Development: Analysis of Asian Experience (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1974), pp. 75-81.

interests. (We do not presume that participation in decision-making is invariably direct rather than indirect.) If the center supports the welfare of the majority, however, it can undertake appropriate measures and precautions to enhance public participation through decentralization. This should be complemented by effective and representative local organizations, with leadership that acts on behalf of the majority, and with technical advice and services brought closer to the people through paraprofessional personnel. Such efforts to assist the rural majority should provide a base of support that makes the government more powerful and effective at the center.

Ultimately, anything more than marginal increases in participation turn on political strategy and philosophy. Such marginal increase can often enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of particular projects. But overall increases in participation should be treated as part of an effort to mobilize the underutilized resources and the innate talents of the majority for an accelerated national program of rural development.

In the following Parts II and III, we address questions of participation by particular local groups in various development activities, to be very specific about the kind of obstacles and opportunities one faces in trying to promote participation. We find the approaches can be used either within incremental or more far-reaching strategies of rural development and participation. Steps can be taken in any direction to increase participation -- in decision-making, in implementation, in evaluation, as well as in benefits -- for specific groups like women or landless laborers, as well as in specific activities like irrigation or health care. Our point is that piecemeal efforts in this direction are less likely to convince people to participate fully and enthusiastically, than are comprehensive approaches that share power and responsibility more broadly.

We conclude this section by observing that participation can be treated in technical and even technocratic terms, probably

with some positive effects, but that its fuller benefits are more likely with a political commitment and strategy for participatory development. All the obstacles we have just enumerated are real, although not inevitable, and should not be taken lightly. The elements of a participatory strategy can be mapped out, as we have tried to do in these first two parts. Their application is a matter of smaller or larger steps toward greater involvement of various members of the rural majority in their own development. The steps can be described based on fragmentary, but encouraging experience thus far. This we do in Parts II and III which follow.

Part II

ANALYZING PARTICIPATION FOR SPECIFIC GROUPS

Chapter Four

PARTICIPATION BY THE LANDLESS AND NEAR-LANDLESS

Projects to increase the production and income of small-scale farmers have increased steadily since governments and donors have become more aware that agriculture can play a major role in the economic growth of most late developing nations. As thinking has shifted toward agricultural development (see Appendix I) many projects have attempted to get small farmers to implement new agricultural techniques, to adopt new crops and seed types, and to participate more fully in the market economy. Some of these endeavors, in particular agricultural extension, farmer credit, and group or cooperative farming, are examined at length in Chapter 8. Normally, a section dealing with target groups would include discussion of small farmers. Since, however, nearly all chapters in this monograph touch on small farmers, we shall not do so here. This has the benefit of drawing even closer attention to groups often overlooked by small farmer projects, such as the landless, women, and disadvantaged ethnic groups.

While the newer agricultural projects are generally an improvement over the capital-intensive, large-scale agricultural development projects that were more popular in the past, most are designed to benefit owners and tenants with secure tenure and sufficient land to respond to new technologies and income-earning opportunities. Often these projects have implicitly assumed the existence of an economically homogeneous "peasantry," overlooking the class and income divisions which rend most rural populations. Increasing concern with questions of equity and distribution in economic development has turned attention to the "rural poor," in particular the landless and near-landless. These families and individuals are of special

concern for two reasons. First, they are for the most part not able to participate in implementing standard agricultural projects, which are tailored for "small farmers."¹ Second, the number of persons who are landless or near-landless is growing, and in many countries already constitutes "the rural majority," as shown in a recent studies by the Rural Development Committee.²

¹A recent annual report of the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) in Colombia stated:

Data from rural development projects in the highlands of Mexico, Peru and Colombia suggest that agriculture is often only a minor part in the total income of subsistence farm families. Furthermore, the situation of small farmers in the highlands is often one characterized by limited land and a lack of well-developed infrastructure. Efforts to ameliorate that poverty should focus on the development of rural industries, rural education, rural public works programs and nutrition supplementation.

The role of new agricultural technology in promoting the welfare of these rural poor is limited and in many zones would be of lower priority than other programs mentioned above. Furthermore, the agriculture of the highlands has evolved over long periods of time on relatively infertile soils and is believed to be operating at a level near its potential. With these traditional but efficient systems, the probability of substantially increasing food supplies through new agricultural technology is low.

This conclusion was reached probably reluctantly but realistically. See Annual Report--1974 (Cali: CIAT, 1974), pp. 221-222.

²See Milton J. Esman, Landlessness and Near-landlessness in Developing Countries (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1978). It is supplemented by two regional studies: Cheryl Lassen, Landlessness and Near-Landlessness in Latin America; and David Rosenberg, Shubh Kumar and Jean Rosenberg, Landlessness and Near-Landlessness in South and Southeast Asia, to be published by the Rural Development Committee in 1978. Norman Ephoff prepared a regional analysis of landlessness and near-landlessness in Africa for the project, but it was not published since the data base for Africa was less adequate. Also, the problems related to land access are somewhat different continent-wide, though of similar severity in certain countries like Egypt, Kenya and Upper Volta. This chapter draws on that project's work, and special thanks go to Cheryl Lassen and Milton Esman for their suggestions.

For this reason also they warrant more attention.

By "landless and near-landless," we mean members of households that either own no land, or own so little land they must earn half or more their subsistence by working for others, and whose incomes are not sufficient to raise the household out of poverty.³ While a low level of access to land is generally correlated with poverty, our definition would exclude, for example, tenants who rented enough land to earn a basic minimum income for their family, or artisans with a skilled trade in demand in rural areas. We are concerned with those who need but lack access to land, or who have it on very insecure terms. These rural poor are unable to benefit from "small farmer strategies," which presume a family has enough land to become self-sufficient on its holding, with appropriate inputs of capital, technology, services, and infrastructure.

Who are the Landless and Near-Landless?

As Bell has pointed out, the "target groups" at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder "do not form a single class having a clear perception of its common interests and of how to act in order to secure them."⁴ The term commonly used, "the rural poor," is misleading because of the homogeneity implied. We would distinguish, at least analytically, persons who are:

³Although we have reservations about the "poverty line" method of analysis, we accept its general premise that persons lacking sufficient income to ensure minimum nutrition, health and other basic needs can be identified as living in poverty. The poverty line will naturally vary from country to country and even within over time. This makes it difficult to measure. Adopting poverty levels that reflect within-country income distributions is, however, more reliable than using gross indicators of the relative poverty between nations such as per capita income.

⁴C.L.G. Bell, "The Political Framework," in Redistribution with Growth, edited by Hollis Chenery et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 53.

- (1) Agricultural Workers with no ownership rights to land, who earn a living from the proceeds of their labor. Some are permanently employed laborers with some power to bargain with landlords. Others are indebted or bonded laborers to one landlord in a fixed place. Still others are casual laborers who seek odd jobs in the area where they live; or migrate seasonally to another region to accept temporary employment; or migrate permanently from one region to another seeking to perform agricultural tasks such as plowing, weeding, harvesting, or livestock tending.
- (2) Non-Agricultural Workers who reside in rural areas and earn a livelihood from the proceeds of their labor. Examples are artisans, petty traders, fishermen, miners, or porters.
- (3) Marginal Tenant Farmers who cultivate parcels owned by others and pay rents in cash or kind. Tenant farmers who have secure access to adequate size and quality landholdings should not be counted among the rural poor. The terms of secure access and adequate size and quality of landholding vary from country to country, and sometimes by regions within a country. Poor tenant farmers also vary considerably in their rental obligations; the degree of decision-making they have in the management of the farm; and tenure security.
- (4) Marginal Farmers who have title to or customary tenure of small or marginal quality farms that are of inadequate size and quality to earn a basic minimum income. This can be traced to a lack of good quality land or to a lack of other means of production such as water, credit, technology, markets, and the like. Farmers in this category may also lack legal title to their land and therefore have insecure tenure status.
- (5) Non-Sedentary Rural Households, including nomadic and transhumant pastoralists, scavengers and other rural poor who lack land and a fixed geographical base.

Poor households often have very complex survival strategies, and different family members may fit into several of these categories. This makes them difficult to classify. To categorize households by the occupation of the "head" is often arbitrary and may misrepresent the contribution of women members and youth.

For now we can only make an analytical note of this, because our classifications are made according to available data, which frequently include only the occupation or status of the household head. We can only be illustrative in this chapter, not conclusive in considering issues affecting the participation of this large and diverse group of rural poor.⁵ Their diversity comes not only from their occupations, but from the way they compete with one another, or contend with classes having property or other forms of power.⁶

Extent of Landlessness and Near-landlessness

The extent of landlessness and near-landlessness varies, of course, from country to country, and across regions. A study recently conducted at Cornell did country profiles of 22 countries that had significant degrees of landlessness and near-landlessness, though not all were extreme cases.⁷

⁵Indeed, we have more information on laborers, marginal tenants and marginal farmers than on shifting cultivators, pastoralists, or nomads. This latter set of non-sedentary rural households probably deserves more full-scale and systematic consideration than we can give here from our review of the literature. These groups, we note with regret, generally receive little attention and concern.

⁶Some of the conflicts of interest between small farmers, on one hand and tenants and laborers, on the other, are described in K.C. Alexander, "Some Aspects of the Emergence of Peasant Organizations in South India" (Paper Presented to the 9th World Congress of Sociology, Uppsala, August, 1978). He goes on to show how once tenants in Kerala state of India gained security through land reform, they became antagonists of agricultural laborers' interests.

⁷In Latin America, we analyzed data from *Bolivia, *Brazil, *Colombia, *Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, *El Salvador, *Guatemala, *Mexico, and *Peru; in Asia, *Bangladesh, *India, *Indonesia (Java only), *Malaysia, Pakistan, *Philippines, *Sri Lanka and Thailand; in Africa and the Near East, *Egypt, *Kenya, Nigeria and *Upper Volta. (Asterisked countries had profiles written on them).

Table 7.1 show the landless and near-landless as a percentage of the total rural population is somewhat similar across both Latin American and Asian countries. In terms of actual numbers of households, totals for the selected Asian countries are much higher. These Asian countries are not only more densely populated, but have much higher proportions of the population remaining in rural areas than do the majority of the more urbanized Latin American countries. Nevertheless, the proportion of "landless" households in the rural sector of different countries is fairly clear and disturbing.

- (1) In Bangladesh, according to the 1977 Land Occupancy Survey, 32 percent of rural households are landless, including 5 percent who are landless tenants.
- (2) For Java, Indonesia, the 1970 estimate of rural households with no land or less than one tenth of a hectare is at least 41 percent, with another 32 percent between 0.1 and 0.5 hectare.
- (3) In the Philippines, according to the 1971 Family Income and Expenditure Survey, 78 percent of rural families were below the poverty threshold of 4,000 pesos, and 37 percent of these had no land.
- (4) In Brazil, the 1966 CIDA survey of land tenure found half of farm families to be essentially families of laborers who were "under-privileged farm people," and this figure has risen in the last 12 years.
- (5) The figures for El Salvador in 1971 showed 45 percent of farms to be "intra-subsistence," and another 44 percent "sub-family." These two groups together had only 27 percent of the farmed area.
- (6) In Egypt, although land reform reduced the proportion of landless households during the 1950s and 1960s, fully one-third of rural households are now landless, and their numbers are growing steadily.
- (7) In Kenya, an analysis of occupational and income data found only 5 percent of the population to be landless agricultural laborers, having a per capita income level one-third the national average. However, the category of poor smallholders constituted 25 percent

Table 7.1: Magnitude of Rural Poverty in Selected Asian and Latin American Countries

Country	Population	Rate of Population Increase	Rural Pop. as % of Total Pop.	Number of Rural Households (000)	Landless and Near-landless as % of Rural Households
Asia					
Bangladesh (1973)	75	3.5	91	11,849	75
India (1971)	548	2.3	80	86,000	53
Java, Indonesia	86	2.2	82	9,390	85
Philippines (1972)	39	3.0	68	4,434	77
Sri Lanka (1970)	12.5	2.1	84	1,888	77
Latin America*					
Bolivia	4.7	2.5	70	609	85
Brazil	116.6	2.8	45	9,719	70
Colombia	26.0	3.2	50	2,407	66
Costa Rica	2.1	2.8	60	229	55
Dominican Republic	6.7	3.3	60	744	68
Ecuador	7.1	3.2	65	855	75
El Salvador	4.8	3.1	60	533	80
Guatemala	6.0	2.9	70	662	85
Mexico	60.5	3.2	40	4,500	60
Peru	16.0	2.9	50	1,481	75

*Population estimates are current for 1978.

Source: Esman, Landlessness and Near-Landlessness, pp. 6-7.

of the entire population and had average incomes only one-fourth the national per capita income.⁸

This finding in Kenya underscores the importance of considering the near-landless as a special category of concern, since they can be as poor or even poorer than persons without land, but whose labor is in reasonable demand. In Colombia, Berry shows the significance of the near-landless as well. There he found the bottom half of income earners in rural Colombia were earning at least 75 percent of their families' income by working on others' farms or at other jobs.⁹ So, contrary to some contemporary imagery about the "small farmer," the "rural poor" are not small, stable cultivators, or potential yeoman farmers, but mostly persons either having no control over land -- so they receive no income from possession of assets, only from the sale of their labor -- or having so little control that they are semi-proletarian.

Within the countries we studied, agrarian structure was another important variable affecting the nature of rural poverty. Absolute levels of rural poverty are highest in Asian countries, such as Bangladesh and India, and in certain African countries, such as those in the Sahel region. These countries not only have low per capita incomes and sparse resources for the government to build infrastructure, raise agricultural productivity,

⁸For Kenya, see Erik Thorbecke and Eric Crawford, Employment, Income Distribution, Poverty Alleviation and Basic Needs in Kenya (Report of Mission to Kenya for International Labour Office, April, 1978), Table 41. Other data come from country profiles prepared for Esman, Landlessness and Near-Landlessness.

⁹R. Albert Berry, "Land Distribution, Income Distribution, and the Productive Efficiency of Colombian Agriculture," Food Research Institute Studies, XII, 3 (1973), pp. 199-232.

provide social services, and so forth. Compared to the Latin American region, these absolutely poorer Asian and African countries tend to have more unimodal agrarian structures, where land is often fairly evenly distributed, and farmers -- middle-size and very small alike -- use similar cropping technologies and have similar relationships with industrial and export activities. Countries in the Latin American region tend in general to have higher per capita incomes, but they are characterized by large income disparities between agriculture and other sectors, and by major inequalities within the rural sector. This is due to their bi-modal agrarian structures, characterized by very unequally distributed private land and extreme dualism in access to markets, technology, credit, and other services. The experience of some of these middle income countries, such as Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico, indicates that because of agricultural dualism, serious problems with rural poverty can persist despite high rates of growth in the economy as a whole. These problems are, of course, often compounded by rapid population growth.

The trends that can be discerned from the fragmentary data available indicate landlessness is growing worse. The analysis by Jannuzi and Peach of recent Bangladesh data suggests: (1) further concentration of land in the hands of a few landholders; (2) weakening of the sharecropping institution, with the share received by tenants being lowered de facto; and (3) rapid growth in the number of landless and near-landless peasants.¹⁰ Among laborers, conditions often deteriorate, as the excess of supply over demand permits employers to set less favorable terms. For example, in Brazil, in the state of Sao Paulo, the number of permanent laborers declined from 288,000 to 32,000 between 1955

¹⁰F.T. Jannuzi and J.T. Peach, Report on the Hierarchy of Interests in Land in Bangladesh (Report to USAID, Washington, 1977), p. 72.

and 1969, while the number of insecure casual laborers rose from 226,000 in 1964 to 350,000 in 1970.¹¹ And in Egypt, the number of rural households below the poverty line went from 35 percent to 27 percent between 1958/59 and 1964/65, under the impact of land reform, only to rise to 44 percent by 1974/75.¹² One of the most striking cases is from Tanzania, where the government has made strenuous efforts to reduce inequality. In an area where, 20 years earlier, people had relatively equal access to land, because of mechanization 9 percent of the households now own 53 percent of the area.¹³ Indeed, throughout much of Africa, where access to land has often been governed by communal practices of free access for community members, privatization is proceeding rapidly.¹⁴ So whereas the problems of landlessness and near-landlessness do not seem too pressing in most African countries today, we envision serious problems in the not-

¹¹ Agricultural Modernization in the State of São Paulo (São Paulo: State Department of Agriculture, 1973), p. 231.

¹² Samir Radwan, Agrarian Reform and Rural Poverty: Egypt, 1952-75 (Geneva: International Labour Office, 1977), p. 46.

¹³ Charles Elliott, Patterns of Poverty in the Third World (New York: Praeger, 1975), p. 33.

¹⁴ The United Nations Sixth Report on Progress in Land Reform (New York: FAO, 1976), notes the breakdown of traditional land tenure systems in favor of privatized holdings in Ghana, Kenya, Cameroon, Morocco and Senegal (and Ethiopia before its revolution); countervailing trends toward collective or cooperative agriculture were reported in Algeria and Tanzania. For an analysis of the literature on the trend in African land tenure, see John M. Cohen, "Land Tenure and Rural Development in Africa" (Development Discussion Paper No. 44, Harvard Institute for International Development, Cambridge, 1978).

too-distant future.¹⁵ Trends such as those led to Philippines Secretary of Labor to comment:

A new species in the labor force has emerged in the country which was not covered by any umbrella of law or government, that is, the landless rural worker. He is the man in limbo, administratively occupying a no man's land between the Department of Agrarian Reform and the Department of Labor. Yet he is rapidly outnumbering all the farmers of the area.¹⁶

We will not go into the causes for the growth in the number of landless and near-landless, as that has been done already in the Cornell report cited.¹⁷ Rather we will consider some of the implications of their needs and situations for rural development projects.

¹⁵Overall man-to-land ratios are presently favorable. Only four countries have more than 100 persons per square kilometers, while 40 have less than 50 per square kilometer. For population per square kilometer of cultivated areas, the respective numbers are nine and 30, but only Egypt, Nigeria, Mauritius, Kenya, Rwanda and Burundi have more than 200 persons per square kilometer of cultivated area (Egypt reaches 1,172!). But agricultural production per capita has been declining since the early 1960s, and 1975 level being 5 percent below that for 1971-75. The increase in cultivated area has been going up by only 1 percent a year, considerably less than the rate of population growth. These figures (from the FAO Production Yearbook, 1976, Tables 1 and 3) suggest that most African countries do not have a margin of land of comparable quality to that they now cultivate onto which they can keep expanding as their populations grow.

¹⁶Blas Ople, in "The Poorest of the Poor," Times-Journal (Manila), October 3, 1975.

¹⁷See Esman, Landlessness and Near-Landlessness in Developing Countries, passim. The causes analyzed in the report are: (1) population-growth, (2) commercialization of agriculture, with attendant mechanization and breakdown of social obligations toward the poor, (3) institutional rigidities and inequities, such as land tenure arrangements and political power structures, and (4) national policies, such as subsidization of use of capital and "urban bias" in investment for public services.

Implications for Project Design

The landless and near-landless face particular problems in increasing their productivity and welfare, because they are essentially assetless, having so little land and so few skills that they start with only their labor to sell. And frequently the health and nutrition of these men, women, and children makes them too weak or ill to be competitive over longer periods of time in the use of their labor. Hence there is an initial need to bring these groups into the development process by promoting their participation in project benefits. The landless and near-landless will have difficulty moving beyond this to participation in decision-making or evaluation activities, for they are usually powerless, either outside the political system or subordinate to landlords, labor contractors, merchants, local political bosses, and other patrons.¹⁸ Accordingly, projects which presume extensive capability and initiative on the part of individuals are not likely to be very helpful. Projects need to take the constraints on the rural poor into account, to help them build a basis for collective action, and to enhance their capacity for sustained self-improvement.¹⁹ Their problems are complex, and here we can only point up ways projects could assist the landless and near-landless to participate more fully in development activities and the benefits therefrom.

i. Agricultural Projects:

One of the most apparent means to help the rural poor participate in economic benefits, would be through increased food

¹⁸For example, this has been well described with respect to Latin America by Andrew Pearce, The Latin American Peasant (London: Cass, 1974).

¹⁹See Cheryl Lassen, Reaching the Assetless Poor: An Analysis of Programs and Strategies for Their Self-Reliant Development (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1978).

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.

In the past, project designers have been oblivious to the distributional implications of high-yielding varieties and other agricultural improvements, thinking "more" output was "better." But how good an innovation is cannot be judged without asking "good for whom?" The same observation can be made about mechanization. Many have thought it invariably good -- "labor-saving."²⁰ But assessment depends on whose labor is being saved, and whether that labor has alternative employment possibilities. If such alternatives do not exist, reducing labor needs can cause large social losses. Only where mechanization creates additional employment, such as electrified tubewells permitting double-cropping, or breaks crucial bottlenecks in labor supply, is it socially

²⁰K.C. Abercrombie estimates that 2.5 million jobs had already been lost through mechanization in Latin America. See "Agricultural Mechanization and Employment in Latin America." International Labour Review, 106; 1 (1972), p. 29. In the CADU project area of Ethiopia, about one-fifth of the tenant population was evicted because of mechanization according to a UN study. See Progress in Land Reform, pp. 29-30. John Cohen reports that approximately 3,000 tenant households had been put off their land by 1974 in the area, and it was predicted that eventually 90,000 rural people would be removed to make way for commercialized farming on large holdings. "The Effects of Green Revolution Strategies on Tenants and Small-Scale Landowners in Chilalo Region of Ethiopia," Journal of Developing Areas, 9, 3 (1975), pp. 335-358.

justifiable.²¹

Agricultural intensification that involves the rural poor in improved production is a promising means for increasing their participation in economic benefits,²² and perhaps, their participation in political and administrative decisions, by making them more essential to development processes. A study in Colombia found many minifundistas (marginal farmers) had capacity to make technological improvements. Peasants in the area adopted fertilizers and improved seeds, and differences of up to 10 times in commercial crop yields could be explained by differences in technology and administration.²³ Important is that the practices and crops supported by agricultural programs be fitted into the existing cropping systems and capabilities of marginal farmers. We would note also the importance of irrigation for increasing demand for labor and raising food output. The ILO study for Kenya concluded this was a hopeful way to get productive livelihood for the many landless and near-landless, though

²¹Increased mechanization need not be antithetical to a labor-oriented development strategy, if the institutional context provides for a sharing of its gains and there are alternative employment opportunities. China has been pushing for mechanization strategically since before Mao's death. See Benedict Stavis, The Politics of Agricultural Mechanization in China (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978).

²²See studies in V.R.K. Raramahamsa, ed. Changing Agrarian Relations in India (Hyderabad: National Institute of Community Development, 1975), showing that increased demand for labor contributed to improved conditions and status of labor.

²³Emil Haney, Possibilities for the Economic Reorganization of Minifundia in a Highland Region of Colombia (Madison: Land Tenure Center, University of Wisconsin, Research Paper No. 43, 1971).

it would be costly.²⁴ We believe agricultural programs designed to involve marginal farmers in intensified and improved cultivation as important to any strategy for assisting the landless and near-landless, though there is potential for harm if the programs are not designed to meet equity and participation criteria.

ii. Access to Credit:

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.²⁵

The implication of this finding is not that massive credit programs be set up for the assetless as a new form of project, though credit is in some ways as "basic" as other needs of the rural majority. Rather, we would stress that the landless and near-landless often cannot be helped unless their debt problems

²⁴To date, 6,000 hectares have been improved with irrigation, but another 160,000-200,000 hectares could be improved. The main impediment is finance. It would cost £700 to £2,000 per hectare to irrigate this land. International Labour Office, Employment Incomes and Equality: A Strategy for Increasing Employment in Kenya (Geneva: ILO, 1972), p. 174.

²⁵A good deal of evidence on this was turned up in connection with USAID's 1972/73 Spring Review on Small Farmer Credit. See Gordon Donald, Credit for Small Farmers in Developing Countries (Boulder: Westview, 1976). Even so, solid information on usury is understandably hard to get. Interest rates of 50 percent and even 100 percent have been reported, with a permanent cycle of borrowing which can never be repaid. For discussion of participatory credit schemes, see Chapter 8, below.

are at the same time alleviated. Where a rural development project has a credit element, it should be designed so that collateral is not in the form of land, which would exclude the landless and near-landless.²⁶ Moreover, special provisions for credit to the poor may be appropriate, to meet periodic crises (loss of income due to illness, loss of job, a marriage or death in the family, and so forth), which now plunge them ever deeper in debt. We wrote in Chapter 2 about informal associations in the rural sector, such as rotating credit groups. Working with such organizations, which have an element of self-help, may be one way to help improve the net asset position of the poorest of the poor, without enmeshing them in a new dependency relationship.

iii. Access to Education:

The landless and near-landless are perpetually disadvantaged with regard to education. Because of their poverty, and need for children's income to help the family survive, the rural poor get less schooling than their better-endowed countrymen. Invariably, children of agricultural laborers are enrolled in smaller proportions than are children even of small farmers.²⁷ This discrepancy

²⁶ See Henock Kifle, An Analysis of CADU Credit Program 1968/69 to 1970-71 (Asella: Chilalo Agricultural Development Unit, Publications No. 66, 1971). For a summary of many of the issues concerning rural credit markets, see Dale W. Adams, "Research on Rural Finance" (Agriculture Development Council, Seminar Report 17, June 1978).

²⁷ V.H. Joshi reports that in studying a village in Gujerat, India, none of the laborers' children were in primary school, and all of the farmers' children were. "Some Observations on Changing Agrarian Relations in Two Villages of Gujerat," in Raramahamsa, Changing Agrarian Relations in India. Elliott reports that 78 percent of cocoa farmers' children were attending school in Ghana, compared to 43 percent of the children of cocoa laborers. Patterns of Poverty in the Third World, pp. 112-113. For an analysis of approaches to non-formal adult education among disadvantaged groups see Phillip Coombs, Attacking Rural Poverty (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974). Further analysis of the use of non-formal education programs in projects to assist the landless is contained in Lassen, Reaching the Assetless Poor.

has a long-run effect on occupational mobility and earnings, and leaves tenants or laborers as a class inferior to land-owners.

In addition to formal schooling for children, one of the most effective ways of assisting disadvantages adults is through non-formal educational programs -- that is innovative techniques for getting people to define their most important problems and solutions to resolve them.²⁸ Knowledge can be regarded as an asset, and one that can be given to persons without taking anything away from others, as is the case with a fixed-sum resource like land. If the rural poor know their rights and could define for themselves alternatives to practices which work to their disadvantage, their lack of power would be in some degree reduced. Indeed many studies indicate that individuals with greater education are more likely to participate in policies and to take an active role in community affairs. This is not to say that education is the entire solution to their assetless and powerless position, but without some improvements in educational level, changing the other debilities is difficult. Particularly important are educational programs to assist group action and introduce skills that have income earning potential within or outside of agriculture.

iv. Temporary Off-Farm Employment:

Agriculture, as well as modern industry, have limited capacity to absorb the annual increments to the labor force that keep swelling the ranks of the landless and near-landless. With

²⁸We recognize there is much criticism of present thinking on nonformal education, that often much of what is being done is reworked community development. For interesting ideas on the subject see David Harman, Community Fundamental Education: A Nonformal Education Strategy for Development (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1974).

appropriate policies and some institutional reorganization, agriculture can provide more gainful employment than at present. But the needs are staggering in some countries. In El Salvador, rural underemployment is estimated to be about 47 percent of the available labor time of adult males.²⁹ In Indonesia, new methods of harvesting rice have reduced labor requirements by introducing indentured labor working under contract to replace community labor (25-30 workers instead of 500 or more per hectare).³⁰ Finding employment for the rural poor becomes a desperate scramble.

To design projects to increase the flow of economic and other benefits to the poor majority, one must begin by understanding that many peasants now spend only 25 to 40 percent of their time on on-farm activities. The absence of earning opportunities during slack seasons of the year prevents many poor rural households from earning basic minimum incomes. Alternative rural employment during off peak seasons is an important component of a development strategy that places poverty alleviation high among its objectives. Knowledge of how to implement such programs is not very good because experiences to date in doing so have had rather mixed results. Crash employment schemes have been able to create temporary employment for large numbers of people in emergency situations of drought, famine, or other disasters. Some public works programs have done likewise. A drawback of such schemes, however, is their frequent low productivity: they do not teach new skills to the workers involved; and substantial

²⁹ AID Mission to El Salvador, Agricultural Sector Assessment (August 1977), p. 13.

³⁰ William L. Collier, Agricultural Evolution in Java: Decline of Shared Poverty (Bogor: Indonesian Agro-Economic Survey, 1976).

proportions of real wages are often lost by such practices as selling food at exploitative prices to the workers, failing to preserve adequate health conditions, and so forth. Many challenges remain in designing and effectively managing programs that can be productive and promote participation in benefits (wages, construction skills, contracting ability, actual public works projects) to the landless and near-landless.³¹

v. Institutional Reform:

The most obvious, but not always the most effective, means for enabling the landless and near-landless to join in implementing agricultural production programs would be to give them land. This would provide a source of income other than insecure and poorly remunerated labor, and grant ownership of some real assets. To provide the poor with land requires some form of land redistribution, new land settlement, or at least reform of tenancy regulations. Unfortunately, the solutions are not easy to effect. First, implementing a land redistribution program faces numerous obstacles; both acquiring the needed excess holdings and distributing them fairly, are administratively and politically difficult tasks. Second, settlement schemes usually hold limited promise, for few countries have extensive uninhabited areas on which to locate such schemes. Areas with sparse

³¹The recent policy paper by the World Bank on off-farm employment is not very satisfactory. Its economic analysis is not bad, but it abstracts entirely from the social and political matrix in which the rural poor live, with various real constraints ignored in a purely economic framework. So, more work urgently needs to be done in this area of policy. See World Bank, Rural Enterprise and Nonfarm Employment (Washington, D.C.: IBRD, 1978). For discussion of the important role of off-farm employment in Africa, see the recent work by Derek Byerlee, Carol K. Eicher, Carl Liedholm, and Dunston S.C. Spencer, Rural Employment in Tropical Africa: A Summary of Findings (East Lansing: Michigan State University, Department of Agricultural Economics, African Rural Economy Program, Working Paper 20, February 1977).

population often have harsh climate or poor soil, and opening them up for settlers can prove prohibitively expensive. Third, in many countries, the man-to-land ratios prohibit setting up all rural families with holdings that make them self-sufficient. Finally, reform of tenancy regulations is difficult to implement, and often has perverse effects on the tenants whom it is supposed to help. Landlords, for instance, may get around reforms by evicting their tenants before they can establish a claim to secure rights of tenancy. Legally mandated reductions in rent are almost unenforceable, as is the requirement to put all tenancy agreements in writing. So we are not sanguine about the possibilities of improving the lot of the landless and near-landless by land and tenancy reform, at least as such reforms have been introduced in most countries.

At the same time, one should recognize that some land redistribution is perhaps the most substantial way of enabling the poorer strata to participate more fully in the benefits of development. In Egypt, the percentage of rural families below the poverty line was reduced from 35 percent to 27 percent in just six years with fairly effective land reform.³² That the percentage rose 10 points in the next ten years was due to relaxed enforcement, as well as population growth. Land distribution may not be a permanent solution to the problems of the rural poor, but many would be worse off without such reforms. Not all Peruvian campesinos, for instance, have benefited from land reform there, but it would be hard to argue that most would be better off if the hacienda system had not been changed. While

³²Radwan, Agrarian Reform and Rural Poverty. Also see the study directed by Ilya Harik, Socio-Economic Profile of Rural Egypt (Report Prepared for the International Islamic Center for Population Studies and Research and Cornell University Rural Development Committee, Cairo, November 1978).

land redistribution has benefited resident workers more often than outside day laborers, as happened in Chile, where getting "land to the tiller" seems possible, there seem to be good reasons for support. The question of land redistribution may arise particularly when a project involves irrigation. To irrigate land that is unequally distributed confers a windfall benefit on landowners. Donors may well decline to sponsor irrigation under such circumstances, requiring some redistribution as the price of assistance.

Since it is no longer possible to create "viable" landholdings for all rural households in some countries, a second consideration might be called "marginal land reform," in which poor families get at least a small plot, enough for a house and garden. Though land shortage has been taken as grounds for doing nothing on the question of land distribution, because in the next generation small plots would just have to be subdivided again, we believe some substantial improvements in the position of landless families could result from distributing small plots of land, which would be cultivated very intensively. Recent research done at Cornell found, in a study of the nutritional status of children in India, that (controlling for aggregate family income level) children were better nourished when the family owned or had control of even a small parcel of land. The opportunity to grow food for the family has a strong welfare (and productivity) effect.³³ In a study of returns to labor in Java, Indonesia, net wages per hour worked (figuring travel time) were significantly greater for workers in households with even a little land, compared to the returns to completely landless persons doing essentially the same

³³Shubh Kumar, "Composition of Economic Constraints in Child Nutrition: Impact of Maternal Incomes and Employment in Low-income Households" (Unpublished Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 1977).

jobs.³⁴ So, 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.³⁵ As for the argument that such holdings will have to be redivided in another generation, a compelling counter-argument can be made that to leave landless households in abject poverty means that the children growing up today will be too deprived nutritionally, educationally, and otherwise to have much future anyway.

This is not to argue that land distribution or tenancy reform must be part of all rural development projects, or that land reform projects should take precedence over all others. But in thinking about how the all-round participation of the landless

³⁴Gillian P. Hart, "Labor Allocation Strategies in Rural Javanese Households: Inter-class Differences with Policy Implications" (Unpublished Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 1978).

³⁵The data showing that output per unit of land is considerably greater on small holdings than on larger land units are reviewed by William R. Cline, "Policy Instruments for Rural Income Redistribution," in Income Distribution and Public Policy in Less-Developed Countries, edited by Charles Frank and Richard Webb (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1977), pp. 281-292. The ILO team for Kenya found that farms under 10 acres had almost six times more gross output, almost seven times more net profit, and used almost nine times more labor input per acre than did large farms, averaging 125 acres. Employment, Income and Equality: Kenya, p. 167.

and near-landless can be increased in development, one needs to address the land question. Projects intending to help the rural poor are going to make little contribution to their welfare unless the inequality of land holdings and the conditions of cultivation are taken into account.³⁶

A further consideration on land tenure is the distorting effect inequalities can have on project performance. A World Bank cocoa rehabilitation project in Ghana apparently did not consider seriously the fact that in the target area, a majority of cocoa farms were owned by absentee landlords and were worked by sharecroppers. The tenants had no interest in planting improved trees that would bring gains 6-7 years later, and then probably not to the sharecropper himself. The project ended up having to plant and then tend the improved trees at its own expense, which primarily benefited the richer persons owning the land. Man-land relationships have often been taken for granted, with the assumption that most people in the rural sector are "small farmers." This cannot be assumed. On the contrary, designers must look carefully at the conditions on which people have access to land and other means of agricultural production within a possible project area.

vi. Organization:

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. A problem with many past efforts to assist the poor has been that government agencies foster,

³⁶For a discussion of some of the unintended disbenefits associated with tenancy, see James C. Riddell, Kenneth H. Parsons, and Don Kanel, "Land Tenure Issues in African Development: A Position Paper" (Madison: University of Wisconsin, Land Tenure Center, Preliminary Report, June 1978).

even desire, dependency 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.³⁷

Efforts to organize the landless and near-landless will often be resisted by privileged interests, which is why government, and even international donor sponsorship can be important.³⁸ The Catholic Church has given crucial support to such organizations in many localities in Latin America. There are also difficulties that come from among the rural poor themselves. Generations of suppression breed defeatism, cynicism, even hostility. Where caste systems exist, such as discussed in Chapter 6, there may be problems of getting cooperation across caste lines.³⁹ But progress does sometimes occur; even in India,

³⁷ Mary Hollnsteiner observed that "evidence from rural and urban settings the world over suggests that grass-roots 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." "Local Initiatives and Modes of Participation in Asian Cities," Assignment Children (UNICEF), 40 (1977), p. 39. The experience means that unless governments are prepared to play the role indicated here, they might better not try to organize the rural poor.

³⁸ In our study of country experiences of the landless and near-landless, we found many reports of violence used against their organizations and their organizers, particularly in countries of Latin America and South and Southeast Asia. See for example "Guatemala: Land and People," International Affairs Report, 24, 4 (1977), p. 5.

³⁹ See T.K. Gommen, "Problems of Building Agrarian Organizations in Kerala," Sociological Ruralis, XVI; 3 (1976), pp. 177-196.

despite the caste system, Alexander reports substantial improvement in the economic and social situation of landless where they have been organized for a number of years. They have been able to get higher minimum wages, to win government programs extending them needed services, to have tenancy reforms enforced, and perhaps most interesting, to reduce the social stigma of their low caste or untouchable status.⁴⁰

Organizing the landless and near-landless is freighted with political implications, and is not likely to be undertaken by governments merely because donors approve of it. But donors should know that for sustained and consolidated improvement for the rural poor to occur, some organization seems necessary; and where governments show any inclination to support this, project support would be appropriate. Indeed, the contributions local people can make to their own development may be impossible without this.

Particularly important is that membership of at least some local organizations for the rural poor be homogeneous, so that all members have shared interests. (Local government units, which are part of any serious decentralization strategy, need to have heterogeneous representation.) For example, one of the most important things contributing to the initial success of Egypt's land reform was that land reform beneficiaries were

⁴⁰Alexander, "Some Aspects of the Emergence of Peasant Organizations in South India." A survey of (employer) farmers and (low-caste) laborers in four districts found more egalitarian responses in the district where laborers had been organized longest, e.g., whether laborers would address farmers in special respectful terms, whether a farmer would enter a laborer's house, whether the laborer was paid on the job or had to come specially to the farmer's home, whether maximum hours of work per day and minimum wage requirements were observed.

organized into their own cooperatives, alongside the existing ones.⁴¹

There are considerable differences and even divisions among the "rural poor." This means that participatory local organizational components of rural development projects must be sensitive to sometimes apparently small differences in interest, usually centered around land tenure status, and whether persons are employers or employees. That some differences can be productively absorbed is indicated by a current FAO-supported project in Nepal, extending group credit to small farmers, tenants and agricultural laborers.⁴² Membership in groups is barred to the top income/landholding group in the villages, and landless households participate in the credit schemes to finance purchase of buffaloes, improved cultivation, fish ponds, well digging, and the like. All groups have a monthly savings program for members to establish an emergency and development fund for group use; the Agricultural Development Bank then makes loans to the group for development efforts. One element here is very intense and effective assistance from "catalysts" from the ADB, known as "group organizers/action research fellows." The initial project has been successful enough that the program is being expanded.⁴³

⁴¹See Iliya Harik, The Political Mobilization of Peasants: Study of an Egyptian Village (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974).

⁴²"First Annual Progress Report on Nepal's Experimental Field Action-Cum-Research Project on Development of Low-Income Small Farmers, Tenants and Agricultural Labourers" (Bangkok: FAO Regional Office for Asia and Far East, Small Farmers Development Unit, May 1977).

⁴³Another report of rather successful, multi-functional organization of landless and near-landless is given by Ela Bhatt, "A Self-Help Approach for Rural Populations: Mobilizing Agricultural Workers in India," Assignment Children (UNICEF), 38 (1977), pp. 89-91. This program centered at Ahmedabad included special

Without prescribing a package of activities to serve the landless and near-landless, since their conditions vary from country to country and even region to region within countries, we can say in general that much more thought, research and experimentation needs to go into rural development project planning if persons in this large and growing category are to have any prospects of participating in the development process.

women's wings of agricultural laborers' unions, with training centers, credit institutions, housing projects, cattle breeding, bus service, weavers' associations, etc. "It was found that agricultural workers, like most other workers, including women, can readily be organized and are capable of putting to use any assistance and ideas offered them." (p. 91).

Another promising organization among the landless and near-landless is the Salvadorean Communal Union, which by 1975 had 200,000 members. It is analyzed along with other projects and organizations for the assetless poor in Lassen, Reaching the Assetless Poor.

Chapter Five

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Rural women are the largest group whose participation should receive special consideration in the design and implementation of development projects. They participate unequally in all respects for most development programs; in decision-making, in implementation of new technologies, in the benefits of these, and in evaluation. This is not to say that they do not participate fully in the work of rural communities, indeed they do. They play a major role in the agricultural production of most societies, providing as much as 80 percent of the food supply in some groups.¹ While women are secluded in some societies and kept from working outside the home, more often they perform half or more of the work in agriculture.² Yet for all this, they are more often regarded by policymakers and administrators as reproducers rather than producers.³ As discussed below, they are seldom given equal access to technology and credit, much less

¹Margaret Mead, "Women in the International World," Journal of International Affairs, 30, 2 (1976-77), p. 152.

²It is reported that in Tanzania and Gabon women work 2600 hours annually, compared to 1800 hours for men, and in Gambia, 1100 and 600 hours respectively on field crops. See Ford Foundation Task Force on Women, Women and National Development in Africa: Some Profound Contradictions (New York: Ford Foundation, 1973); and John Cleave, African Farmers: Labour Use in the Development of Smallholder Agriculture (New York: Praeger, 1974), p. 39; also Irene Tinker and Michèle Bo Bramsen, eds., Women and World Development (Washington, D.C.: Overseas Development Council, 1976), pp. 147-148.

³Adrienne Germain, "Poor Rural Women: A Policy Perspective," Journal of International Affairs, 30, 2 (1976-77), p. 161.

brought into local organization or project activities in a participatory way. They are less likely to be visited by extension agents, even though some recent studies show them to be as or more efficient than male farmers.⁴ When it comes to introducing cash crops, it can even happen that women do some or most of the work, but men get most of the income.⁵ Efforts to introduce "modern" systems of land tenure to facilitate agricultural modernization can deprive women of rights they had previously to land under communal rules.

All of these considerations have prompted some analysts to argue that women are generally made worse off by process of development.⁶ In LDCs, as in other countries, women play the dual role of producer and homemaker. For some women, upward social mobility may result in a less rigorous style of life, as the spread of "middle class" values often leads women to withdraw labor contributions from families that can afford to forego

⁴See the studies done in Kenya by Peter Mook, "The Efficiency of Women as Farm Managers: Kenya," American Journal of Agricultural Economics, 58, 5 (1976), pp. 831-835; and Kathleen Staudt, "Women Farmers and Inequities in Agricultural Services," Rural Africana, 21 (1975-76), pp. 81-94.

⁵See, for example, Peter McLoughlin, African Food Production Systems (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), p. 215 on this in Senegal.

⁶The major argument on this is by Ester Boserup, Woman's Role in Economic Development (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970). See also Irene Tinker, "The Adverse Impact of Development on Women," in Tinker and Bransen, Women and World Development, pp. 22-34. A specific case is examined by Mary Elmerdorf, "The Dilemma of Peasant Women: A View from a Village in Yucatan," ibid., pp. 88-94. A case showing more favorable outcomes for women is presented by Deniz Kandiyoti, "Sex Roles and Social Change: A Comparative Appraisal of Turkey's Women," in Women and National Development: The Complexities of Change, edited by the Wellesley Editorial Committee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), pp. 57-73.

their wives' and daughters' income and production.⁷ But more generally, women are likely to find that, along with the discriminatory access to the benefits of development programs, their work load may be increased.⁸ While they share with men the hardships of rural poverty, in some respects their conditions of life are more disabling, for example, with regard to malnutrition and illiteracy.⁹

A review of experience concerning women in development concluded that on the whole, development has had a negative effect

⁷See Judith Van Allen, "Women in Africa: Modernization Means More Dependency," The Center Magazine, VII, 4 (1974), pp. 60-67; and Valerie J. Hull, "Women in Java's Rural Middle Class: Progress or Regress?" (Paper Presented to Fourth World Congress for Rural Sociology, 1976). Hanna Papanek has discussed the increase in purdah seclusion of women in Bangladesh since independence as a manifestation of rising socio-economic status for some. "'Purdah' Separate Worlds and Symbolic Shelter," Comparative Studies in Society and History, L, 3 (1973), pp. 289-325.

⁸Dunstan Spencer has done a study in Sierra Leone where improved agricultural technology (seeds, fertilizer, mechanization, irrigation) was introduced, saving men's labor but increasing women's labor by as much as 50 percent to weed the increased area and to harvest and process the greater production. African Women in Agricultural Development: A Case Study in Sierra Leone (Washington, D.C.: Overseas Liaison Committee, 1976).

⁹On the serious problem of pregnant women's malnutrition in West Africa, see Achola O. Pala's monograph, African Women in Rural Development: Research Trends and Priorities (Washington: Overseas Liaison Committee, 1976), p. 4. The rate of illiteracy among rural women in India is 90 percent compared with 63 percent for men according to the 1971 census. Joy Wilkes, "But We're Not Afraid to Speak Anymore" (Report on Church World Service Consultation in India on Women and Development, April 1977), Table VI. On the abominable conditions of women migrant laborers in Guatemala, see Norma S. Chinchilla, "Women's Work in Guatemala," in Wellesley Editorial Committee, Women and National Development, pp. 47-48. These are just a few examples from different parts of the world.

on women because planning has erred in one or more of the following ways:¹⁰

- (1) omission -- that is, by failing to notice and utilize the traditional productive roles that women are playing;
- (2) reinforcement of values already in existence in the society which restrict women's activities to household, child-bearing, and child-rearing tasks; and
- (3) addition -- that is, by superimposing Western values of what is appropriate work for women in "modern" society on developing societies.

Avoiding the first error requires more extensive knowledge of the actual workings of rural societies and economies, both what is "traditional" and what is contemporary. The second requires change-oriented development programs that are appropriate and effective under existing circumstances, and the third, more sophistication and less ethnocentrism on the part of development practitioners.

One of the first things to be examined in any society is the division of labor between the sexes. All societies assign particular tasks to men and to women; often these tasks differ from one culture or sub-culture to another.¹¹ We will not review the very complex and still contestable explanations for the different patterns dividing work between sexes.¹² But we will note that almost

¹⁰See introduction to Tinker and Bransen, Women and World Development, p. 5.

¹¹Mead reminds us that in Europe, milking cattle is regarded as "women's work," whereas in the U.S. it is assigned to men. "Women in the International World," p. 151.

¹²Ibid., and Boserup, Woman's Role in Economic Development; also M.Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere, Women, Culture and Society (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974); M. Kay Martin and Barbara Voorhies, eds., Female of the Species (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975); and Audrey C. Smock and Janet Giele, eds., Women and Society: An International Comparative Perspective (New York: Wiley, 1977).

invariably, whether they do more or less work, women's tasks are typically socially less prestigious and economically less rewarding. Also, the roles given them in the public sphere are less than men's. This pervasive inequality, more marked in some societies than others, presents a challenge to any development institution which would try to bring participatory opportunities and development benefits of programs equally to all, or particularly to those who need them most. We will consider some of the most important issues affecting women's participation in development, and then some of the implications for rural development projects and participation.

Issues Concerning Women's Participation

i. Sex or Class:

One of the most critical issues is the extent to which sex should be regarded as an overriding criterion in designing projects and targeting assistance, or whether it is treated as less important than social class. At one extreme would be the position taken by Saeed that in some parts of Asia, "women are prisoners of the family-based system of production," working as unpaid laborers and having little partnership with men in initiative and responsibility.¹³ The alternative view is to regard class relations as "analytically prior to an investigation of male-female relationships within classes," as Stoler argues.¹⁴ She contends that class stratification, based on differential access

¹³ Kishwar Saeed, Rural Women's Participation in Farm Operations (West Pakistan University Press, 1966), cited in Ingrid Janelid, "The Small-Farm Household in Rural Development" (Working Paper, Food and Agriculture Organization, Rome, February 1977), p. 5.

¹⁴ Ann Stoler, "Class Structure and Female Autonomy in Rural Java," in Wellesley Editorial Committee, Women and National Development, p. 75.

to land, so affects the life chances and live conditions of both men and women that one cannot view women as a homogeneous group in village society, and cannot assume that exploitation will occur primarily along sexual lines. The first position would target programs to reach and assist women primarily, whereas the second would treat women in the context of their social class opportunities.

In some societies, differences between the sexes may not be extreme. The literature on Javanese society has pointed up that women are not as dependent or held down as in some other societies, as Stoler acknowledges. Women exert considerable control over family finances, and over the distribution of food through rituals that are ostensibly conducted by men. In such societies, the effects of class differences on the position of women will be relatively more severe and will need to be addressed more vigorously than are simple male-female differences in participation. On the other hand, in a country like Pakistan, both sex and economic disparities are fairly pronounced, and special efforts to improve women's greatly disadvantaged position appear appropriate, along with activities to improve the productivity and welfare of lower class persons in general. (Note that both Java and Pakistan are predominately Muslim societies.) Whether projects should be directed more at sex disparities, class disparities, or both together is a matter to be determined in specific country or regional situations.¹⁵

It should be kept in mind that sex disparity is not necessarily uniform throughout a society, that there may be greater inequality in some ethnic groups than others, and often in some

¹⁵ See Kathleen Staudt, Women and Participation in Rural Development: Issues Concerning Project Design that Affect Women's Status (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1978).

social classes than others. We have noted that "middle class" women are more likely to be relegated to nonproductive roles, freeing them from labor, but also subordinating them to men as a consequence.¹⁶ A fairly typical pattern in LDCs is for sex disparity in roles and power between men and women to be greatest for the middle class. At upper levels, at least where women are well educated and working, they have some degree of status and autonomy. At the lower class level, which includes the vast majority, differences are also less extreme, but because both men and women must work hard to survive and have to cooperate, regardless of cultural norms.¹⁷ Clearly, development practitioners need to be attuned to the interplay between factors of sex and class inequality, to discern when it is most appropriate to target efforts to disadvantaged women as a group, and when women's depressed condition needs to be dealt with more as a consequence of their class position.

¹⁶Thorstein Veblen analyzed this phenomenon with respect to American society in terms of "conspicuous consumption." The Theory of the Leisure Class (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973). This applied to the upper classes, but it established imitative middle class behavior. This pattern was introduced into some LDCs by colonial regimes bringing a version of "Victorianism" to societies with different sex-class patterns. See Kathleen Staudt, "'Victorian Womanhood' in British Colonial Africa: The Role of Social Service Programs" (Paper Presented to Conference on the History of Women, St. Paul, October 1977). On colonial impact, see Judith Van Allen, "'Aba Riots' or Igbo 'Women's War'? Ideology, Stratification, and the Invisibility of Women," in Women in Africa, edited by Nancy Hafkin and Edna Bay (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976), pp. 59-85, and Margaret Jean Hay, "Luo Women and Economic Change During the Colonial Period," *ibid.*, pp. 86-110.

¹⁷See Stoler, "Class Structure and Female Autonomy in Rural Java"; also Gillian P. Hart, "Labor Allocation Strategies in Rural Javanese Households: Inter-class Differences with Policy Implications" (Unpublished Ph.D. diss., Cornell University, 1978).

ii. Female Headed Households:

A second issue concerns the apparent increase in the number and proportion of female-headed households, due in part to male migration. We lack adequate data to measure changes, because female-headed households have been practically invisible in the past, ignored by male-centered concepts that invariably regard households as headed by males. We are now becoming aware that this blindspot has detrimental effects, not just on women, but on whole families and regions when female-headed households are bypassed. Tinker estimates: "Around the world today, one out of three households is headed, de facto, by a woman. In the United States the figure is just under 20 percent, but in parts of Latin America it is as high as 50 percent."¹⁸

The major cause of this, one associated with "development," is male migration, as men leave their rural communities and families to get wage employment elsewhere. This may be due to the "pull" of money income and urban living conditions, but as often as not it is due to the "push" of rural poverty, as discussed in the preceding chapter on the landless. The 1969 census of Kenya showed one-third of all rural households to be headed by women as a result of male migration, in what is thought to be a fairly prosperous country. In Lesotho, where half to two-thirds of the adult males are working in South Africa, 30 to 35 percent of households are legally headed by women, and another 40 percent

¹⁸Tinker, "The Adverse Impact of Development on Women," p. 31. Germain says, "In many if not most countries, at least 20 percent to 35 percent of households are headed by women (often the percentage is much higher in particular regions within countries) due to death, desertion, migration, polygamy, and divorce." "Poor Rural Women: A Policy Perspective," p. 168.

de facto.¹⁹ The proportion of female-headed households appears to be somewhat lower in Asia than in Latin America and Africa, but still in absolute numbers, Asia is ahead of the other two continents.

The common ignoring of, and even discrimination against, female-headed households has both productivity and welfare consequences, though we are only now beginning to get specific research on them in the literature. The research by Staudt and Mook on the bias of the extension service in Kenya against women farm managers, shows they are managing their meager resources as well or better than men, despite the discrimination against them. If they had proportional service, it would appear that output would be increased. The situation of women and other household members when adult males are away is often desperate. Managing an existence is difficult even with a full complement of adults, when women are already doing double duty in terms of agricultural and domestic chores. When they must assume full responsibility for production as well as household service, they are pushed to the limit and possibly beyond.²⁰

¹⁹See Ingrid Janelid, "Promoting the Participation of Women in Rural Development," (Report on Mission to Lesotho, Food and Agriculture Organization, Rome, August 1977); also Martha Mueller, "Women and Men, Power and Powerlessness in Lesotho," in Wellesley Editorial Committee, Women and National Development, pp. 154-166.

²⁰The ILO report on Kenya says: "Women left in charge of a farm are often strained by the manifold claims on their time and energies. Their husbands may be away in town, but many rural women are under strain even with husbands by their side. Here there is no underutilization of labour--rather the contrary--and perhaps no time even for aspirations or feelings of frustration. Excessive claims press upon their time and very limited (and often insufficiently aided) capacities--leading to low incomes. And there is the ever-present risk of the calamity which may make it no longer possible to cope." Employment, Incomes and Equality: A Strategy for Increasing Productive Employment in Kenya (Geneva: International Labour Office, 1972), p. 72.

Women carry a heavy burden in child-rearing along with their major contributions to agricultural and artisan output.²¹

Development programs making the standard presumption that households have a male head and the full labor power of a married couple, are bound to err in planning and allocating services, and hold back increases in productivity and welfare in the rural sector.²²

iii. Access to Technology and Capital:

One of the most striking things about development activities, when one becomes aware of it, is the sex bias in access to technology and capital. We have already noted the tendency for cash crops to be introduced for men, with men gaining income from them even if women do some or most of the work. Beyond this, common sex stereotypes lead development agencies to entrust equipment and machinery to men, but not women, and to make loans only to men -- as "household heads" -- presuming that women are not, and cannot be, financially responsible. This is in spite of the fact that women in many countries, most notably in West Africa, have

²¹Deere argues that women in this situation are underwriting the process of capital formation, often in the hands of foreign investors, who are able to pay male labor a minimum wage, thereby increasing profits, because men need not provide for their families' maintenance. Women are doing this. If women did not carry such a heavy burden of production in the rural sector, wages would have to be higher to maintain the labor force over time. Carmen Diana Deere, "Rural Women's Subsistence Production in the Capitalist Periphery," Review of Radical Political Economics, 8, 1 (1976), pp. 9-17. This argument probably applies more to Africa and Latin America than Asia. On the situation of women such situations, see articles by Jelin, Moses, Mueller, Sibisi and Sudarkasa in Wellesley Editorial Committee, Women and National Development, passim.

²²See study by Mavra Buvinic, Nadia Youssef and Barbara Von Elm, "Women-Headed Households: The Ignored Factor in Development Planning" (Report Submitted to the Women In Development Office, USAID, Washington, D.C., March 1978).

controlled much of commerce.²³

Tinker discusses how women's traditional economic roles have been undermined by development agencies introducing equipment to men, even when the work for which it substituted was previously done by women:

Oil presses in Nigeria, tortilla-making machines in Mexico, and sago-processing machines in Sarawak also are purchased and operated by men -- because only men have access to credit or to money. Stereotypes that women cannot manage technology are reinforced by the fact that illiteracy is more widespread among women, who therefore cannot read instructions.²⁴

She argues that planners have sought to create alternative employment for men who have been displaced by new technology, but not for women. That women enjoy a better quality of life from the introduction of some technology cannot be denied. Labor-saving devices free them from physically debilitating work, but why, Tinker asks, cannot women be taught to operate the devices themselves, or get the credit to buy new technology and benefit from it more fully? Even apparently "neutral" technology can have negative effects. Roads, for instance, often bring in commodities manufactured elsewhere, which compete with women's hand-made

²³See articles by Brooks, Hay, Robertson, Lewis and Mullings in Hafkin and Bay, Women in Africa, passim.

²⁴Tinker, "The Adverse Impact of Development on Women," p. 27. A study of rural projects in Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Nigeria, Bolivia, Paraguay and Peru done for AID by Development Alternatives, Inc. found that although women appear to play active roles both as decision-makers in rural households and as participants in most work, external development projects designed to transfer technology to rural people seldom incorporate women as participants. Mary Ann Riegelman et al., A Seven Country Survey on the Roles of Women in Rural Development (Washington, D.C.: Development Alternatives, Inc., 1975).

products, and merchants who displace women petty traders.²⁵ For such reasons, de Vries says:

it is essential to consider how the total labor force, both male and female, is best utilized. It is small profit for a developing economy if the gains made in male productivity are neutralized by losses in the productivity of females.²⁶

There is little question that women in most rural communities are responsive to new technologies that will increase their output or save them labor.²⁷ Research is now beginning on appropriate technologies that are of particular use and value to rural women, and this is one of the most promising areas of rural development.²⁸ Attention needs also to be paid to the process of getting technologies to rural women, whether by designing "female" technologies that would contribute to rural development, but not conflict with existing "male" technologies,²⁹ by increasing the

²⁵Tinker, "The Adverse Impact of Development on Women," Also see case by Elmerdorf, "The Dilemma of Peasant Women."

²⁶Margaret DeVries, "Women, Jobs and Development," Finance and Development, VIII, 4 (1971), p. 8.

²⁷See Riegelman, A Seven Country Survey on the Roles of Women in Rural Development; also Janelid, "Promoting the Participation of Women in Development."

²⁸Janelid reports work being done in Lesotho on: improved mohair spinning wheels, simple grader for beans, implements for small-scale asparagus cultivation, mill for sunflower seed, solar dryers for vegetables, heating system for small broiler units, an animal drawn planter for concentrated fertilizers, water treatment plants, water storage facilities, low-cost windmills for water pumping, pit latrines, simple design of foot bridges, solar cookers and ovens, and solar water heaters. "Promoting the Participation of Women in Development," p. 9. See also Elizabeth O'Kelly, Simple Technologies for Rural Women In Bangladesh (Dacca: UNICEF, Women Development Programme, 1977).

²⁹See Allen Jedlicka, "Diffusion of Technological Innovation: A Case for the Non-Sexist Approach Among Rural Villages" (Paper Prepared for Seminar on Women in Development, Mexico City, 1975).

number of women extension agents, by engaging women in developing and improving technology, or by trying to make all technologies sex-neutral. In any case, the question of how women can get greater access to the benefits of technology has many participatory dimensions, and these need to be attended to more explicitly than in the past.

iv. Participation and Development:

Women's public participation raises still other issues about rural development strategy, since increasing this may be seen as "political" and thus outside the purview of economic development projects. In practically all societies, men occupy most positions of authority, with a virtual monopoly at the highest levels.³⁰ To argue that this imbalance is not relevant for the concerns of development practitioners, one would have to show that it does not affect or reinforce inequalities in women's opportunities and rewards. In fact, the contrary can be shown, as in the following examples from Latin America, Africa and Asia:

- (1) In the Peruvian highlands, although women participate in labor crucial to the community and have control over land in several of the communities, they are consistently subordinate to men, who have captured and controlled all community institutions which determine values and distribute social benefits. In spite of their labor contributions agriculturally and domestically, women were not granted the full responsibilities and privileges of comunero status.³¹

³⁰See particularly Rosaldo and Lamphere, Women, Culture and Society, for their distinction of male-female roles in the public and private spheres.

³¹Susan Borque and Kay Warren, "Compesinas and Comuneras; Subordination in the Sierra," Journal of Marriage and the Family, 38, 4 (1976), pp. 781-788.

- (2) In parts of West Africa, women traditionally owned cattle and other animals, obtained through the off-spring of bridewealth animals or from dowry. Among the Tuareg, women could sell and slaughter their animals without consulting their husbands. The government program to reconstitute herds lost during the drought, however, replaced cattle only for men, disrupting the social system, as male decision-makers were oblivious to or antagonistic toward this area of female autonomy and productivity.³²
- (3) In China, although women have benefited from equal access to land and socialization of certain housework functions, there is still often discrimination in the work points and income given to jobs when done by women. The patrilineal exogamous household system, whereby women marry outside of their original home community, means that team affiliations pass from father to son, while women remain temporary residents who will soon leave for marriage.³³

If women had an equal or even substantial voice in community decision-making, these disabilities would be at least ameliorated. Introducing new development programs and activities into communities where decisions rest almost entirely with males is not likely to benefit females as much as where females share in community governance. This applies at the national level as well, where we find policies that systematically undervalue women's labor and give little attention to their employment, sanctioning lower wages and largely ignoring income earning opportunities for women.³⁴

³²Kathleen Cloud, "Sex Roles in Food Production and Food Distribution Systems in the Sahel" (Report Submitted to the Bureau for Africa, USAID, Washington, D.C., December, 1977).

³³Norma Diamon, "Collectivization, Kinship and the Status of Women in Rural China," Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, 7, 1 (1975), pp. 25-32.

³⁴Hanna Papanek, "Development Planning for Women," in Wellesley Editorial Committee, Women and National Development, pp. 15-16.

This is not to say that projects, as projects, can aim at expanding the public participation of women in decision-making, nor is it to say that such participation is a sufficient condition for improving the situation of women.³⁵ But it is to say that project designers and managers need to be sensitive to the biases, sometimes unwitting, introduced into work assignments, conferring of prestige, sharing of information, and distribution of benefits, when the persons making all of these decisions are men. To the extent possible, it makes sense to try to involve women much more fully, at least in project-related decision-making. Certainly, projects cannot change the political and social systems around them, but they can provide opportunities for women to have a larger share of direction and control of activities that will affect their lives, and this may set some useful precedents for the larger socio-political environment.³⁶

v. Integration versus separation:

An important related issue is the question of integration versus separation of women's activities. "Integration" of women in development has become a standard international objective.³⁷ As usually meant, it seems an appropriate goal. Yet the means of reaching it may not always be through sex-integrated activities,

³⁵ For a case where such participation has not changed women's status very much, see Mueller, "Women and Men, Power and Powerlessness in Lesotho."

³⁶ For some case studies showing the connection between women's participation in planning, decision-making and implementation, on one hand, and in benefits, on the other, see Wilkes, "But We're Not Afraid to Speak Anymore," pp. 15-23.

³⁷ See Ester Boserup and Christina Liljencrantz, Integration of Women in Development: Why, When, How (New York: United Nations Development Programme, 1975); Irene Tinker and Michele Bo Bramson, "Report of Seminar on Women in Development" (Mexico City, June, 1975), in Tinker and Bramson, Women and World Development, esp. pp. 152-153.

organizations, and services. Just as ethnic minorities have had to undertake segregated efforts on their own behalf (and segregated at their own initiative) to focus attention on problems, to raise group consciousness and aspiration, and to bring forth leadership which would not gain experience and confidence in mixed-ethnic activities, so also may it be important to provide separate vehicles for women in development.³⁸

"Women's activities" should not be limited, as often done in the past, to "maternal" and "domestic" work, to sewing, knitting, food preparation, child care, housekeeping, and so forth. The more recent literature makes clear that women must be regarded seriously as producers, and be given appropriate training and skills to become more productive, so they can contribute more effectively to alleviating the poverty of rural families. The purpose is not to remove them from the family or create independent women's power. Rather, it is to enhance their productivity in ways that add to their capacity and value within the rural community, giving them more "bargaining power" for fairer treatment by husbands, mothers-in-law, elders, and officials. The status of women will be more satisfactory if they have such power, not for secession, but for more voluntary contributions to the welfare of those whom they value, as well as to their own.

Thus, even if "integration" of both sexes in public forums and programs is the goal, the means to achieve this may be separate programs or efforts in certain contexts. Where mixed activities will inhibit women's participation, segregated ones, like women's clubs or programs for mothers, may be helpful. Whether integrated or segregated activities are more beneficial

³⁸These considerations are examined at greater length in Staudt, Women and Participation in Rural Development, p. 48 ff.

to women depends on the social setting and stage of their development, how prepared they are for participation on an equal footing with men, and whether they are more likely to develop talents and competence within groups of women or of both sexes. Further, integration does not necessarily mean men and women doing the same things. As a consultant to ECLA, OAS and PAHO on poverty problems of women, families, and youth in Latin America has suggested:

From the outset, efforts in this field have mistakenly tried to measure with a single yardstick the functions of the two sexes, which are complementary but not identical. This has aroused rivalry between the sexes that goes against the very nature of their vital functions, which are those of preserving mankind and improving the quality of life for the whole society.³⁹

The form integration ultimately takes will surely differ from one society to another, just as women's roles have varied considerably throughout at least most of recent history. The question for development practitioners is whether the activities help establish set a pattern of activities, expectations and rewards which equalizes opportunities or not. Social change is always cumulative, and plans and programs which are not very large in themselves nevertheless contribute to, obstruct, or are indifferent to women's broader participation, which is now almost

³⁹Teresa Orrego de Figueroa, "A Critical Analysis of Latin American Programs to Integrate Women in Development," in Tinker and Bramsen, Women and World Development, p. 53. She continues: "Possibly the magnitude of the gap that exists between women's potential and the role that continues to be assigned to them may justify this conflict. There is no doubt that exceptionally qualified and motivated women began a true revolution by dramatically exposing discrimination on the basis of sex, but it is equally true that, to correct this unjust situation, a concerted effort by both men and women is necessary to promote measures that will win, extend, and effectively apply women's rights through out Latin America."

universally accepted as a goal and criterion of development.

Implications of Women's Participation

The foregoing analysis has a number of implications for project development. We would underscore the following five points for enhancing women's all-round participation in development.

i. Emphasis on Women's Production:

Women will be in a subordinate position as long as they are not recognized as equally productive contributors to the family and to society. In fact, as noted already, they are major and sometimes majority contributors, but their work is almost always of lower prestige and is seldom remunerated as highly as men's work. Two ways to correct for this are: expand their involvement in "modern" economic activity, or compensate them for their domestic work. The latter is probably not practical for most countries, and there are good reasons to stress the former, as it will increase the supply of goods and services available to society as a whole if women become more productive by conventional criteria.

This will require women's increased access to technology and capital, through reoriented extension programs, through leading programs, through membership in cooperatives, and so forth. The work of Moock and Staudt suggests that indeed, in many rural settings, the average level of ability of women may be higher than of men, many of the most enterprising of whom have migrated to take advantage of income opportunities elsewhere. So redirecting resources to women in agriculture should not be seen simply as a welfare measure, but as a sound investment, enabling

women to have similar opportunities as men to be effective producers.⁴⁰

ii. Correction of Educational Disparities:

In almost all countries, fewer females are enrolled in schooling than are males, and the exceptions are only at the primary level.⁴¹ The sharp disparity in educational opportunities available to girls, according to Ruttan, "represents a particularly heavy restraint on rural development."⁴² Interestingly, Moock found in rural Kenya that the impact of schooling on output was greater for women than for men.⁴³ In her assessment for Lesotho, Janelid found that indeed the demand for rural women for education and training was very great.⁴⁴ Special efforts will be needed to close the gap between the sexes, but success in this is crucial, since claims to income, status, and authority are so widely connected to educational level.

⁴⁰ Germain says women have been doubly jeopardized by the program approach which emphasizes welfare services such as health and family planning, plus instruction in nutrition, child-care, home economics and the like. "First, as is well known, welfare programs receive only a small fraction, certainly not an equitable portion, of development funds and skilled human resources. Second, when concern about women is centered in welfare-oriented policies and special women's programs, women are effectively excluded from a broader range of programs and policies that would help them to be more productive." "Poor Rural Women: A Policy Perspective," p. 163.

⁴¹ See Nadia H. Youssef, "Education and Female Modernism in the Muslim World," Journal of International Affairs, 30, 2 (1976-77), p. 196.

⁴² Vernon W. Ruttan, "Integrated Rural Development," International Development Review, 17, 4 (1975), p. 15.

⁴³ Moock, "The Efficiency of Women as Farm Managers: Kenya," p. 834.

⁴⁴ Janelid, "Promoting the Participation of Women in Development."

Because education and training are not the same as "schooling," most rural development projects can have components that provide equal, and in some instances, preferential educational opportunities to women. Certainly what are called integrated rural development projects should provide a significant educational program. Some or much of the education offered can be non-formal, and it should probably give more attention to problems of resource utilization (use of credit, consumer economics, and so forth) than previously.⁴⁵ We appreciate the point made by Clignet that the female-male sex ratio in school enrollments is usually correlated with the size of overall enrollments.⁴⁶ But he also recognizes that simply increasing the latter will not necessarily advance women's educational progress. Female enrollments seem to be associated, as much as anything else, with perceived occupational alternatives available to women, Clignet finds. So in this sense, one cannot make much progress simply by providing educational openings for women. There must be advances in terms of productive possibilities, just discussed, and employment opportunities, discussed next, to get parents and young women to make the investment of their resources and time, which is needed along with government facilities.

⁴⁵This is argued in the Agricultural Development Council, Seminar Report (October, 1975) on "Role of Rural Women in Development." Policymakers, it says, need to ask themselves what new or modified programs will do most to advance the status of women in: income-generating activities, income-utilizing activities, and organizational capacity.

⁴⁶Remi Clignet, "Social Change and Sexual Differentiation in the Cameroon and the Ivory Coast," in Wellesley Editorial Committee, Women and National Development, p. 247.

iii. Increased Employment of Women at All Levels:

This heads the list of necessary procedures which Germain proposes for institutions or governments serious about improving the productivity and participation of women.⁴⁷ It means hiring women at policy levels and recruiting them to work on government staffs in rural areas. With more obvious positions of status and authority, such women will encourage others to come forward with their best talents, energies, and ideas. It should have a favorable effect on female education, as just suggested. The policies that result should be more supportive of women's participation in all aspects of development. As we have noted before, projects cannot change the values and behavior of a society, but within their scope for hiring and promotion, they can follow a course of employing women with sets a positive example for other organizations. To the extent they can demonstrate the range and depth of female abilities in managerial, planning, and service roles, they can encourage similar tapping of talent in other sectors and areas.

iv. Special Programs:

Despite her justified criticisms of past emphases on "women's" programs, Germain does conclude that, where necessary, special programs should be developed. While opening up opportunities for the same kind of productive work as men have, it will continue to be appropriate to provide programs tailored to women's particular needs, as mothers and as homemakers. These programs need not be sex-exclusive, as they have been in the past, since men can benefit from more knowledge about child care, home economics, and so forth, but often introducing more women into what has been defined as the "men's" sphere is as much as can be pushed at one time, without trying to get men into "women's" work.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Germain, "Poor Rural Women: A Policy Perspective," p. 169.

⁴⁸ If the program is beneficial, men may wish to join in. See case study 5 in Wilkes, "But We're Not Afraid to Speak Anymore," pp. 23-23, which gives an example of where men volunteered to join

A crucial element in setting up programs is that they involve participation, certainly by women but possibly also by men, in the problem identification and diagnosis stage. This should help project designers get a good fix on what special efforts will make a difference in people's lives and attract their participation in the implementation phases.

As a rule it is good to build on existing skills and activities, to go from what is familiar and accepted to something that can improve the status quo. At the same time, care should be taken not to steer women into outdated, unprofitable, and unmarketable work, since many of the traditional crafts of women are facing increased competition from modern production.⁴⁹ Where this is not already an option for them, women need to be introduced to marketing and commercial transactions, to get around costly dependence on middlemen.

As part of any effort to meet people's needs, health deserves special attention, and women's health among the lower classes in LDCs is often shockingly bad.⁵⁰ Maternal and child health, and family planning programs which emphasize improving women's health (in part through reducing the number of pregnancies), deserve continuing support in this regard.

v. Organization and Participation:

Going along with all of these policies is a need for getting women organized, both in women's and in community or class-wide groups. There is no advantage in having organizations that

a sewing class being set up under a well-designed community development program in India.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 13.

⁵⁰ See, for example, contributions to the issue published by the American University in Cairo, Women, Health and Development (Cairo: American University, Monograph Series No. 1, June 1978).

compete with women's families for their loyalty. Especially among the lower classes, solidarity between men and women is crucial in their struggle for survival and improvement. But women's organizational membership gives them some options, strengthening their position within the family and broadening their horizons. As long as they have no affiliations outside the family, they are likely to be more dependent and less ambitious for themselves and their families. Fortunately, in most societies women do not need to be "taught" about organization. Many societies have a rich legacy of collective action by women, though their organizations may be informal rather than formal-legal in structure.⁵¹ Either way, there is important potential here which should not be overlooked in project design and implementation.⁵²

We have already discussed in Chapter 2 the relative merits of formal versus informal organization, with both contributing different strengths to development effort at the grassroots. Almost by definition, governments cannot establish informal organization; they can only respond to and support this form. Among the most common types of formal organization are cooperatives, self-help associations, and service organizations. The experience and problems with cooperatives were considered already. We

⁵¹ See Tinker and Bramsen, Women and World Development, pp. 67-69 and 171-175; also Boserup, Woman's Role in Economic Development, Ch. 5; Margaret Strobel, "From Lelemana to Lobbying: Women's Associations in Mombasa, Kenya," in Hafkin and Bay, Women in Africa, pp. 183-211; and Filomena Chiome Steady, "Protestant Women's Associations in Freetown, Sierra Leone," *ibid.*, pp. 213-37; also chapters by Van Allen, Hay and Robertson on Nigeria, Kenya and Ghana.

⁵² See Marion Ruth Misch and Joseph B. Margolin, Rural Women's Groups as Potential Change Agents: A Study of Colombia, Korea and the Philippines (Washington, D.C.: George Washington University, Program of Policy Studies in Science and Technology, 1975); also Staudt, Women and Participation in Rural Development, p. 34 ff. Moock suggests, for example, that women's church groups be contacted and if possible involved in agricultural programs because women are already participating in such groups. "The Efficiency of Women as Farm Managers: Kenya," p. 835.

would note here that, except in the case of women's cooperatives, men have often monopolized positions of authority and decisions on dividends and investment.⁵³ This suggests that, where appropriate, single-sex cooperatives might be supported, at least until women are better able to enter as effectively as men into the management of combined-sex organizations. Alternatively, a certain number of seats on the boards of directors of community-based coops might be reserved for women.⁵⁴ In designing any project some measures should be taken to make their fuller participation in decision-making more likely.

The Technical Assistance Information Clearing House, of the American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service, has prepared a set of criteria for evaluating development projects involving women which would be relevant for assessing women's participation in development:

- (1) Initiation and Leadership: Are women involved in initiation? Number of women? Who? Status? Role? Indigenous? Are they responsible and responsive to project participants?

⁵³ One of the most successful cooperatives, the Amul cooperative in Kaira district, India, has greatly increased poor rural households' income from small-scale milk production, done mostly by women. Yet as Adrienne Germain has pointed out, direction of the coops, even at the local level, is largely in male hands. "Letter to the Editor," Report-News of the World Bank Group, (July-August, 1977), p. 3.

⁵⁴ It is hard to reach a consensus about "reservation" of seats by sex, caste or other "minority" characteristic to ensure some representation. Such representatives are often not really "representative," because they are selected by majority interests anyway. The most experience with this has been in India. Interestingly enough, the Committee on the State of Women in India has concluded against reservation of seats for women in the state and national legislatures (though some members strongly favored them), at the same time advocating establishment of women's panchayats at the village level to ensure greater political participation by women and improve their status generally. See discussion by Doranne Jacobson, "Indian Women in Processes of Development," Journal of International Affairs, 30, 2 (1976-77), pp. 236-239.

- (2) Participation and Control: Do women participate in the direction of the project? How? Characterize the structure for participation and feedback (e.g., formal vs. informal). What is the participant's role? Will this experience change women's roles?
- (3) Benefits: What are the benefits of this project to women? Direct? Indirect? How are they measured? Do the participants perceive them as benefits in key areas in their lives? Is the project structured so that, having attained one objective, the participants can move on to others? Does the project contribute to increasing women's access to knowledge, resources and power?
- (4) Social Change: Does this project increase women's options, raise their status? What are the political, economic and cultural implications of the project? Does the project create dislocations? Does it reinforce structures of exploitation? Have these effects been anticipated? What provisions are there to deal with them?
- (5) Process: Does the project treat development as a process? How does it relate to a larger plan? Does it stimulate a broader base for continuing development? Is the project flexible enough to adjust its course to changes identified as desirable? Does the project treat women as an integral part of the family and of the community.⁵⁵

We would conclude our discussion of women's participation with these criteria, which can also serve as guidelines for project

⁵⁵ Criteria for Evaluation of Development Projects Involving Women (New York: American Council of Voluntary Agencies for Foreign Service, 1975). These criteria are applied to six sample projects. Note the similarities in formulation to John M. Cohen and Norman T. Uphoff, Rural Development Participation: Concepts and Measures for Project Design, Implementation and Evaluation (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, January 1977), summarized in Appendix 2, below.

development. They encompass the learning from experience to date on how to help bring women into more productive and satisfying roles in development.

Chapter Six

PARTICIPATION BY DISADVANTAGED ETHNIC, CASTE AND PARIAH GROUPS

One of the major questions asked about rural development participation is whether it can occur where communities are marked by social inequality. Here we are not talking about the political and economic power of local elites, based on the unequal distribution of land, wealth, status, and authority, that commonly characterizes the countryside. There is a different yet related type of inequality that has roots in race, ethnicity, religion and cultural legacies, often reinforced by the unequal distributions referred to above. Social group inequalities often hinder projects trying to reach and involve certain sectors of the community, placing a serious block to fully participatory rural development. We will look at the bases for such blockages and then consider how project design and implementation can attempt to work around them.

Ethnic Groups: Culture, Language, Religion and Race

The literature on the 60 percent of the world's people who live in villages is replete with case studies of cultural, religious, and other cleavages that divide communities, and on occasion lead to extensive conflict and tragic suffering.¹ The fighting between Muslims and Hindus in 1947 in India, the bloody genocide between Hutu and Tutsi in Burundi and Rwanda, and the continual conflict between Ladinos and Indians in many parts of Latin America are salient examples of the religious, cultural and language divisions that can affect rural communities and lead

¹For a good introduction to the problems and issues of societal cleavages, see Crawford Young, The Politics of Culture Pluralism (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1976).

to differential participation in many aspects of development.

Ethnic minorities often emerge as a result of population movement, when groups of people migrate into new areas, for example, the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia, or when areas are settled by large groups of outsiders, for example, the Taiwanese who have been subordinated to immigrants from mainland China.² Economic change, with its resulting social differentiation, can cause minorities to "emerge" even within a stable population, by heightening preexisting cultural, linguistic or religious distinctions that were not salient before certain groups gained advantages over others. The Marwaris in India are a good example of this; their distinctiveness became more marked as they succeeded in commerce and moneylending.

Language often creates a sense of nationality, and different language groups can exist in the same country, for instance, the Dravidian languages in southern India and the Indo-Aryan languages of the North. (The Dravidian base is further broken down into a number of separate languages such as Tamil and Telugu so that several nationalities can exist within a single language region.) India has tried to draw state lines to correspond with linguistic populations, but invariably linguistic minorities exist in most states. Rural people may share a lingua franca, such as Swahili in Kenya and Tanzania, but mother tongues often prevail in rural communities, reinforcing social divisions. Command of the lingua franca may itself give advantages to persons fluent in it, so that its use has political-economic implications. Conflicts often arise over whether a national language

²For other examples, see John A. Works, Jr., Pilgrims in a Strange Land: Hausa Communities in Chad (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), and Pierre van den Berghe, Exile Country: A Plural Society in Highland Guatemala (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).

should be the medium of instruction in primary schools, or whether trading groups should be permitted to use their own languages, which may keep market information from other groups. Particularly difficult problems arise when the national language is seen as one of colonization, as the Oromo view Amharic in southern Ethiopia, or when a language is identified with exploitation, as the Malay see Chinese in Malaysia.

Religion is another prime source of community division and conflict. Often religious cleavages reinforce national and linguistic identities. Few religious conflicts have been as destructive as that between Hindus and Muslims in India. Even subgroups within a major religion may come into conflict, such as the Shiite and Sunni Muslims in some Middle Eastern countries. In Yemen, for example, townsmen and farmers differ along sectarian lines within many communities. Another major basis of conflict is race, as in the extensive conflict in Zanzibar among Arabs, Iranian immigrants, and Africans settled from the coast.³ In this case, the latter group was brought in as slaves, and the social stigma and subordination continued even after emancipation, with race symbolizing a bundle of social positions and relations.

The term "tribe" is used rather loosely to designate social groups distinguished particularly by linguistic or cultural differences, with corresponding differentiation of social organization and political allegiance, as common in Africa. There may or may not be any discrimination or subordination to other groups, so one would not necessarily be concerned about participation by a "tribe", unless this group was systematically excluded from economic and social opportunities. Of more concern would be

³See Michael Lofchie, Zanzibar: Background to Revolution (Princeton: University Press, 1965).

"tribal" minorities -- small groups, usually hunters and gatherers, who have their own techno-cultural organization, that have eluded integration into the larger state and society and are outside the mainstream of national life. Such "tribals" are found in parts of Asia and Latin America and present particular difficulties for participatory approaches to development, since they often do not want to, and are unable to compete for the same opportunities as the majority or dominant groups. (This distinguishes "tribes" in most of Africa from "tribals" elsewhere.) For such groups, a strategy of "non-participation" may be preferred; the alternative of forcing them to participate like other groups contradicts the participatory approach.

At the same time, it may not always be practical to ignore these people and leave them isolated, since exogenous changes are reducing their access to vital, lightly-exploited natural resources. To preserve their autonomy, one would have to set aside large areas of forest, jungle, or plains. The literature on tribals is divided into two camps, supporting either integration (assimilation) or continued isolation. We cannot sort out this complex controversy here. We note the problem and the lack of agreement on what middle course, if any, may be practical. Because tribals generally have small populations and are geographically isolated, most projects do not encounter them and have to consider what to do about their participation. Still some development organizations should give greater and continuing attention to the problems of tribals and their participation in present societies.

The key concern from the perspective of rural development participation is that minorities are often excluded against their will from economic, political, legal, or associational aspects of community life. Such separation may be self-imposed, as with Indians in many East African towns, for purposes of maintaining valued cultural differences. But usually such separateness is

enforced by hidden or public hostility. The patterns of prejudice and discrimination are highly variable among given groups, and even among superficially similar communities in the same region.

Domination and prejudice emerge usually when one group finds opportunities to gain from exploiting another for economic, political, prestige, or other purposes. This has been the case in areas of the Andes where Spanish-speaking Ladinos dominate native language speakers,⁴ or in the Sudan where northern, Arabic-speaking Muslims have dominated non-Islamic peoples from the South. It can also occur where one group wants to impose its ideology or religion on another, as has occurred in Thailand where Buddhist, Thai-speaking groups have attempted to assimilate hill tribes such as the Meo.⁵ The ethnic, linguistic, or other differences do not themselves cause problems for participation; rather, the cause is the web of practices and beliefs that establish differential access to public authority, to resources, and the benefits therefrom. "Ethnic" problems are problems of participation in a very real sense. Where groups with different language, religion, or race, participate equally in decision-making, implementation, benefits and evaluation, there is no major ethnic problem. But because differences in participation by different ethnic groups are fairly common, we need to consider the implications for rural development projects and programs. First, however, we should look also at caste and pariah groups, because they can exist with linguistic, racial or

⁴See, for example, Pierre van den Berghe and George Primov, Inequality in the Peruvian Andes (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1977).

⁵See Somboon Suksamran, Political Buddhism in Southeast Asia: The Role of the Sangha in the Modernization of Thailand (London: C. Hurst, 1976).

other groups, and because the people discriminated against may have skills particularly needed or excluded in the development process. Their participation thus can be a matter of social concern.

Low Caste and Pariah Groups

The term "caste" is used in two different ways. It refers generally to any hereditary and exclusive group that is hierarchically related to others, with implications of discrimination or unfair privilege.⁶ Under such arrangements, our concern is with the participation of subordinate and underprivileged groups. Alternatively, the term identifies a form of social organization, found particularly in India, based on religious beliefs of the superiority of some groups and inferiority of others, with rigid ranking according to birth, and restrictions on occupation and marriage.⁷ In such a system, our concern is with the lower castes and particularly those outside the caste system, commonly referred to as "untouchables."

⁶For an analysis of the literature, see "Caste" in the International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, edited by David Sills (New York: Macmillan and Free Press, 1968), Vol. 2, pp. 333-334. Kroeber's definition is the classic one: "an endogamous and hereditary subdivision of an ethnic unit occupying a position of superior or inferior rank or social esteem in comparison with other subdivisions." A.L. Kroeber, "Caste" in Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (New York: Macmillan, 1930), Vol. 3, p. 254.

⁷For studies on caste in Indian rural settings, see: F.G. Bailey, Caste and the Economic Frontier: A Village in Highland Orissa (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1957); André Beteille, Caste, Class and Power: Changing Patterns of Stratification in a Tanjore Village (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971); and Mahmood Mamdani, The Myth of Population Control: Family, Caste and Class in an Indian Village (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972). See also studies cited in John M. Cohen et al., Participation at the Local Level: A Working Bibliography (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1978), pp. 53-54.

We think it is appropriate to use the term, caste, in its more general sense because one finds rigid systems of group social stratification in a number of countries.⁸ Project designers and managers should be alert to the existence of such systems and to the need to develop innovative ways for ensuring participation by lower caste groups. The problems of getting participation here are likely to be more intractable than with other underprivileged groups (ethnic, linguistic, or religious) because the subordination of lower castes is buttressed by ideology accepted, at least nominally, by both the privileged and underprivileged.

Pariah groups pose particular problems. They tend to be occupationally defined and are seldom in a position to be assisted by small farmer development strategies, because they are artisans outside agriculture, or because they have no land and must work as landless laborers.⁹ Often certain occupations have been socially (even religiously) defined as polluting, and their practitioners stigmatized and denigrated. In the Hindu culture, blacksmiths, tanners, tailors, carpenters and other artisans are so classified, as are sweepers, washermen and musicians. Under the jajmāni system of economic distribution, such specialists received fixed payment each year for their services. In practice, they were subordinate "clients" to their

⁸ A good example of such a system in Latin America is found in Melvin Tumin, *Caste in a Peasant Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952). This shows a Guatemalan village divided into two ranked segments -- Ladinos and Indians.

⁹ This and the following discussion of pariah castes applies directly to those within the Hindu culture sphere, but such occupational groups can be found elsewhere, for example, the Muslim butchers in much of West Africa, or the blacksmiths serving pastoralists in East Africa.

landowning "patrons" and commonly had to perform agricultural labor as well.

Of special significance for rural development efforts is that some of the craftsmen whose manual skills are important to development projects, such as blacksmiths, carpenters, or masons, are low caste and socially excluded from certain types of interaction with higher castes. Consequently, they have no role in decision-making and probably little benefit from new activities, most of which are oriented toward agricultural production anyway. They are thus in an anomalous position with regard to projects, which are needed by the socially marginal. Worse off, of course, are the unskilled groups, like sweepers or washermen, who are by custom barred from activities like commerce, and by poverty from owning land or other assets sufficient to move them up economically and socially. Without outside help, they and their descendants are consigned forever to a miserable life at the bottom of the social pyramid. Unless development projects specifically provide them with new opportunities, which may be resisted by other caste groups, these pariah groups have no prospects of improved existence.¹⁰

Development projects have difficulty reaching and assisting pariah groups because cultural rules, such as taboo and etiquette, make certain types of interaction between them and socially superior groups unacceptable to the latter. In so far as the social norms are accepted by the "untouchables," they are not inclined to engage or challenge their social superiors. Such

¹⁰Some studies report that low-caste occupational groups may be made worse off by development projects, as for example when water-carriers lose their jobs because of mechanized pumps or irrigation systems. See for instance Joseph W. Elder, "Rajpur: Change in the Jajmani System of an Uttar Pradesh Village," in Change and Continuity in India's Villages, edited by K. Ishwaran (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), pp. 105-127.

cultural inhibitions can badly compromise participatory strategies that involve holding village meetings, forming committees, or promoting cooperative groups.¹¹ Higher caste status tends to coincide with greater wealth or authority, increasing the power of local elites, and exacerbating the problems of elite domination, described in Chapter 3.

Although debate is considerable over whether the "cement" holding caste systems together comes more from consensus or coercion, we think the better case can be made for the latter, at least in today's world.¹² High status groups must exert constant pressure to suppress low caste efforts to move upward in society. Myths of custom and rank are reinforced by political power of higher status people, and their frequent economic domination of those below them. Unfortunately, researchers rarely get close enough to low caste groups to know their own real view of the system.¹³ The complex structure that maintains caste systems can be threatened by seemingly minor programs, such as adult literacy, for preventing low castes from learning about their rights and opportunities is needed to keep them quiescent. Obviously, projects that focus on providing economic benefits

¹¹The problems of getting cross-caste interaction when taboos forbid eating or drinking together are discussed in Lionel Caplan, Administration and Politics in a Nepalese Town: The Study of a District Capital and Its Environs (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975).

¹²See for instance, Gerald Berreman, "The Brahmannical View of Caste," Contributions to Indian Sociology, New Series, 5 (1971), pp. 16-23; and Joan Mencher, "The New Caste System Upside Down, or the Not-so-Mysterious East," Current Anthropology, XV, 4 (1974), pp. 469-478.

¹³For a study done in Nepal that tries to understand low-caste perceptions, see Harvey S. Blustain, "Power and Ideology in a Nepalese Village" (Unpublished Ph.D. diss. Yale University, 1977).

for the rural poor and involve participatory decision-making mechanisms pose a major challenge to dominant castes, and are likely to be resisted.¹⁴ This does not mean such efforts should be abandoned or avoided, because then the poorest of the rural poor would be completely by-passed. Rather it means that projects must proceed with realistic efforts to reach these lower groups or whatever terms are possible.

Increasing Outgroup Participation

There are numerous grounds for seeking to increase participation in decision-making, implementation, benefits, and evaluation by various minorities in the rural sector. This may be endorsed in the name of more equitable development. Some argue that the greatest margin for increased productivity is to be found among previously by-passed groups. Of particular interest are theories that ethnic or religious minorities have been highly innovative in the past, perhaps because their lack of full integration into the community gives them unique, often progressive perspectives.¹⁵ Although more recent research emphasizes the

¹⁴Berremán notes: "The social costs [of caste] become manifest when the traditional hierarchy of power and privilege is confronted by democracy and equalitarianism and when pluralism is confronted by the homogenizing influence of mass media, public education, and the like. The resulting changes may take the form of group or individual mobility, or implementation of equalitarian practices, or elimination of traditional prerogatives, or wider dissemination of power and access to valued things in society. Such changes are likely to be traumatic in their achievement. The fact that they are sought by some in the society and bitterly resisted by others belies the notion that caste systems are intrinsically consensus-based, equilibrium-maintained, personally satisfying and conflictless." "Caste," p. 338.

¹⁵See: David C. McClelland, The Achieving Society (New York: Van Nostrand, 1961); Everett Hagen, On the Theory of Social Change (Homewood: Dorsey Press, 1962); David C. McClelland and D.G. Winter, Motivating Economic Achievement (New York: Free Press, 1969). The classic analysis is by Everett V. Stonequist, The Marginal Man (New York: Russell, 1937).

role of structural variables, there appears to be some validity in the notion that "marginal men" (and women) who have been kept on the edge of society can be significant forces for change. While we do not assume minorities are generally progressive, ample grounds exist for urging their incorporation into rural development projects. This means designing projects so that minorities are not excluded, as they will be in all probability unless special efforts are made. (This is presuming that they wish to be included, which they may not, as discussed next.)

The range of policies for increasing outgroup participation runs from focusing project activities exclusively on the isolated group, to increasing its active presence within projects where the majority or high status groups are involved. Whether the strategy should be to integrate generally separated groups through participatory strategies, or to target activities and benefits specifically for minority or low caste groups raises difficult ethical questions, particularly for donors when the host government opts for the first strategy. Moral objections can be raised both to perpetuating separation and to enforcing integration, depending on what the specific groups in question desire for themselves. As long as one is committed to a participatory strategy, the decisive voice on this should presumably be that of the people concerned. This does not mean that governments will not undertake aggressive integration strategies, but at least the donor's position can be fairly clear. Enough tasks need to be done in LDCs, without forcing opportunities on people which they are not prepared to choose for themselves.

i. Ensuring Fair Share of Benefit:

Five kinds of program activity seem reasonable for enhancing the participation of minority groups in rural development. The first is to ensure them some fair share in opportunities and benefits created in the rural sector. Projects are unlikely to be specifically aimed at this, but in the implementation of an integrated rural development project, for example, where schools and water

supply are supported by a grant, guidelines could require identifiable disadvantaged minorities get a specified proportion of places in the schools, or that a certain share of water taps be installed in minority sections of the community.

India has tried to uplift the status and position of the "scheduled castes" by allocating to them a percentage of educational openings at different levels, of jobs in the public sector, and even of seats on village panchayats. The enforcement of "quotas" is an often unpopular step, as we know from experience in the U.S. It seems to have had some payoffs in India for the lowest castes, who would have been left out of schools, public service positions, and public office without the intervention of the state. Changes in attitude on the part of both privileged and underprivileged come slowly, however. India has been working on this for some 30 years, and while the life chances of many low caste members appear to have been improved, the change comes most slowly and contestedly in the rural areas. We are not suggesting that all projects ought to introduce quotas, but designers and managers should consider "fair share" guidelines when allocating seats on cooperative boards of directors or hiring staff, as well as when disbursing credit, extension advice, and so forth.

ii. Enhancing Minority Assets:

A second emphasis would be to enhance the assets of minority or low caste members of the community. In rural areas, landless laboring castes would be most immediately assisted by getting assured access to land, and in projects where land is reclaimed or could be purchased, this would be feasible. Where irrigation is to be introduced, minority groups might be given responsibility for constructing and maintaining the system, thereby gaining control of water even if they cannot be given land. They can sell the water to users to earn income. Or perhaps small amounts of land could be purchased to establish fish ponds, which would

generate employment and income for landless workers, as well as improve nutrition by increasing the supply of protein in the rural area.¹⁶

iii. Providing Community Facilities:

Projects can concentrate on community facilities that can be made accessible to all, such as drinking water supply, schools or cooperative storage depots. Pariah groups have often been excluded from such services, but with resources coming from outside, where local advantaged groups have to accept minority participation as the price of foreign or government assistance, the services may be opened up to all. A concerted monitoring and enforcement system backed by government sanctions, will usually be required, at least initially, to assure access is indeed available to the disadvantaged. Because pariah groups have been excluded, introducing and maintaining these services may have a substantial effect, not just on physical needs, but on social relations.

iv. Undertaking Special Programs:

Some projects can provide special programs for minorities, particularly focused on their production possibilities. Where a caste system prevails based on occupational differentiation, it

¹⁶These possibilities have been raised in connection with project design for a rural area development project in the Rapati zone of Nepal, where a particular ethnic minority, the Tharus, are mostly landless laborers in a major valley. Introducing irrigation in the conventional style would provide a windfall gain to the landowners, many of whom are absentee. It is not clear that land reform could be made a precondition for any project assistance in the valley since increasing food production is a high priority in the area and this would itself benefit the rural poor in this food-deficit zone. Whether control over irrigation water or fish ponds could be designed into the project remains to be seen. There are further possibilities that most of the economic gains from irrigation could be taxed away for expenditure on activities benefiting mostly the Tharus, but fiscal mechanisms appear too weak for this to be effective.

may be possible to introduce functional programs to benefit targeted groups, such as a training program for blacksmiths, improved kilns for potters, formation of tanning and hide marketing cooperatives for leather workers, or support of small tool industries aiding groups of carpenters. Since higher caste groups would not normally be interested in participating in such programs, they would be an open opportunity to assist disadvantaged groups. Special programs to provide education or adult literacy to minority groups may successfully reduce the hold of landowners, money lenders, and others. Educational programs may be resisted by the privileged, but since education can be positive-sum rather than zero-sum in its operation (one does not have to take something away from one person to give it to another), greater opportunity may exist for these programs than for redistributing assets like land or water.

v. Assisting Organization:

Finally, we would point to the importance of organization for low caste or underprivileged minorities, as for other groups we have considered in Part III. Even if their numbers in the total society are few, minorities can increase their bargaining power significantly by joining together, to give or withhold votes, and to bargain collectively over wages for their labor or prices for their goods. One can be sure powerful groups within rural society (and maybe nationally) will resist such efforts, so they need sympathetic support from government, and possibly foreign donor, agencies. We have noted previously the study of peasant organizations in South India by Alexander, showing that unions of agricultural laborers, most of whom are low caste or untouchables, have been able to improve members' economic and social conditions.¹⁷ Foreign donors are hardly in a position to

¹⁷K.C. Alexander, "Some Aspects of the Emergence of Peasant Organizations in South India" (Paper Presented to 9th World Congress of Sociology, Uppsala, Sweden, August, 1978). Of special

insist on the right of such persons to organize and act collectively on their own behalf, but where the national government is sympathetic to the rural poor, the understanding and encouragement of donors can be helpful in support of organization for the poor.

When it comes to assisting the rural poor to participate in all aspects of rural development -- decision-making, implementation, benefits, and evaluation in particular -- little is well established. Development specialists had best adopt the axiom of medical ethics -- to do no harm. Practitioners cannot always know whether what they can do will help, but at least they can forswear policies and technical interventions likely to hurt needy groups. Introducing an irrigation scheme, for example, where land tenure is very unequal and certain minorities are predominantly agricultural laborers, would be irresponsible. While the minorities might benefit somewhat from increased demand for labor, most of the economic benefit would go to the already wealthy and further entrench their power. It would probably be better for development agencies to do nothing in this situation than to do what foreseeably reinforces the disadvantages of poor groups. Possibly some programs or financial provisions might be devised and introduced along with the irrigation to offset the disparity otherwise resulting, in which

Interest concerning lower castes is that in Alleppy district of Kerala, the district where landless laborers have been actively and effectively organized for the longest time. Obligatory service for pariah castes like barbers, washermen, carpenters, and blacksmiths has been almost eliminated (Table 4). Moreover, in that district, almost everyone says that farmers and laborers take food together at the village tea shop (only one-third say so in the less organized districts) and laborers do not need to address farmers with special respect and laborers are allowed to enter farmers' houses. Wage rates are decided jointly by the farmer, laborer and public authorities, hours of work are fixed and enforced, and laborers get extra pay for extra work (Table 3). The significance of organization for improving economic and social status of low caste laborers is well shown by this study.

case, the project might satisfy expectations of reasonably equitable impact.

This conclusion applies to all of the groups discussed in this part. Unfortunately, the state-of-the-art is not advanced enough to have highly reliable and readily acceptable means of enhancing the participation of these groups (least of all ethnic and other minorities). Caution in assessing the impact of new programs before they are undertaken is entirely warranted. At the same time, because knowledge is limited, it does make sense to introduce some experimentation in the process of designing and implementing projects, to try different methods of reaching and assisting the rural poor, so long as the results are carefully evaluated and the projects are able to make modifications and corrections as they proceed.

We are not saying that projects will be unacceptable if they benefit any except the target groups among the rural majority. Some spillover is generally unavoidable, and indeed may be necessary to get the relatively affluent to accept programs aimed to help the poor. Our concern here has been to identify particular characteristics of different target groups whose greater participation in rural development efforts is usually to be increased by donor-assisted projects, and to reflect what experience is at hand in terms of appropriate approaches to project design and implementation. Donors, like most governments, are fairly new at trying to help those in greatest need of assistance to improve their productivity and welfare. Thus we would expect that in some years' time more conclusive analysis and recommendations would be possible.

Part III

SUPPORTING PARTICIPATION IN RURAL

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

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Chapter Seven

PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Past dispositions to view peasant farmers as backward toilers of the soil, whose lives will be made better and whose labor will be made more productive by the adoption of "modern" technology, may make it difficult for some to accept the idea that farmers should personally participate in agricultural research and development (R&D). Yet the evidence is accumulating that this indeed is in order. A new strategy of agricultural R&D is emerging that persuasively argues such involvement makes good sense. It grows out of realization that agricultural systems in Third World countries are complex and not always amenable to the technical solutions created in more temperate climates, that peasant "resistance" to innovation is often well-founded, and that agricultural scientists in many instances have something to learn from peasant cultivators. New approaches to agricultural R&D, which we will describe in this chapter, have arisen not because farmer participation is regarded by scientists and technicians as a good thing in principle, but because in practice, some partnership will achieve better results.

The "Green Revolution" has been much debated, with critics and defenders as yet not agreed on how much its technology has improved rural living conditions. Fairly clear is that, by and large, larger farmers have benefited more from the new technology than have small farmers, even if parts of the "package" are beneficial to the latter. For the foreseeable future, no "break-throughs" are in the works that are going to boost small farmer's income through technological wizardry. If the benefits of better technology, better crops and practices, are to reach the poor majority who need of them most, a different approach is required. Fortunately, models and examples are emerging that point out

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promising new directions.¹

The new orientation is illustrated in the work of Freire. He argues development is more than material change, but involves an awakening of people's consciousness and the community's creative forces, which have lain dormant due to induced dependence on specialists' expertise.² Even if one does not accept Freire's formulations, growing evidence from social science field studies indicates the developing world's rural people are not naturally passive, fatalistic, or tradition-bound. Rather, they are as rational as their Western counterparts and are often good farmers, builders, and problem-solvers at their given level of poverty and technology.³ Such considerations suggest participation by rural people in agricultural research can have both

¹For much of the following analysis, we are indebted to our colleagues at Cornell working on agricultural research for developing countries, particularly William F. Whyte. See his book, Organizing for Agricultural Development: Human Aspects in the Utilization of Science and Technology (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1975); and his article, "Toward a New Strategy for Research and Development in Agriculture: Helping Small Farmers in Developing Countries," Desarrollo Rural en las Américas, IX, 1-2 (1977), pp. 51-61; also David Monogan's review of field experience by agricultural scientists, "Abundance and Subsistence - Can Two Worlds Meet?" Food and Life Sciences Quarterly, 11, 2 (1978), pp. 4-9.

²Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (London: Penguin, 1971). For a methodology using participation to raise group consciousness and capacity, see Roy Carr-Hill, Developing Educational Services for the Needs of Population Groups: Testing Some Concepts (Paris: UNESCO, 1975).

³"The myth of the passive peasant" is well described by Whyte, Organizing for Agricultural Development, pp. 6-10.

subjective and objective benefits for development.

Some basic elements of "participatory research" have been suggested by Hall:

- (1) research processes should be of immediate and direct benefit to a community and not merely serve as the basis for an academic paper or obscure policy analysis;
- (2) research should involve the people in the project area, from the formulation of the problem, to discussion of solutions, and interpretations of findings;
- (3) research should be part of a community's total educational experience and serve to establish needs, increase awareness, and promote commitment;
- (4) research processes should be viewed as a consciousness raising effort involving dialogue over time, and not present a static picture at one point in time;
- (5) research should aid in the realization of human creative potential and the mobilization of human resources for the solving of community problems; and
- (6) research should increase community power by giving local people self knowledge.⁴

Participatory research extends well beyond its obvious uses in community surveys for getting baseline data on a project area, or in gathering data for evaluation of project performance.

Indeed, its greatest utility may be in promoting better ways for rural people to work with outside experts to solve specific community problems. For example, in Tanzania, the Community Development Trust Fund (CDTF) involved farmers in research on grain

⁴Budd L. Hall, "Participatory Research: Expanding the Base of Analysis," International Development Review/Focus, 19, 4 (1977), pp. 23-26. See the growing literature on this subject in such studies as N.J. Colletta, "Participatory Research or Participation Put-down? Reflections on an Indonesian Experiment in Non-Formal Education," Convergence, IX, 3 (1976), pp. 32-46; J.K. Lindsey, "Participatory Research: Some Comments," Convergence, IX, 3 (1976), pp. 47-50; and Budd L. Hall, "Participatory Research: An Approach for Change," Convergence, VIII, 2 (1975), pp. 24-32.

storage systems that used entirely local materials.⁵ Rather than conduct research at an experiment station or on a "model farmer's" homestead, and then recommending a "solution" to the local people, the CDTF staff drew on the farmers' already considerable knowledge about grain storage. When the villagers found the outsiders were not going to force a preconceived solution on them, they entered into active experimentation that produced four or five improved storage units, and developed better construction methods in the process.⁶

The methods of participatory research can help solve many problems in the rural sector, such as the gathering and analysis of local data, designing of better tools, creating efficient local water systems, developing reforestation techniques, and

⁵This is reported in Hall, "Participatory Research," and in a report by the Economic Development Bureau (New Haven, Connecticut), Appropriate Technology for Grain Storage in Tanzanian Villages (Dar es Salaam: Economic Development Bureau, 1976).

⁶EDB consultants to the CDTF report that initially there was distrust by most members of the community chosen for the experimentation, and dominating initiative by a few of the most prosperous members of it. Some rather good designs were proposed by the latter, but they involved purchased materials which the CDTF and EDB wisely declined to use because poorer members of the community could not purchase them. The consultants described their first several weeks in the community as "consciousness raising" (a la Freire), though the process might be better described as the community members deciding whether they could and should trust the outsiders enough to "open-up." Some interesting techniques were used, such as a local artist to draw diagrams of alternative designs for people to discuss and criticize. It turned out from long discussion that, depending on the prosperity of the household, different silos were needed, an important finding which led to diversified experimentation rather than searching for one "optimum" design.

so on.⁷ But the most dramatic pay-offs may well come from participatory involvement in plant and livestock production efforts, so we will illustrate the possibilities and methods of new research approaches in the agricultural sector.

Reassessment of Agricultural Systems

The conviction that scientific knowledge developed in one environment can be readily transferred to another has been considerably modified in recent years, as agricultural scientists have come to appreciate more the complexity, variability, and vulnerability of agricultural systems in developing countries. The model from U.S. and European experience was scientifically improved monoculture, maximizing yields for a single crop using "best" techniques and "optimal" resource inputs. Monoculture was responsive to mechanized cultivation (in labor-scarce, land-abundant economies). The model sought increments to output by employing new inputs, not by using existing ones better. This involved introducing machinery and equipment, fertilizer, pesticides, and so forth, all of which required capital.

More recent research has demonstrated the efficiency and virtues of polyculture, including multiple cropping, intercropping, and relay cropping, not for every environment, but

⁷For consultative and experimental techniques in developing agricultural tools, see paper on the Tanzanian Agricultural Mechanization Testing Unit by David Vail, "Technology for Socialist Development in Tanzania" (Mimeo, n.p., n.d.). A very interesting experience developing improved technology for village blacksmiths, with some assistance from the Intermediate Technology Development Group in London, is described in D.L.O. Mendis, "Reorganization of Tool and Small Machine Production with Cooperatives in Sri Lanka," Development Digest, 14, 4 (1976), pp. 109-115.

for many settings in the Third World.⁸ Not planting neat rows and allowing to grow many plants considered weeds by outsiders, were in fact practical responses to the particular ecosystem. As discussed below, growing crops in combination was often optimal even if the yields of none of them were maximized. Research, such as conducted at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) at Ibadan, Nigeria, also made clear that "minimum tillage" -- a fancy name for planting with a digging stick instead of ploughing the field first -- was more appropriate in the tropics.⁹ Digging up the soil where the rain and sun beat down only led to loss of nutrients through runoff and leaching. Many of the things farmers had been doing for ages turned out to be scientifically superior to recommended, imported practices.

Even more than in temperate zones, the environmental conditions of developing countries vary greatly. Often quite different micro-environments exist a short distance from one another. What "works" in one may not work at all well in the other. So different times of planting, weeding practices, combinations of crops, rotations, and so forth must be worked out empirically for specific locations. The farming systems can also often be

⁸For review of this literature, see Donald Kass, Poly-culture Cropping Systems: Review and Analysis (Ithaca: Cornell International Agriculture Bulletin 32, 1978). One of the first arguments along these lines was by Richard Bradfield, "Increasing Food Production in the Tropics by Multiple Cropping," in Research for the World Food Crisis (Washington: American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1970), pp. 229-242. He showed that a single acre of land in the Philippines could produce 2-4 tons of rice, 10 tons of sweet potatoes, 1 ton of soybeans, plus 18,000 ears of sweet corn and 6,000 pounds of soybean pods, enough calories to feed 29 people, and enough protein for 53!

⁹International Research in Agriculture (New York: Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, 1974), pp. 36-37.

seriously upset by even small changes in established patterns. The whole approach to research must be different, when what "works" on an experiment station cannot be counted on to give the same results in other locations. That new varieties or practices did not always produce as high yields on peasants' farms has not always been due to their failure to follow extension agents' advice. Poor results could come from a misfit between recommendations and micro-environments, or from getting even one part of the system out of balance. The top-down model of agricultural R&D, where expert scientists worked out solutions to the productive problems they saw, and sought to extend these to farmers through government agencies, is itself mismatched to environments such as just described. There the knowledge of cultivators is both great and relevant to the tasks of improving agricultural output. When the problem of variability is coupled with the limited professional and administrative manpower available for research, participation in the research process by knowledgeable farmers begins to make sense.

Reassessment of Rural People's Practices

Two conclusions have emerged from studies in recent years on peasant economic behavior. First, their behavior is better understood as "constrained" than as "irrational," and second, it is the product of a great deal of empirical learning. Some have been tempted to regard rural people in developing countries as irrational whenever they did not do what planners and scientists expected. (To be sure, such experts were not necessarily seeking what was best for the specific household, but what would be, in the aggregate, best for the country.) The complexity, variability, and vulnerability of the farming systems, however, often made it unwise for farmers to adopt certain practices recommended by outside experts. The factor of risk, which poor rural households could ill afford to bear, also weighed

heavily in their calculations. A smaller, but more certain yield, was more valuable to them than a yield which was possibly, even a probably, but not certainly larger. Given their small holdings and marginal subsistence, a crop failure or even reduced yield could spell disaster.¹⁰

Unfortunately, experts have too easily interpreted "resistance to change" as cultural backwardness or individual immaturity. When peasants did not speak the language of the technician or administrator, whether foreign or city-born, or spoke it poorly, many inferred they were ignorant or still like children, thereby reinforcing "paternalistic" attitudes. Yet, as Belloncle concludes, based on many years of experience in Francophone West Africa:

Indeed, it is high time to take the African peasants for what they are -- not children, and still less grown-up children, but responsible adults; not virgin wax to be moulded at will but experienced men who, for generations, have successfully maintained a difficult balance under difficult conditions.¹¹

Experience with the Puebla project in Mexico shows the validity of current practices and the appropriateness of learning from the peasantry. This project was launched with support of the international corn and wheat research center (CIMMYT) and was to raise the yields of maize for peasant cultivators under

¹⁰For review of the literature assessing peasant "rationality," see Davydd J. Greenwood, The Political Economy of Peasant Family Farming: Some Anthropological Perspectives on Rationality and Adaptation (Ithaca: Rural Development Committee, 1973); also his "Community Level Research, Local-Regional Governmental Interactions and Development Planning: A Strategy for Baseline Strategies" (Paper Prepared for USAID, Policy and Program Coordination Bureau, 1978).

¹¹Guy Belloncle was deputy secretary-general of IRAM (Institute du recherche et d'application des méthodes de développement)

rain-fed conditions. Between 1968 and 1973, as much as one-quarter of the project area was planted with the new maize variety promoted by the project. Beyond this point, adoption fell off dramatically. An assessment of peasant practices made clear what should have been evident from the outset: maize was seldom grown by itself, but almost always together with beans. The latter climbed up the stalks of the maize, thereby getting more sunlight, without much affecting maize yields. CIMMYT researchers, when they looked into this maize-bean association, found the combination yielded approximately double the net income of either grown alone. Moreover, given the lysine deficiency in maize, producing and consuming beans along with maize led to a balanced protein intake, not possible by maximizing maize production.¹²

A new subdiscipline has emerged within the agricultural sciences, drawing on the methodologies and theories of anthropology -- ethno-science. This involves investigating and analyzing indigenous practices together with the folk explanations given -- why certain weeds do not get out of control, why certain rotations of crops produce better results, how different soils are classified for their functional uses, what varieties of crop store best, and so forth.¹³ This does not mean that indigenous practices

in Paris at the time of writing this. "Listening to the Peasant: Foreign Experts and Their Local Counterparts Suffer from the Same Superiority Complex, Ignoring Knowledge Accumulated Over Centuries," *Ceres*, 6, 3 (1973), p. 27.

¹²See Whyte, "Toward a New Strategy"; also Consultive Group, International Research in Agriculture, p. 44.

¹³The approach of ethno-science, developed abroad has been "brought home" to New York State, by Steven Craft, a Cornell graduate student in Agricultural Economics who is writing his Ph.D. thesis on the folk classification of New York soils by practicing farmers. Their system of classification proves to be more useful than that derived scientifically by USDA or FAO, which emphasizes chemical differences more than productive properties.

are always optimal or their effects understood. Nor does it mean that scientists and technologists have no useful role to play -- they do. In the Puebla project, tests revealed the chicken manure applied to the maize-bean fields, while producing some good results, lacked certain minerals needed for best yields. By supplementing the traditional method of fertilizing the soil, further improvements could be made.¹⁴ So the point is not that peasants are all-wise and need no assistance. Rather, it is that much can be learned from indigenous practices, and the intelligence and experience of often illiterate people should be respected, to form a partnership in which modern science and acquired knowledge are joined to take advantage of each.

Reassessment of Agricultural Research

As suggested above, the style and structure of agricultural R&D have been very top-down. Indeed, as Whyte points out, the aims of research often did not originate with the researchers, but rather with national planners and policy-makers:

The planners have already decided what was to be done; agronomic research was used simply to determine how best to achieve the predetermined objectives....the planners did not set out to discover the interests and needs of the farmers nor to study and evaluate their prevailing production practices, in order to determine, from analysis of the field situation, what innovations might yield the best results for the farmers. They assumed that they had the basic technology that was required, so that the problem was only one of making adjustments for local conditions,

¹⁴In the CDTF efforts to develop better grain storage methods in Tanzania by working with the rural people, at some point the technical knowledge of one of the outside staff was very helpful. Some of the traditional silos were built on many

getting the package to the farmers, and persuading them to use it.¹⁵

In this strategy of agricultural R&D, farmers' views were not sought, only their participation in "adoption" of the proposed new crops or practices. This participation they often would not or could not give, because of circumstances that had not been considered in detail or from the farmers' point of view. Interestingly enough, conventional R&D also provided for little participation in decisions or evaluation by the extension workers, who while they might act superior to the farmers, were treated by their superiors simply as "channels" for reaching the peasants. This has had predictably adverse effects on extension morale and performance.¹⁶

This system scored enough successes that it was not abandoned, but its limitations were recognized. Unfortunately, fault was found with the farmers and extension workers, almost never with the R&D approach itself. The Puebla project's experience contributed greatly to a rethinking of the R&D Model. It was trying to reach and assist small farmers, yet the new technology, like most of what the high-science research centers had produced, was developed under "ideal" or at least quite

stilt-legs, which rats could easily climb to get in despite the improvised shields to keep them out. With some simple engineering principles, silos could be constructed, still with local materials, having many fewer legs, which could then be made more effectively secure against rodents.

¹⁵Whyte, "Toward a New Strategy," p. 56.

¹⁶On the limited participation of extension staff, see David K. Leonard, Reaching the Peasant Farmer: Organization Theory and Practice in Kenya (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977); and Robert Chambers, Managing Rural Development: Ideas and Experience from East Africa (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1974); also Stanley Heginbotham, Cultures in Conflict: The Four Faces of Indian Bureaucracy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975), esp. pp. 155-174.

favorable conditions. This obviously biased the varieties and practices to be recommended for adoption. The project, however, worked under more "typical" conditions. The general coordinator of the Puebla project (1970-73) concluded:

In Mexico we have been mentally deformed by our professional education. Without realizing what was happening to us, in the classroom and in the laboratories we were learning that scientists knew all that had so far been learned about agriculture and that the small farmers did not know anything. Finally we had to realize that there was much we could learn from the small farmers.¹⁷

It is not just a matter of learning substantively what farmers knew, though this is very important. Researchers, like project designers, need to know what the farmers' problems and objectives are. What qualifies in their mind as a "better" output or a "better" practice? The focus in the international research stations on maximum yields missed the point that many of the world's cultivators, and certainly most of those whom we now think of as the target group, need secure yields. Drought-resistant or disease-resistant varieties will enhance their welfare more than varieties that give great output but require much water and many nutrients, and enough chemicals to destroy weeds and pests. Such improvements in seed types will be less dramatic than the so-called miracle varieties, and may even forgo output in good years, but they require less cash outlay, and probably less labor input. It is the bumper crop, however, that wins plaudits for research and extension, while averting famine often goes unrecognized.

Farmers usually are most concerned with ensuring the livelihood of their families. They favor crops and livestock that

¹⁷Mauro Gomez, quoted in Whyte, "Toward a New Strategy," p. 54.

produce a predictable, adequate output, and fit prevailing consumption and resource constraints. A new rice variety that increases yields 50 percent is of little use if it takes enough longer to mature that a second crop cannot be planted that year. A new variety that requires more labor to harvest and process at a time when other crops must be planted quickly, or when there are remunerative job opportunities off-farm, may not add to the family's economic well-being. Researchers must understand well the goals and constraints of typical agriculturalists, even the specific ones of cultivators in a particular area, if their research is to serve the rural poor.¹⁸

These various considerations point up the need for more participatory approaches to agricultural R&D. National and international research centers have not all begun moving in this direction, but enough experimentation is going on to be able to see the advantages of such an approach. It seeks to integrate indigenous knowledge of agriculture with the principles of science worked out in the laboratory and experiment station.

Implications for Agricultural Research Projects

Recent experience makes apparent that increased farmers' participation in agricultural R&D is a matter of practicality, not ideology. The prospects are greater for successfully creating appropriate technology and spreading it through the community,

¹⁸This applies, of course, to project designers. The cattle ranching and range management project among the Masai in Tanzania is reported to have run into difficulty because of the assumption that the Masai would raise the cattle for sale (as beef) rather than want to increase the production of milk. Given considerations of economic return and assuring family security under the prevailing conditions the latter may be reasonable rather than a matter of "traditionalism."

if farmers have a voice in the process, helping not just to evaluate results but also to identify problems and set criteria for determining success.

i. Taking Farmers' Perspective into Account:

Farmers' interests and perceptions are not the only ones to be considered in shaping and assessing research programs, but they should be central. Farmers are not always right, in specifying what their most critical problems are or in coming up with solutions. We find no basis for having all research decisions made by rural people. But the presumption should be that their statement of problems and possible solutions be taken seriously, and explored with the tools of science to see how far they are appropriate. To the extent that this is the case, getting action to resolve problems should be easier than with solutions proposed from outside, with which the people have not been identified.

Some suggest that more role be assigned to social scientists in working on peasant agricultural problems.¹⁹ It should be recognized that the social sciences employ different methodologies and have comparative advantage in dealing with different kinds of problems -- farm management studies draw on different theory and field techniques than studies of the influence of caste relations. So simply having one social scientist, of whatever discipline, do baseline analysis will not reveal all the relevant problems. At the same time, the physical scientists involved ought to be more versed in social science concepts and approaches, just as any social scientist working on problems of agricultural research and development should be reasonably knowledgeable about soils, plant nutrition, plant protection, hydrology, and so forth. In other words, to suggest involvement of social

¹⁹ See Whyte, "Toward a New Strategy," p. 57 ff.

scientists does not mean erecting one more division of labor, which can, if extreme, impede communication rather than promote it. We have found in our work at Cornell, between social scientists and physical scientists, that it helps to have a firm fix on problems, such as can be identified from working with farmers. Some of the disagreements between disciplines become less significant, and even less apparent, if transported from the realm of academic discourse, to the field, where cooperation to solve problems can have results that become their own reward.

ii. Adopting a "Systems" Approach:

The problems of peasant production, plant protection, and environmental conservation, as suggested already, are so complex that no one discipline can make much headway by itself. But interdisciplinary cooperation by itself will probably not suffice. It appears important that researchers from various disciplines work within some "systems" framework, which identifies component parts of the whole and the relationships among them. One of the miscalculations made by rice breeders, when they developed fertilizer-responsive but short-stalked varieties, was to breed for yield of kernels, ignoring the use of the stalks as an important source of animal fodder, for water buffalo, for example. The shorter stalks had less nutritional value, and were possibly even undigestible by animals. Plant breeders had ignored animals as part of the production system, when in fact they contribute valuable draught power and fertilizer to the household enterprise, and are maintained as part of a complex set of activities.

Analyses should not, however, be made too complex. While in the final analysis, almost everything is related to everything else, such a level of abstraction and generality is overwhelming and not productive. Nevertheless, researchers should always be prepared to look into interactions among the variables

they are working with, some of which will impinge significantly on each other. The physical, biological, and human systems interact, for example, in rangeland management, as plant, animal, and human populations exist interdependently. But each of these systems is in turn comprised of systems -- soil, water, and climate; vegetation and animal life; economic, social and political systems -- and one can even add the international system.

We would underscore the importance of considering how human systems, with their institutions, social organization, and cultural values, are part of the production system, and vice versa. Some of the international agricultural research centers are showing more interest in how these human factors affect agricultural performance, and what effect technology has on people.²⁰ Taking a systems view of agricultural development is no guarantee of insights and success, but taking a narrow view by discipline or by role seems no longer tenable. Farmers must integrate all the elements of the production system in their own calculations and operations. If researchers are to approach problems in ways that will engage farmers' attention and respect, they need to address the physical, biological, and social dimensions of farmers' problems. This degree of making analysis more complex seems conducive to more

²⁰The most recent report of the International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines, for example, indicates the increase of landless households from one third to half of the households in a village between 1966 and 1976. See Research Highlights for 1977 (Los Baños: IRRI, 1978), p. 85. CIAT describes the inapplicability of certain technological approaches to the minifundista (marginal farmer). See Centro Internacional de Agricultura Tropical, Annual Report - 1974 (Cali: CIAT, 1974), pp. 221-222.

participation.²¹

iii. Reorientation of Professionals:

The experience of the last five to ten years has profoundly affected many agricultural technologists, as suggested by Gomez's comment above. Incorporating such experience into the structure of agricultural research projects is difficult, but it should be reflected in the spirit of the projects, in their staffing, and their philosophy. Humiliating professionals, as was sometimes done to scientists in China during the height of the Cultural Revolution, serves little useful purpose by itself; but some of the enforced work experience of professionals in the countryside may not have been as negative as portrayed in the West. The idea of "learning from the people" as well as "serving the people," was long overdue in China, as it is in so many other countries. China has not solved all of its agricultural problems, but evidence indicates the rapid strides of the last 15 years are due in part to the reorientation of the scientific community.²² If substantial economic resources are put into agricultural research, but scientists and extension

²¹One of the leaders in the shift from monoculture research to multicropping systems, R.R. Harwood, presents an analysis along these lines. "Farmer-oriented Research Aimed at Crop Intensification," in Proceedings of the Cropping Systems Workshop (Los Baños: International Rice Research Institute, 1975), pp. 12-31. See also Peter W. Hildebrand, Generating Technology for Traditional Farmers: A Multidisciplinary Methodology (Guatemala: Instituto de Ciencia y Tecnologia Agrícolas, 1976).

²²Sterling Wortman, vice president of the Rockefeller Foundation, concludes: "As regards China, they have put every resource into farm level development -- to the extent of putting every research scientist into the field. And they are carrying the people with them." This observation followed his judgment that "the agricultural system we've been following is self-defeating. We've been concentrating on an elite--but 'trickle

personnel are not convinced they should work in partnership with farmers, participation or productivity gains are unlikely to be very widespread and substantial.

iv. Involvement of Farmers:

The foregoing considerations lead to the conclusion that, rather than treat farmers as the receiving end of research operations, they should be involved throughout the research and development process. The initiative given to farmers will vary; but at a minimum they should have, as they have later in the matter of adoption, veto power over work being done. This has been the approach followed by the Instituto de Ciencias y Tecnología Agrícolas (ICTA) in Guatemala.²³ Belloncle characterizes the approach in Francophone West Africa as one of "discussion-negotiation."²⁴ Initiatives come from the technicians, but work proceeds only after the farming community agrees. Probably the most extensive and ambitious involvement of rural people is in China, where more than 10 million persons, few of them trained scientists, are said to be engaged in scientific experiments.²⁵

down' doesn't work." Second Bellagio Conference: Strategies for Agricultural Education in the Developing Countries (New York: Rockefeller Foundation, January, 1976), p. 40. For an analysis of Chinese policies toward science and technology, see Benedict Stavis, Making Green Revolution: The Politics of Agricultural Development in China (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1974).

²³See Hildebrand, Generating Technology for Traditional Farmers.

²⁴Belloncle, "Listening to the Peasant," p. 27.

²⁵"China Develops Science and Technology Independently and Self-Reliantly," Peking Review (November 15, 1974), pp. 13-15.

One reason for involving farmers is to overcome some of the difficulties posed for research by the great variability in agro-ecological conditions. Often a massive number of experiments are needed to determine what crops or practices are best suited to specific conditions. Such experiments do not require much scientific training, but they do demand labor and discerning observation, something farmers can provide. The "mini-kit" program in Sri Lanka to test different packages of seed and practices is one of the best examples of this. Farmers used the kits to plant small plots in the corners of their fields, and could judge for themselves which sets of inputs produced best results, and order on a larger scale whatever appeared to suit their environment.

v. Use of Paraprofessionals:

Experience with paraprofessionals in R&D is not very complete and not systematically assessed so far.²⁶ But there seems to be a role, building on experience with what have been called "model farmers," discussed in Chapter 8. Paraprofessionals such as these can pass knowledge between higher government staff and the members of the rural community. The role can be defined and performed in many different ways. Initially, persons with some, but not advanced, education were more likely to be given special training to serve as subprofessionals. The alternative more and more suggested is that local people be "upgraded" to fill paraprofessional roles. Each approach has advantages. The first may create personnel who lack familiarity with the rural community (or perhaps, with any rural communities at the start), but they are also unaligned with factions or families

²⁶ See Ben Stavis, Agricultural Extension for the Rural Poor. (East Lansing: Michigan State University, Department of Agricultural Economics, Forthcoming) The Rural Development Committee has organized a working group, headed by Milton J. Esman, to analyze experience with paraprofessionals in the agricultural and health sectors, but the results of this analysis will not be completed until after the next year.

within the community. The second has the potential to tap persons who enjoy the confidence of their peers, but they may not be able to impart much information to fellow farmers without additional training.

Concern with the use of paraprofessionals is consistent with the other elements of this new R&D strategy, already outlined. Interestingly enough, the Integrated Cereals Project, supported by USAID, in Nepal is using "farmer-cooperators" in its experiments and extension, and this project has been heavily influenced by Harwood, cited already for his work on multiple-cropping.²⁷ The most appropriate methods of recruitment, training, remuneration, promotion, and supervision, under certain kinds of circumstances and for given tasks are not yet agreed upon. What is clear enough from the literature is that these roles, if well-designed and supported, can enhance rural participation considerably. They can do this directly as participants in development work, and indirectly, as facilitators of many others' practices and benefits in the rural sector. We anticipate that before much longer, there will be detailed, comparative and critical analyses of experience with such roles.

vi. The Role of Organization:

As with most other activities and groups, local organization has a role in enhancing broader and effective participation. Belloncle takes exception to the "pilot peasant" approach ("model farmer" method), because he says rural people are not isolated individuals, but usually part of a solidary community.²⁸ This latter point can be exaggerated, but it is important to remember that rural people gain power through interacting effectively with others in group organizations.

²⁷ See Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Irrigation, Integrated Cereals Project (Kathmandu: Work Plan 1977-78).

²⁸ Belloncle, "Listening to the Peasant," p. 25.

For purposes of participation in agricultural R&D, farmer groups can give more effective voice to peasant needs and priorities. They can underwrite the costs of local experimentation. They can speed adoption of new varieties or practices once agreement has been reached on which are best. The project in Guatemala and Nepal, mentioned already, have not moved to organized activity by the farmers.²⁹ The best examples of organized involvement of rural people in agricultural research and development are from Taiwan, where the Farmer Associations maintain test plots for each area, and from China, where an elaborate system of experimentation is managed through the

²⁹The ICIA approach involves sending a project team out to identify homogenous farming areas with small and medium farmers. Two dozen of them are recruited to keep records on simple forms for two years, on labor, costs and other farm decision factors. In the third year, the project rents some land from farmers and pays them for their inputs and services. The farmers thus involved are called worker-advisors, and they engage in active discussion with professional workers on the test plots. Positive results are referred back to the experiment station, and if judged scientifically sound, return for field tests, which are carried out by farmers who pay for their own inputs and provide their own labor, receiving advice from the professional researchers. Positive results are diffused in the area by an extension system which has yet to shift from a top-down mode of operation to a participatory one. The worker-advisors are also not really "paraprofessionals" yet, as considered in subsection v, below. See Hildebrand, Generating Technology for Traditional Farmers, and Robert K. Waugh, Four Years of History (Guatemala: Instituto de Ciencias y Tecnología Agrícolas, 1976). The Integrated Cereals Project started out with the intention of having farmer committees involved at the base, but so far it has been working with individual "farmer-cooperators," as they are called.

structure of communes, brigades, and production teams.³⁰

The state-of-the-art for participatory approaches to agricultural research and development is still evolving. The reasons for moving in this direction are clearer from experience and from the literature than are the modalities for accomplishing it. In the U.S. experience, farmers have participated in the research process by interacting with the agricultural extension service and the land grant universities. During the early and dynamic phase of agricultural improvements in Japan, farmers (usually the larger and more prosperous ones however) organized committees for exchanging better seeds and practices.³¹ Use of paraprofessionals is just beginning on a more serious scale, and it will be a few years before very firm conclusions can be drawn about how best to define their role and utilize them under different conditions. Increasing thought, however, is being given to these issues and institutions by practitioners and academics, who see appropriate involvement of farmers in scientific research as the key to success.³²

³⁰For an analysis of the structures of local organizations engaged in agriculture in these two countries, see Benedict R. Stavis, Rural Local Governance and Agricultural Development in Taiwan (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1974); and his People's Communes and Rural Development in China (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1974).

³¹See Ron Aqua, Local Institutions and Rural Development in Japan (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1974), pp. 27-34.

³²See William . . Whyte, "Potatoes, Peasants, and Professors: A Development Strategy for Peru," Sociological Practice, II, 1 (1977), pp. 7-23, for some thoughts on how this interaction can usefully increase.

Chapter Eight

PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION EFFORTS

The poverty afflicting rural areas in most LDCs stems from low levels of agricultural productivity, which severely limit agricultural output, constrain current consumption of food and fiber, and leave little surplus for purchase of nonagricultural goods or reinvestment to increase future production. To improve significantly the diet and income of the rural poor requires a marked and sustained rise in agricultural productivity. The factors constraining output are numerous and complex, and can include in different areas and countries: poor soil, unfavorable climate, inequitable land tenure systems, poorly developed market infrastructure, lack of access to inputs such as fertilizer or new seed types, inadequate or prohibitively expensive credit systems, and the use of technically inferior methods of plant husbandry. Many of these constraints are rooted in rural social structures and could be lessened by redistributive policies, particularly by more equitable distribution of land and other productive assets.¹ But increases in productivity on the order required to alleviate rural poverty also require technical innovation, and new organizational forms that permit more efficient use of productive resources.

Participatory research strategies, as outlined in Chapter 7, offer the potential for developing improved seed types and other innovations relevant to the needs and capacities of small farmers. But development of new technology, even with participation of the farming community, is only the first step in boosting farm productivity. These innovations must be widely adopted by peasant

¹See for instance, John W. Mellor, The Economics of Agricultural Development (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), pp. 255-260.

agriculturalists to have a significant impact on output. To this end farmers must first be informed of new technologies, and receive accurate and timely advice to correct problems they may encounter during adoption. This requires more effective systems of agricultural extension than currently exist in most LDCs. Second, farmers must have access to the required new inputs, such as high-yielding seeds, chemical fertilizer, and new agricultural machinery. While making these available on a wide scale raises a host of production and distribution problems, the peasant producer's primary concern is likely to be how to secure adequate credit. New credit institutions are therefore essential to widespread adoption of more productive agricultural techniques. Third, small farmers must be willing to alter existing patterns of land use and labor allocation. This is perhaps the most difficult prerequisite for increasing productivity, for it often entails major changes in individual behavior. To make more efficient use of their resources, small farmers will have to alter familiar work routines, participate in new organizational roles, and cooperate in novel ways with their neighbors. Profitable technologies and expanded credit facilities can, of course, facilitate such behavioral changes, but innovation in local farmer organization will also be needed, whether by creating new organizations or by adapting existing ones to new functions.

In this chapter we will consider efforts to increase peasant productivity and raise agricultural output, giving particular attention to extension programs, rural credit services, and group farming. As with other aspects of rural development, we see a growing disengagement with older, more "top-down", strategies, and an increasing interest in more participatory approaches. There have been some notable successes with participation in implementing agricultural improvement projects, although experience is still limited. We believe, nevertheless, that enough evidence has accumulated to offer some fruitful

suggestions for assisting small farmers to improve their agricultural practices.

Agricultural Extension

Most LDCs have limited resources and manpower available for agricultural extension. According to Evenson and Kislev, in the mid-1960s developing countries averaged only .64 extension agents per thousand farms, compared to 1.53 per thousand farms in developed countries. Annual expenditure on each agent in developing areas was less than a quarter the level in developed areas.² As Lele sums up the problem in Africa, "extension agents are few and far between, ill-paid, ill-trained, ill-equipped with a technical package, and consequently very poor in quality."³ These observations apply with equal force to most Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia.

Because of manpower limitations it is usually not possible for an extension worker to regularly visit all farmers under his jurisdiction, though exceptions occur in some experimental projects and in various cash crop schemes. Consequently, extension services have tended to concentrate their effort on "progressive farmers", who are most likely to adopt farm innovations.⁴ This approach has been justified as the most

²Robert E. Evenson and Yoav Kislev, Agricultural Research and Productivity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1975), Table 2.2.

³Uma Lele, The Design of Rural Development: Lessons from Africa (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), p. 62.

⁴In a detailed analysis of extension activities in western Kenya, David K. Leonard found that 57 percent of extension visits were to progressive farmers (who made up 10 percent of all farmers), but only 6 percent of visits were to non-innovators (47 percent of all farmers). Leonard concludes that "this problem is probably

efficient use of scarce extension resources, leading to greater returns in increased agricultural output, than would attempts to extend new technologies to "traditional" agriculturalists. Extension agencies have also assumed that progressive farmers are community opinion leaders, arguing that focusing extension on the "best" farmers would eventually encourage the "worst" farmers to adopt recommended practices. To aid the diffusion of innovations, most extension agencies also use demonstration plots, located either on experimental farms run by the agency, or on fields cultivated by selected, innovative farmers. These trial plots are expected to show, for all who care to see, the superiority of recommended practices.

While the use of progressive farmers and demonstration plots attempts to stretch limited extension budgets to reach a larger segment of the farm population than could be contacted individually, this approach has not been effective in getting the rural poor to implement new farming techniques. As Leeard notes:

The wide distribution of benefits promised by the diffusion of innovations argument depends on two conditions that often are not met...: (1) the proposed innovation will remain available for eventual adoption by all or most farmers; and (2) there are not significant social barriers to the communication of agricultural practices from progressives to others.⁵

Progressive farmers are, in fact, usually relatively wealthy individuals with sufficient resources to experiment with new

general to all agricultural extension services in the world and only the degree of it varies." See Reaching the Peasant Farmer: Organization Theory and Practice in Kenya (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), pp. 177-178.

⁵ Ibid, p. 179.

farming techniques; their poorer neighbors often cannot finance such innovations, nor bear the risk of crop failure should the new techniques not work. Consequently, extension programs in many developing countries have missed smaller and marginal farmers, and indeed have often worked to heighten disparities in rural income.⁶

To overcome the biases and ineffectiveness of standard agricultural extension strategies, some governments and projects have attempted to encourage greater participation by small farmers in implementing extension activities. These more participatory approaches, which include the use of model farmers and group extension, are more than a means for facilitating the flow of technical advice from research stations to the peasant community. They are related to complementary efforts to improve agricultural research, as discussed in Chapter 7. More effective research requires feedback from small farmers, in turn necessitating an extension service in immediate contact with rural communities. Participatory extension strategies attempt to involve small farmers in the development of new farming techniques, as well as in the diffusion of these techniques to the countryside.

⁶Many argue that skewed distribution of extension is a reflection of, and contributing factor to, class differentiation in rural areas. In one provocative study, based on research in Tanzania, H.P.E. Thoden van Velzen suggests an emerging class alliance between extension staff and the wealthier farmers. See "Staff, Kulaks and Peasant," in Socialism in Tanzania, vol. 2, edited by Lionel Cliffe and John S. Saul (Nairobi: East African Publishing House, 1973), pp. 153-179. Leonard's findings, however, indicate that the class bias of extension services can be partly explained by the "squawk factor", i.e., progressive farmers have a higher propensity to complain about receiving inadequate attention from the extension agency. See Reaching the Peasant Farmer, pp. 188-192.

i. Model Farmers:

As noted in Chapter 7, interest is growing in the use of model farmers and other paraprofessional workers, not only in agricultural research, but to implement extension programs as well. The Comilla project, in former East Pakistan, has used this approach since the early 1960s. Central to Comilla's model farmer strategy is reliance upon resident villagers, rather than project employees, to perform extension duties. This assures each village of services, which would not have been possible using bureaucratic personnel, and kept the research staff in close contact with village affairs. Unlike progressive farmers, to whom the model farmers bear superficial resemblance, model farmers are selected by their peers, not by project authorities. Within the limits of local political and social constraints, peasant participation in the selection process appears to have helped insure that model farmers are both representative of their community and respected opinion leaders. To build technical competence, these individuals, once chosen, receive continuous training in new farming techniques at the project's headquarters, and join a team of "innovators" in applying these techniques under actual production conditions. Continued input from villagers is maintained by requiring each model farmer to meet regularly with an assembly of village residents to discuss what he has learned during training sessions, to hear questions about agricultural innovations, and to receive suggestions to be relayed to project headquarters.⁷ This

⁷ For more information on model farmers in Comilla see Akhter Hameed Khan, Reflections on the Comilla Rural Development Projects (Washington, D.C.: Overseas Liaison Committee, Paper No. 3, 1974), esp. pp. 17-18 and 44-45; and Arthur F. Raper, Rural Development in Action: The Comprehensive Experiment at Comilla, East Pakistan (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970), p. 42. Also see

extension system has reportedly led to widespread acceptance of recommendations, to increased demand for fertilizer, insecticides and new seeds, and to higher agricultural yields.⁸

China has a similar system of paraprofessional extension workers at the local level, but on a much larger scale than at Comilla. Small groups of high-school graduates and older experienced farmers are established in brigades and production teams. Members draw no special salaries, but receive work points, as do other agricultural workers. These small agro-technical teams receive technical books and other communications, attend technical meetings, and conduct agricultural experiments on local fields. In the Chinese system, as at Comilla, separating extension activities from research is difficult, as both are essential components of the effort to increase agricultural productivity.⁹

A variation on the model farmer approach is the farmer-demonstrator strategy, used, for instance in the Wolamo Agricultural Development Unit (WADU) in Ethiopia. Rather than rely on a relative handful of model farmers to promote a package of innovations, this project encourages a large proportion of farmers to establish small demonstrator plots on their holdings.

Swadesh Bose, "The Comilla Co-operative Approach and the Prospects for Broad-based Green Revolution in Bangladesh," World Development, 2, 3 (1974), pp. 21-28; and Robert D. Stevens, "Three Rural Development Models for Small-Farm Agricultural Areas in Low-Income Nations," Journal of Developing Areas, 8, 3 (1974), pp. 409-420.

⁸Khan, Reflections on Comilla, p. 44. Animation rurale has also used local people as voluntary extension workers (vulgarisateurs), delegated by the village community to perform this function. See Chapter 3, above, for details on animation techniques.

⁹The scale of the Chinese system is impressive. In 1976, in Kiangsu, 60 percent of the brigades had research teams, and about

Although these farmers are still treated as individual clients, this procedure assures both geographic coverage, and that innovations are tested under a wide variety of conditions. Because many farmers participate, the new practices can be shown to be within the capacity of the average farmer, and are less likely to be interpreted by the local population as something for the select few. In addition, in WADU each farmer demonstrator uses a single innovation at a time, so the advantages and disadvantages are made clearly evident.¹⁰

ii. Group Extension:

Another means to increase popular participation, at least in the benefits of extension, is to present innovations and recommendations to groups of farmers, rather than to individuals. Often group extension has been used in conjunction with a model farmer strategy, although the approach has found increasing favor with otherwise conventional extension services, as a more effective means for reaching small farmers with technical information.¹¹ In many instances, group-based extension may entail only "passive" participation in which groups of farmers are treated as "receptors" of extension advice. The group format does not have to be limited in this way, however, and can provide a vehicle for articulating small farmers' demands more effectively, for mobilizing their knowledge of local agricultural conditions and constraints, and for bringing pressure on extension agents

60 percent of production teams had research groups. Thus, for all of China, roughly 13 million people are involved in the research-extension network. For details see Benedict Stavis, "Agricultural Services in China," World Development, 6, 5 (1978), p. 634.

¹⁰See Lele, The Design of Rural Development, p. 78.

¹¹See David K. Leonard, "Organizational Structures for Productivity in Agricultural Extension," in Rural Administration in Kenya, edited by David K. Leonard (Nairobi: East African Literature Bureau, 1973), p. 148.

when needed. Other advantages of group extension include: demonstrations can be provided more economically; public presentation of recommendations assures all farmers in attendance receive the same information; and the group format can expand the range of questions asked the extension worker.

Experience with model farmers and group extension in various countries and projects suggests the following considerations be taken into account in designing such programs: First, model farmers and group extension tend to be more effective where land and other resources are distributed equitably; otherwise the large farmer biases of conventional extension are likely to reappear. Where income disparities are large, therefore, extension agencies may have to target services and programs explicitly toward the poor, and exclude participation by the more well-to-do farmers, even though this latter group may be the more receptive to innovations, to cultivating demonstration plots, or to receiving additional training in farm techniques. Second, among the most important conditions is the need for some popular participation in deciding who from the community shall become model farmers, to help insure they in fact represent small farmer needs and interests. The selection of model farmers is particularly subject to manipulation, both by extension professionals who find "progressive" farmers easiest to work with, and by progressive farmers themselves, who perceive individual benefits from additional training and technical advice. The possibility is always present that local elites will be able to dominate the decision-processes, and monopolize a model farmer program, although the extent and effects of this will depend on numerous other social and economic factors. Third, adequate training and support of model farmers is needed to maintain a steady flow of relevant technologies, that work under actual field conditions and offer clear productive gains.

Without careful supervision and retraining, the quality of advice given by model farmers may be no better than that currently disseminated by poorly trained field staff in many LDCs. But, in addition, as emphasized in Chapter 9, farmer participation in agriculture R&D is needed to improve the quality of the packages being recommended. Finally, participatory extension programs depend on local organization, both as a mechanism for selecting representatives to receive extension training, and as a forum for receiving technical information on better farming practices. Without small farmer organizations, indigenous or induced, participatory extension is likely to be transitory, and not part of a process of dynamic interaction between small farmers and agricultural researchers. As discussed in Chapter 2, however, building viable rural organizations, or supporting existing ones, is often difficult, particularly where class differentiation is high, where authoritarian political structures exist, or where local organizational goals conflict with those of bureaucratic personnel.

Participation in Credit Programs

To finance the use of farming innovations such as new seed types, chemical fertilizer, or intermediate technical implements, small farmers must have access to larger and more reliable sources of credit. Traditional money lenders in rural areas frequently charge exorbitant interest, and lack resources to expand the supply of credit to meet the financial needs of new farm technology.

Consequently, rural development programs and projects often create new financial institutions, capitalized by public funds, to make loans to farmers who meet certain criteria of credit-worthiness, and who agree to follow a package of recommended farming practices. As with agricultural extension, such credit

programs are often biased toward the upper strata of rural society, especially where land must be used to secure a loan. Fairly typical was the experience of the Chilalo Agricultural Development Unit in Ethiopia, where during the first two years of the project, landowners with more than 40 hectares received between one-quarter and one-third of the funds loaned, while tenant farmers got only 3 to 6 percent.¹³

Because conventional credit programs often exclude small farmers, increasing attention is being given to alternative, more participatory strategies. For example, committees of local farmers may be empowered to screen loan applications, and to modify or make more flexible conventional definitions of credit-worthiness, to allow more farmers to take advantage of loan programs. Another approach is for government credit agencies to make loans to groups of farmers, rather than to individuals. Donald summarizes the advantages of group lending as follows:

economies of scale in loan administration and supervision; intra-group sanctions to improve repayments; a means of mobilizing savings; and the extended capability of a credit agency for reaching small farmers, so that institutional credit need not be focussed on the larger farmers. A further gain would be economies and improved service in technical assistance.¹⁴

Some projects attempt to tap rural financial resources through small farmer organizations, such as credit unions, savings

¹³John M. Cohen, "Rural Change in Ethiopia: The Chilalo Agricultural Development Unit," Economic Development and Cultural Change, 22, 4 (1974), pp. 600-601.

¹⁴Gordon Donald, Credit for Small Farmers in Developing Countries (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1976), p. 195. An alternative to group loans may be cash sales to groups of small farmers. Lele reports that in the Lilongwe Land Development Program in Malawi, farmers have banded together, without project intervention, to purchase bulk quantities of fertilizer at discount prices. See Design of Rural Development, p. 91.

societies, and multi-purpose cooperatives, to encourage farmers to save and invest surplus resources. Although some outside seed capital or subsidies may be required, locally owned and operated credit services have the potential to make agricultural development a self-financing process.

Group credit, whether based on new or existing local organizations, offers small farmers greater opportunities to be involved in planning and implementing rural credit programs, than is possible with conventional approaches. Unfortunately these opportunities are usually missed, skewing benefits as well. Local credit committees, when created, for instance, may distribute loans as patronage, with benefits going to rural elites and their retainers. Credit cooperatives frequently suffer very high default rates, although perhaps no higher than in other types of rural credit programs.¹⁵ The source of such problems is often the larger farmers, who have alternative sources of credit, and therefore little incentive to repay the cooperative: in fact some larger farmers may consciously default to undermine credit institutions that promise to benefit the community's smaller farmers. Holding a group of farmers collectively responsible for loans -- one of the potential advantages of group lending -- often discriminates against the poorer members, who may have better repayment records, but fewer resources to fall back if the group

¹⁵In Bangladesh, for instance, cooperatives in seven Thanas (counties) surveyed had defaulted on 9.5 percent of their loans from the State Bank between 1965 and 1970. See Khan, Reflections on Comilla, p. 34. But these default rates are no worse than in some projects making individual loans. CADU, for example, had default rates of 8-15 percent during its first three years. Lele, Design of Rural Development, p. 94.

is denied further credit.¹⁶

Group credit requires, as a first condition of success, increases in production and income to enable peasant farmers to pay back previous loans and finance further innovation. This is true of all credit programs, of course, but especially of locally financed, credit groups, which may not have the financial strength to write off numerous bad loans. To insure farmers the necessary income to avoid falling into arrears, necessitates effective research, extension, marketing and other support services. Second, group and cooperative forms of credit will not function if members do not trust one another, or if funds are misspent, or lost through high default rates. These may be major problems where rural society is highly stratified, or where inhabitants do not have prior experience with indigenous savings organizations. If credit is administered through a local cooperative, management and account procedures present additional problems. Because of the skills required, the cooperative may be open to domination by educated members, who may still lack the knowledge necessary to handle funds competently. Consequently, cooperative credit schemes must include adequate training of participants, to insure both that managers are competent and that members have sufficient knowledge to monitor managerial performance. None of these conditions for success are easily met, but greater participation in managing the credit group or cooperative can help -- by assisting in agricultural services, by bringing social or economic pressure on members who default, and by maintaining public scrutiny of the group's officers.

¹⁶Lele suggests, contrary to conventional wisdom, that the larger farmers often have the worst repayment records. When true, this would indicate that defaults could be reduced by targeting credit exclusively on peasant smallholders. Ibid.

Organization for Increased Production

Increased agricultural production will often require increased participation by farmers in collective actions and institutions, to coordinate farming activities, pool land and other resources, and share output in new ways. This is not to say farmers do not already participate in group activities. As evidence in Chapter 2 shows, the purely individualistic, self-sufficient peasant farmer is largely a myth. Peasant agriculturalists have always exchanged labor and other resources, for instance donating gifts of food to a neighbor whose crop has failed, sharing pasture land or water resources, or assisting one another with planting and harvesting.¹⁷ Nevertheless, many new agricultural practices, such as adoption of cash crops or mechanized farming, necessitate different, and perhaps more extensive and complex, kinds of cooperation than existed in the past. We have discussed in Chapter 2 the often negative experience with cooperatives in the Third World, but here will focus specifically on group agricultural production.

Many governments want to encourage greater cooperation among small farmers in crop production, seeing two advantages

¹⁷This does not necessarily mean that the alternative myth of a harmonious and cooperative traditional peasant community has any more validity. For more debate on this topic see Samuel Popkin, The Rational Peasant: The Political Economy of Rural Society in Vietnam (forthcoming); and James C. Scott, The Moral Economy of the Peasant: Rebellion and Subsistence in Southeast Asia (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976).

in the outcome.¹⁸ One is economies of scale. In many rural areas holdings are small and fragmented, resulting in inefficient use of labor and land, and hindering the introduction of irrigation or mechanization. Collective management may enable farmers to exploit existing land resources more fully, permit a higher degree of labor specialization, and make possible expensive investments in modern technology. A second advantage, stemming from greater social control of productive resources, is the potential to distribute output more equitably.¹⁹ Parallel to these advantages, however, are problems that frequently hamper group farming efforts. First, the advantages of large-scale agricultural enterprise are sometimes exaggerated by proponents. Evidence shows that intensive cultivation of small individually

¹⁸ Governments, of course, may have additional reasons for emphasizing group agriculture. Such an approach to production can also facilitate state penetration of rural areas, either to mobilize the peasantry, or to defuse their revolutionary (or counter-revolutionary) potential. Governments may also find group forms of cultivation a convenient means to extract surplus production, for investment in the nation's industrial or military strength. For an interesting analysis of how these issues were viewed by the Bolsheviks, the first modern government to introduce collective agricultural policies, see David Mitran, Marx Against the Peasant (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1951).

¹⁹ In the absence of joint action by farmers, new technologies often worsen the status of the poor. Introduction of HYVs and of tractors, for example, has sometimes increased income disparities in rural areas. See Uma Lele and John W. Mellor, "Jobs, Poverty, and the 'Green Revolution'," in International Affairs, 48, 1 (1972), pp. 20-32; and John M. Cohen, "Effects of Green Revolution Strategies on Tenants and Smallholders in Chilalo Region of Ethiopia," Journal of Developing Areas, 9, 3 (1975), pp. 335-338.

operated plots can be highly productive, while large-scale cultivation, using many farmer workers, can have its own diseconomies because of management and supervisory requirements.²⁰ Group production may also fail to provide individual farmers with adequate incentive to contribute their labor or other resources to the joint enterprise. Without participation in benefits, in other words, participation in implementation will usually be half-hearted. This will reduce labor efficiency and raise management and other production costs, perhaps so high as to negate such scale economies as are achieved.²¹

²⁰These diseconomies are largely due to the spatial and temporal dimensions of agricultural production. As Clark notes: "Management supervision and coordination of farm operations are complicated by the sequential nature of agricultural enterprise. In agricultural production, unlike industrial production, the process typically spans several months with significant time lags between stages...[and] requires workers to shift repeatedly from one kind of work to another throughout the production season." These management problems are compounded by "lack of uniformity of natural resources and unpredictable behavior of resources and the environment...[which] require sudden changes in work routine and more supervision." See M. Gardner Clark, "Soviet Agricultural Policy," in Soviet Agriculture: An Assessment of Its Contribution to Development, edited by Harry G. Shaffer (New York: Praeger, 1977), pp. 10-12. This suggests decentralized management, which allows wide latitude to agriculturalist with intimate knowledge of the local environment, can help group farming perform better.

²¹It is difficult to isolate the effect of cooperative management on agricultural productivity, however, since the most significant determinant of yields, over the short-run, is weather, and also because governments may direct disproportionate resources to the cooperative or collective sector. Nevertheless, experience with group farming has often been disappointing. In Tunisia, for example, an investigation showed that 46 percent of collectively-cultivated farms established on former colonial holdings suffered production declines; output per hectare of wheat was only 65 percent of planned figures, and average income of cooperative members was only 77 percent of projections. See

Given the potential benefits, and corollary obstacles, of group farming, discussion of cooperative forms of agricultural production is often ideological, revolving around the respective merits of "socialist" versus "capitalist" farming. We believe this distinction is too stark to serve much useful purpose. It certainly does not help clarify differences among the wide range of group farming practices that have been tried, almost all of which have "individualistic," as well as "communal" characteristics.²² Nor does it adequately address the issues of participation that are the focus of this monograph. Because analyses of group farming tend to concentrate on other important

P.J. van Doreen, The Cooperative Approach in Implementing Land Reform Programs (Madison: University of Wisconsin, Land Tenure Center, 1977), p. 14. In Bangladesh, a comparative analysis of a cooperative farm with six individually operated farms, showed net returns per acre were almost 4 times higher on the individual farms. See M.Z. Hussain, Study of the Bamail Cooperative Farm (Comilla: Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development, 1973), p. 79.

²²For a typology of group farming systems, as well as a useful review of the issues involved in cooperative forms of agriculture, see Peter Dorner, ed., Cooperative and Commune: Group Farming in the Economic Development of Agriculture (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1977); also Agricultural Development Council Seminar Report, Group Farming, Issues and Prospects: A Summary of International Experience (New York: ADC, 1975). A good capsule description of various cooperative farming systems in use around the world can be found in Claudio Barriga, Management in Cooperative Farming (Madison: University of Wisconsin, Land Tenure Center, 1973), pp. 71-89.

concerns, such as the allocation of property rights or the effect on production, involvement in farm decision-making is sometimes overlooked. Yet evidence suggests the degree of participation, both in setting the enterprise's policies and in micro-level decisions about crop management, is often crucial.

Some attempts at group or collective agricultural production, such as state farms, plantation systems, or contract farming under close supervision by extension agents, are more bureaucratic than participatory. Farmers in these systems have relatively little say in management, with most decisions retained by administrative personnel. Other collective forms of agriculture, however, provide farmers greater autonomy and empowerment, through institutions such as elected farm management committees, authorized to make investment, marketing, and other decisions that affect the collective organization and its membership. As important as participation in running the cooperative organization, is the latitude given agriculturalists over the myriad decisions that must be made in the fields, to resolve problems or exploit opportunities that arise during the production process. Here flexible and decentralized administration is needed, but also material and social incentives, to assure farmers some benefit for the extra effort these decisions require. Such benefits are more likely where farmers have made a personal investment in the larger organization, as well as having the power to influence its policies, particularly with regard to issues of remuneration, job allocation, and working conditions. There seems to be, in other words, a close link between participation in benefits and participation in decision-making and implementation.

China's experience with collectivization illustrates the importance of participation for successful group farming. After creating large communes during the late 1950s, China's

agricultural output fell off alarmingly. Adverse weather was largely to blame, but the new communal system, which was too cumbersome for efficient management, and paid too little attention to production incentives, aggravated the problem. Faced with serious shortages, the government in the early 1960s moved to decentralize the agricultural sector and allow more peasant involvement in on-farm decision-making. It reduced the size of communes to correspond to local market areas, gave peasants greater control over day-to-day management of the local economy, and altered the individual incentive system so that more of the income from agricultural production was retained by peasant producers. As Stavis notes:

the adoption of the production team as the basic accounting unit...meant that an individual's income would be based on the profitability of a small piece of land farmed collectively by about 20 families. Invariably the families in a team would be old friends or relatives and would put strong social pressure on everyone to do his share of work. Thus labor incentives were rationalized compared to those in the period 1958-1960, when the entire commune was an accounting unit and individual effort would be less directly rewarded.²³

Each member of the work team gets a minimum subsistence income, with additional wages according to his labor contribution. This system of "work points" is highly variable among teams, according to the needs and wishes of the team members.

²³ Benedict Stavis, Making Green Revolution: The Politics of Agricultural Development in China (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1974), pp. 110-111. Also see Jonathan Unger, "Collective Incentives in the Chinese Countryside: Lessons from Chen Village," World Development, 6, 5 (1978), pp. 583-602; and Keith Griffin, "Efficiency, Equality and Accumulation in Rural China: Notes on the Chinese System of Incentives," World Development, 6, 5 (1978), pp. 603-608.

The Chinese have also encouraged a small "private" sector of individually-operated garden plots that specialize in high-value, labor-intensive crops, for instance fruit and vegetables. While other factors, such as technological improvements, played a major role, following adoption of these policies to increase participation in agricultural decision-making production recovered and has continued to grow at about 2.5 percent per year.²⁴ To be certain, one reason the Chinese have been willing to devolve so much authority over agriculture to the communes and other lower echelon bodies is because the party cadre pervades all levels, ensuring locally determined decisions will not vary too far from the center's policies. Nevertheless, the lessons seem transferable to countries lacking China's political infrastructure, though whether these countries would be willing to allow their rural populations the requisite latitude is an empirical question.

²⁴The growth rate of Chinese agricultural production is not spectacular. India, most of whose agriculture is privately organized, has achieved approximately the same rate of growth as China, although per capita production is considerably less. Neither India nor China, however, have done as well as Taiwan, a country with a basically capitalist agricultural system, but with considerable development of multi-purpose cooperatives. Thus it is difficult to reach firm conclusions about the productivity of individual versus group organization of agricultural production. It does seem clear, however, that China has been relatively successful, compared to many other LDCs, in distributing equitably the income from agricultural output. For a discussion of these and related points see Ben Stavis, "The Impact of Agricultural Collectivization on Productivity in China" (Paper Presented to the Annual Convention of the American Political Science Association, Washington, D.C., September 1-3, 1977).

Governments can have many reasons for wanting to maintain bureaucratic control over group farming efforts, not the least of which is a belief, justified or not, that close supervision is needed to maintain production standards. This tends to be especially true of group efforts to develop cash crops, such as the smallholder tea scheme sponsored by the Kenya Tea Development Authority. KTDA represents a type of group farming very different from the Chinese commune -- holdings are individually owned and operated, with only marketing done collectively, through a single agency, which also provides extension and other services. The group effort does not entail the sharing of land, work, or income, but the precise coordination of harvesting activities. Tea is a demanding crop; leaves have to be picked daily, and delivered to factories for immediate processing. Farmers must maintain stringent quality controls for the product to be exported successfully. Because the processing must be done on a large-scale, tea is usually grown on plantations, but KTDA has been able to organize over 100,000 small farmers, cultivating an average of only 0.4 hectares of tea, to meet the crop's difficult technical requirements.

To achieve this impressive degree of coordination, KTDA, which is a parastatal agency, not a producers' cooperative, has employed administrative means -- what Ruthenberg calls the "carrot and stick" approach.²⁵ By offering participants in the scheme clear material benefits, it has fostered widespread

²⁵Hans Ruthenberg, cited in Lele, Design of Rural Development, p. 64. The "carrot" is the promise of higher income, the "stick" the threat of being forced out of the project for failing to meet husbandry standards.

participation in implementation as well.²⁶ Lacking, however, is much participation in decision-making, particularly by smaller farmers, despite the scheme's system of representative growers' committees. These tend to be dominated by larger growers, and are used by project managers to mobilize support for previously determined policies, rather than as a channel for bottom-up influence. This lack of participation in decisions has helped skew the scheme's benefits in favor of the larger growers. Steeves shows how these farmers and KTDA officials often had a mutual interest in policies that discriminated against smaller members, and that kept marginal farmers from joining the scheme, at least during its early years. The project, for instance, repeatedly raised the minimum number of seedlings that could

²⁶KTDA's system of incentives is instructive. These encourage regular delivery of tea and strict quality control, as well as reducing "free rider" problems. The agency pays farmers monthly, assuring a steady income to those who deliver their tea regularly. Because higher output leads to greater income, growers have an incentive to raise productivity, invest in their holdings, and expand tea acreage if possible. To make sure output is not increased at the cost of quality, the agency makes a second payment at the end of the year. This second payment is calculated separately for different areas. See Jeffrey S. Steeves, "Structures of Participation in Agricultural Development" (Department of Economics and Political Science, University of Saskatchewan, May 1978). The linkage demonstrated here between participation in benefits and participation in implementation seems applicable to all forms of group farming, including those entailing far more extensive cooperation among farmers than occurs in KTDA.

be purchased at one time, making it difficult for low income farmers to begin or expand tea production. Tea was so attractive a crop, however, that "illegal" growing proliferated, providing a convincing, if unofficial, evaluation of the project's discriminatory policies. Greater involvement of small farmers in setting KTDA's policies might have made illegal growing unnecessary, and permitted these people to contribute more fully to implementing the project's stringent husbandry requirements.²⁷ That KTDA has been relatively successful seems most attributable to tea's demonstrable profitability, which encouraged widespread involvement in tea production despite the project's technocratic decision-making style and large peasant biases.

The experience of China, Kenya, and other countries with group agricultural production efforts suggests the following environmental and task-related factors have important effects on the participation of small farmers.

Socioeconomic Structure: The distribution of power, prestige, and economic resources is crucial for participation in group agricultural production, not only in implementation and benefits, but in decision-making as well. In particular, equitable distribution of land seems important for successful

²⁷ A technical innovation has recently ended the problem of illegal growing. An important reason for KTDA's earlier policies of requiring large purchase of seedlings, was that farmers' demand for tea plants exceeded the agency's capacity to supply them. New propagation techniques, using plant cuttings, have eliminated this constraint and made tea plants readily available to anyone with the resources to grow them. See *ibid.*, p. 18.

group farming. If land ownership is highly unequal, larger farmers are likely to dominate the group and monopolize its benefits. Redistributive policies, therefore, may be needed, or where this is not feasible politically, steps may be required to exclude or limit the participation of wealthier farmers and landlords.²⁸ If excluded, however, this group is likely to oppose, and perhaps try to subvert, the group enterprise. This points to the difficult question of under what conditions a "private" agricultural sector can coexist with a "communal" one, a practical issue faced by many contemporary governments, on all points on the ideological spectrum.

Location: Where a group farming project is located will have important effects on its economic viability, affecting the willingness of farmers to participate in implementation. For instance, easy access to transportation and markets may be necessary to some group enterprises, particularly those producing cash crops. If the organization is poorly endowed with resources or is inefficient, however, accessibility may threaten it by draining off manpower and investments, or by exposing it to more efficient competition. This suggests group agricultural production projects will succeed only if the research, extension, credit, and related needs of small farmers

²⁸In an analysis of rural cooperatives in Peru, McClintock found more participation of poorer peasants in decision-making than existed in cooperatives in Mexico and Chile. A major reason for this seemed to be that in Peruvian cooperatives membership of elite groups was restricted by law. See Cynthia McClintock, "Socioeconomic Status and Political Participation in Peru: The Impact of Agrarian Cooperatives, 1969-1975" (Paper Presented to the Annual Convention of the American Political Science Association, San Francisco, September 2-5, 1975).

are also met. Greater participation in running the group which may help it become an effective lobbying force, has the potential to influence government agricultural policies to meet these needs.

Size: Small local organizations have advantages in making members more accountable to one another, in facilitating the speed and flexibility needed for good decisions on crop management, and in permitting direct involvement in farm administration. Against these, however, must be weighed economies of scale in mobilizing resources. The optimal size for small farmer production organization is thus probably highly variable according to the dictates of the environment and the agricultural task. These issues also suggest a need for multi-tiered organizational structures and effective linkages between levels.

Type of Produce: What a group farm produces has an important influence on participation in implementation. Individuals will probably have greater incentive for involvement in joint farming activities that produce high-value cash crops. But where climate is unfavorable, land scarce, or nutritional status low, introducing cash crops on a large scale may not be desirable. In such areas, the most equitable policy may be to provide inputs and services to raise subsistence production on individual holdings. This could both improve local diet and provide farm families with direct material incentives, in the form of higher food consumption, to increase output. In China, however, one reason for the relative success of communal agriculture has been that group activities focus on food production first, thereby assuring all members of basic dietary requirements. This lowers the risks faced by farm families, and encourages experiments with new technologies and cash crops. So it is difficult to make general recommendations on what crops are most amenable to group farming, for this depends on other task and environmental factors.

Husbandry Requirements: The quantity and type of labor needed by crops also have major effects on participation in group farming. A new or particularly exacting crop or technique may require more top-down supervision than would otherwise be considered desirable; but paradoxically, administrative controls are probably least effective on crops with intensive labor requirements.²⁹ Similarly, some forms of agricultural labor, such as pruning, may be less amenable to close supervision than are other forms, such as plowing. On cooperative farms, as opposed to state farms using wage labor, it may be easier to provide individual incentives for crops providing regular returns to labor (e.g., tea), than for those providing returns only at the end of the growing season (e.g., coffee). These considerations indicate that, to insure farmers participate fully and equitably in implementation, the organization of decision-making in joint-farming must be flexible, and adapted to the requirements of specific crops.

The preceding discussion is not meant to be exhaustive, but only suggestive of some of the constraints to be taken into account in designing and implementing programs to increase small farmer participation and cooperation in agricultural production. The bottom line, however, is whether a group endeavor does, in fact, offer the individual farmer clear opportunities to improve his income and well-being. Marginal farmers, for whom the risks of innovation are great, are rightly skeptical of unproven experiments with group farming, as are the larger farmers who stand to lose some of their relative, if not absolute,

²⁹The difficulty in supervising labor intensive production stems largely from the difficulty management has in measuring quality of labor input and consequently in insuring that farm workers fulfill the tasks assigned them. See Clark, "Soviet Agricultural Policy." This suggests a need for policies to encourage individual responsibility and accountability.

income. Consequently, most countries trying to encourage communal agriculture have encountered either active or passive resistance, Tanzania being a recent example.³⁰ This does not mean that such programs are doomed to failure, or can be implemented only through political coercion, although some administrative sanctions will usually be necessary. It does suggest that group farming, in whatever form, must be introduced cautiously to permit monitoring and necessary adjustments in labor organization, administrative structure, and incentive systems. Perhaps the most effective means of doing this is through direct small farmer participation in designing, implementing, and evaluating group farming projects.

³⁰See for example, Dean E. McHenry, Jr., "Peasant Participation in Communal Farming: The Tanzanian Experience," *African Studies Review*, XX, 3 (1977), pp. 43-64; Michael F. Lofchie, "Agrarian Socialism in the Third World, The Tanzanian Case," *Comparative Politics*, 8, 3 (1976), pp. 479-499; and Louise Fortmann, "Ujamaa Villages: Tanzania's Experience with Agrarian Socialism" (Report Prepared for COPAC/FAO, February, 1978).

Chapter Nine

PARTICIPATION IN WATER MANAGEMENT

Irrigation systems have seldom performed as well as their planners and administrators had hoped. Inefficient use and underutilization of water resources is widely reported. Collecting the revenue to operate schemes is often difficult. Canals and channels get little or no maintenance and decline in capacity. Water theft and disputes cause social turmoil in communities, often with an adverse effect on production, as land is held out of use or water is withheld. Increasing demands for food and fiber make such a state of affairs unacceptable, and irrigation specialists are working on ways to promote more efficient and equitable water control and use. This task is made all the more pressing by a growing conviction that irrigation is a critical requirement for increased productivity in many developing countries.

Considering how immense have been the resources committed to construction of irrigation systems, remarkably few have been invested in their management.¹ Our knowledge of what makes for efficient water use under a variety of specific conditions is sadly incomplete. Most attention has thus far been concentrated on the engineering and design of systems, with a view to optimal efficiency in acquiring and transporting water from its source to the vicinity of farmers' fields. What happens then is left up to the administration or to the farmers themselves.²

¹See discussion of this by Robert Chambers, "Men and Water: The Organization and Operation of Irrigation," in Green Revolution?: Technology and Change in Rice-growing Areas of Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka, edited by B.H. Farmer (Boulder: Westview Press, 1977), pp. 340-360.

²Richard Reidinger reports that irrigation systems in India were designed to operate with only minimal linkage to the farmer-users. "Institutional Rationing of Canal Water in Northern India: Conflict Between Traditional Patterns and Modern Needs," Economic Development and Cultural Change, 23, 1 (1974), pp. 79-104.

Such indifference is no longer tenable, since "efficiency" encompasses social as well as technical variables, including allocation practices and on-farm use, plus maintenance considerations. What counts is the water delivered to the root-zone of plants, not the volume of water conveyed in the main irrigation system. Even in terms of this latter criterion, the practices of rural people figure powerfully in the equation, so we need to get beyond engineering concepts and norms.³ Fortunately, serious collaboration is now beginning between engineers and social scientists on these very complicated problems.⁴

We are likely to see in the future national governments, sometimes with funding from international donors, undertaking a growing number of irrigation projects. Examples of these include the Bicol River project in the Philippines and the Muda River project in Malaysia. The success of such schemes, with their complex engineering and bureaucratic organization, depends ultimately upon the participation of thousands, even hundreds of thousands of farmers. Clearly some participation in implementation is needed. Farmers need to take the water provided

³In a careful study of Max K. Lowdermilk, Wayne Clyma, and Alan C. Early, Physical and Socio-Economic Dynamics of a Water-course in Pakistan's Punjab: System Constraints and Farmers' Responses (Fort Collins: Colorado State University, Water Management Research Project, December, 1975), it was found that water losses frequently exceeded 50 percent in only 2,000 to 3,000 feet of channel length, due to kind of construction, extension of fields, and failure to maintain the channels properly.

⁴The Water Management Research Project at Colorado State University cited in Footnote 3 above, is a good example of this, as is the water management group at Cornell University which combines anthropology, rural sociology, agricultural engineering and agricultural economics. An international network based at the Overseas Development Institute in London is further attempting to facilitate interdisciplinary work on irrigation administration.

and use it effectively for crops that raise total production. To the extent this is done efficiently, they will also participate in benefits. However, the critical question is what participation in decision-making -- planning and managing the irrigation system -- is desirable and possible? Questions of implementation and benefits can be subsumed under this prior and pervasive form of participation. Neither governments nor the public will profit from irrigation investments unless they are utilized well.

In irrigation projects, government and farmers generally share ultimate objectives. Efficient use of the water provided by irrigation systems should serve their respective interests. But how to proceed, presents knotty problems, concerning whether efficiency can be best obtained by government management of water distribution, or by devolving responsibility to local organizations of water users. The first approach involves participation by individuals in the irrigation process, with little or no input on decision-making. By the nature of irrigation processes, the alternative has to have a group basis, including some roles of authority to make and enforce decisions affecting all members. In thinking about participation for irrigation management, we need to consider first the question of organization among water users, and then a number of related issues affecting their participation.

Water User Associations

In recent years the literature on irrigation management has given increasing attention to the value of organized participation by water users in the management process.⁵ This is not

⁵This position is taken by Reidinger, "Institutional Rationing of Canal Water in Northern India," who advocated farmer organizations on each watercourse to organize distribution of irrigation water. David M. Freeman and Max K. Lowdermilk

to say that the alternative of administering water use through bureaucratic means and roles has been ruled out. Indeed, it continues to be the predominant approach. But the performance of hierarchically administered systems has been unsatisfactory enough in many cases, that people are looking for better ways to distribute water productively among potential users. More participatory approaches look promising.

The functions of water users' associations, as outlined by Radosevich from his review of the literature, are the following:

- (1) getting farmers directly involved in the local decision-making process;
- (2) managing the water distribution system, thus improving the delivery, application and removal of water throughout the system;
- (3) resolving disputes between water users as individuals and problems arising between water users collectively and the central government;

argue "that programs to improve the management of irrigation water must center on the design and improvement of farmer irrigation organizations." See "Community and Irrigation in the Pakistan Punjab: Physical and Sociological Dimensions of the Water Management Problem" (Paper Prepared for Association of Asian Studies, Toronto, March, 1976), p. 1. See also E. Walter Coward, Jr., "Small Groups and Large Projects: Technology, Organization and Irrigation Performance" (Paper Presented to 13th American Water Resources Conference, Tucson, 1977); George Radosevich, Improving Agricultural Water Use: Organizational Alternatives (Washington D.C.: USAID, Office of Rural Development, March, 1977); Robert S. Saunders, "Technical Cooperation, Indigenous Peasants Groups and Rural Development: A Look at Possibilities and Experiences" (Background Memorandum Prepared for World Bank, August 29, 1977). Also Robert and Eva Hunt, "Canal Irrigation and Local Social Organization," Current Anthropology, XVII, 3 (1976), pp. 389-411.

- (4) serving as a communications link and forum for disseminating information and assistance on improved water use, agricultural practices and technologies, and methods for improving the quality of rural life;
- (5) representing the needs and desires of farmers and rural communities to those government agencies best equipped to meet them;
- (6) promoting the collective action of individual farmers by pooling their individual resources in actions that benefit the individual and the group;
- (7) establishing a formal management mechanism for administering government aid with a higher level of accountability and performance;
- (8) taking advantage of economies of scale in committing scarce financial and technological resources to programs which are better integrated with national or regional goals, and which will benefit greater numbers of individuals.⁶

The forms of organization are reasonably diverse. Water users' associations may be privately organized and regulated.⁷ They range from simple local associations with just a few members, to a complex hierarchy of groups that operate within an entire river basin. Some will restrict their activities to

⁶Radosevich, Improving Agricultural Water Use, pp. 1-2.

⁷The spectrum which George Radosevich and Craig Kirkwood delineate is from private organizations including irrigation companies, community groups and associations, through quasi-public organizations -- farmer cooperatives and some water user associations -- to public organizations, like irrigation districts. Organizational Alternatives to Improve On-Farm Water Management in Pakistan (Fort Collins: Colorado State University, Water Management Research Project, July, 1975), p. 13. This formulation does not do justice to "indigenous" organizations, discussed below. They are private in the sense of not being connected to the central government, but they have universal membership within their area and can enforce severe sanctions, two characteristics of "public" organization.

water-related functions, while others are engaged in multiple activities, including conservation, providing production inputs, and marketing. Some are legally recognized entities, with clear territorial boundaries, while others are unregulated. There will be differences in the degree to which they are connected with agencies and policies of the central government, or are relatively autonomous from it.

A major issue not yet resolved in the literature is the extent to which water-user associations have to be introduced by government agencies or can be based on existing institutions at the local level. This is a specific expression of the questions discussed in Chapter 2. Levine has observed:

Almost all new irrigation projects recommend some form of public institution similar to that found in developed countries. There is very little attempt to work within existing institutions or to develop adaptations based upon indigenous social relationships. For example, the design for the Upper Pampanga River Project in the Philippines envisions either Irrigation Districts (U.S. style) or, more recently, Irrigation Associations (Taiwan style).⁸

This corresponds to Coward's finding that:

In actuality, there are few examples of irrigation associations acting in an organized manner to contribute to effective operation and management of agency-sponsored systems; though there are numerous examples of such organized behavior in systems which are entirely operated by the local people.⁹

⁸Gilbert Levine, "The Management Component in Irrigation System Design and Operation" (Unpublished Mimeo, Cornell University, Department of Agricultural Engineering, Ithaca, 1971), p. 29.

⁹Coward, "Small Groups and Large Projects," pp. 5-6.

There appears to be more interest now in designing irrigation projects so they can utilize smaller, community-based groups for water management, as discussed below. But basically much more needs to be known about indigenous water-user groups and about the potential for creating such groups where none existed before.¹⁰ The view has been expressed by Takase and Wickham that:

The major weakness in the irrigation sector is not the lack of technology nor the lack of financial resources but a shortage of institutional organizations by which human talent and skills can be matched optimally with technology and other inputs.¹¹

But Coward suggests there may be less of a shortage of organizations than is thought, if only we knew more about traditional grass-roots water groups and the opportunities they can offer for better irrigation management and increased popular participation.¹²

Indigenous social organization can pose some serious obstacles to efficient water allocation at the local level. Freeman and Lowdermilk find that the core groups of village social organization in the Pakistan Punjab -- biradiri, or brotherhoods -- are very tight structures, able to facilitate cooperation within the group but leading to often serious competition and strife between groups. For certain kinds of water management tasks,

¹⁰E. Walter Coward, "Indigenous Irrigation Institutions and Irrigation Development in Southeast Asia: Current Knowledge and Needed Research" (Paper Presented at Symposium on Farm Water Management, Asian Productivity Organization, Tokyo, September, 1976).

¹¹"Irrigation Management as a Pivot of Agricultural Development in Asia" (Manila: Asian Development Bank, 1977), p. 31.

¹²Coward, "Small Groups and Large Projects," p. 2.

such as canal cleaning and maintenance, there must be cooperation among different social units.¹³ Balancing such an example one finds a case such as the zangjera indigenous irrigation associations, on the Ilocos Coast of the Philippines. There, Coward finds social organization is similarly cohesive at the base, but cumulates into complex patterns of cooperation at higher levels.¹⁴

When indigenous groups are accepted for managing irrigation at the community level, one has to work with and through the traditional leadership. This has its advantages and disadvantages. Local people are accustomed to working under the authority of these leaders, and social sanctions may be more effective in gaining compliance with regulations than are legal measures. Yet the local elites may be exploitative in running irrigation systems, favoring themselves in water allocations or avoiding labor contributions to canal maintenance. We find in the literature good and bad examples of local irrigation leadership within the same country. Duewel's analysis of the ulu-ulu (water-master) in Java, Indonesia shows how such a position can be exploited.¹⁵ Yet, the klian subak who heads subak irrigation associations on the island of Bali is found to be very representative of these

¹³Freeman and Lowdermilk, "Community and Irrigation in the Pakistan Punjab," p. 8 ff.

¹⁴E. Walter Coward, "Local Organization and Irrigation Development: Patterns and Responses in an Indigenous System" (Unpublished Mimeo, Cornell University, Department of Rural Sociology, Ithaca, 1976).

¹⁵John Duewel, A Socio-Institutional Analysis of the Ulu-Ulu System of Rural Irrigation in Java (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, forthcoming).

groups' membership.¹⁶ So one cannot say a priori that indigenous organizations will disserve the interests of their membership.

Large-scale government irrigation projects have had difficulty accommodating and assimilating small, informal organizations. Coward says that the former have often demarcated "collections of water users that are [too] large to facilitate the critical shift from an aggregation of individual water users to an irrigation community capable of corporate action." Moreover, "often such groups are conceived by the administering agency as creations of the agency and are given little real responsibility."¹⁷ No wonder little positive experience with involving such groups in large programs has been accumulated so far. Perhaps one of the keys to building on informal organizations is to grant them formal recognition, since there is a need for formal status in various tasks.¹⁸ A further

¹⁶Aubrey W. Birkelbach, Jr., "The Subak Association," Indonesia, 16 (Ithaca: Cornell University, Modern Indonesia Program, 1973), pp. 153-169. The *klians'* average landholding, .47 hectares, for example, was only .01 hectare above the average for the area.

¹⁷Coward, "Small Groups and Large Projects," pp. 5-6.

¹⁸Freeman and Lowdermilk write: "Some form of formal farmer organization must be constructed if farmers are to be able to contract, in a legally binding manner, with outside organizations technically competent to undertake major watercourse realignment and lining projects." See "Community and Irrigation in the Pakistan Punjab," p. 33. The *zangjera* and *subak* organizations in the Philippines and Indonesia are certainly complex systems even if informal (not legally created), so no assumption should be made that informal systems are necessarily simple ones.

adjustment relates to establishment of different levels of organization for irrigation. The base organization among cultivators can perhaps function fairly informally, but representative organizations at higher levels, formally recognized and empowered for financial and technical tasks supporting the base level, would need a different mode of operation. Considerable field research must be done on the workings of different kinds and sizes of irrigation organization, before very firm or refined conclusions can be drawn. We are aware of some research currently underway and hope that still more is going to produce results soon.¹⁹

Issues Relating to Irrigation Participation

While the literature cannot be definitive on some of these questions, we can point out some of the more important issues affecting the feasibility and productivity of greater participation by rural people in irrigation management.

i. Flexibility in Determining Boundaries and Structure:

Governments are inclined to standardize the organizations and procedures. This can be particularly detrimental in irrigation, where both biological processes and human motivation are concerned. The size and territorial boundaries of irrigation organizations need to suit "natural" units, usually the area and population served by a single water source. These

¹⁹Three colleagues at Cornell, E. Walter Coward, Milton Barnett and Gilbert Levine, along with Leslie Small of Rutgers, are engaged in such research in Southeast Asia under AID funding. Doctoral dissertation research on irrigation organizations in the Philippines and Indonesia is presently being done along these lines by David M. Robinson, Department of Government, and John Duewel, Department of Rural Sociology, Cornell University.

usually do not coincide with the existing administrative units. It appears to be a mistake to force farmers to handle their irrigation business within the latter. Part of the success of the Taiwan Irrigation Associations, which range in size from under 5,000 hectares to over 50,000 hectares, seems to have been their appropriate delimitation, which is not coterminous with the (also effective) Farmers' Associations. Moreover, the internal structure of the Irrigation Associations varied depending on the size of the project, so that organizational staffing and operation were as simplified as possible.²⁰ Traditional organizations like the zangjera and subak display considerable flexibility, and it is necessary for governments to act and respond in like manner, if they want farmers to participate in and benefit from the institutions intended for effective local water management.

ii. Group Size and Basis:

Both large groups and small groups have advantages: the first for economies of scale in operation, the second for cohesion and solidarity of action. Several countries are moving away from earlier emphasis on large-scale, multipurpose irrigation groups. The Muda Project in Malaysia has shifted from farmer associations, involving several thousand members, to small units of 50 to 100 members, divided into work groups of 7 to 15 persons. The Upper Pampanga River Project in the Philippines will be based on groups of 50 farmers or less, and Thailand is reducing the size of its irrigation groups. Such trends greatly increase the potential for participation by cultivators in the affairs of the organizations governing them.

²⁰ For a good summary analysis of the Taiwan Irrigation Associations and their relevance to other countries, see Radosevich and Kirkwood, Organizational Alternatives to Improve On-Farm Water Management in Pakistan, pp. 77-82.

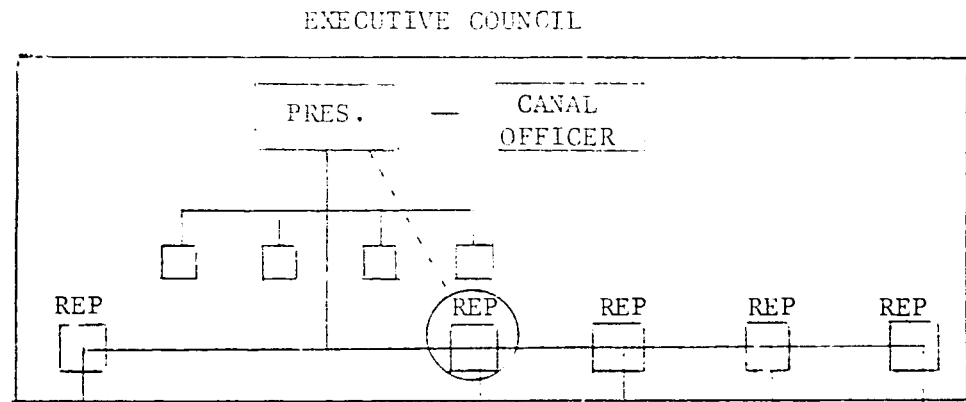
Some larger units are still needed to assist in training, communication, and labor mobilization for major maintenance and rehabilitation tasks. This suggests having several tiers of organization, from the village or watercourse level, including all persons served by a single distribution point (turnout, mogha, gate), to the level of all persons served by a minor canal (more than one watercourse), to the level of all within the service area of a major canal. Such a structure, of water user associations, water user federations, and water districts, is diagrammed in the following scheme suggested by Radosevich and Kirkwood.²¹

The basic unit includes all the farmers served by the lowest level turnout structures controlled by the project. The Muda Project adopted this "terminal group" strategy after having difficulty building farmer organizations in irrigation zones approximately one mile square. By reducing the large irrigation compartment into smaller units, farmer cooperation was improved and irrigation extension work simplified. Rather than have a compartment of four or five villages, a small unit would contain only one or a part of a village which could be more easily managed.²² This terminal unit strategy is most likely to work when each irrigation unit draws water from a source not dependent on other units of the larger system, that

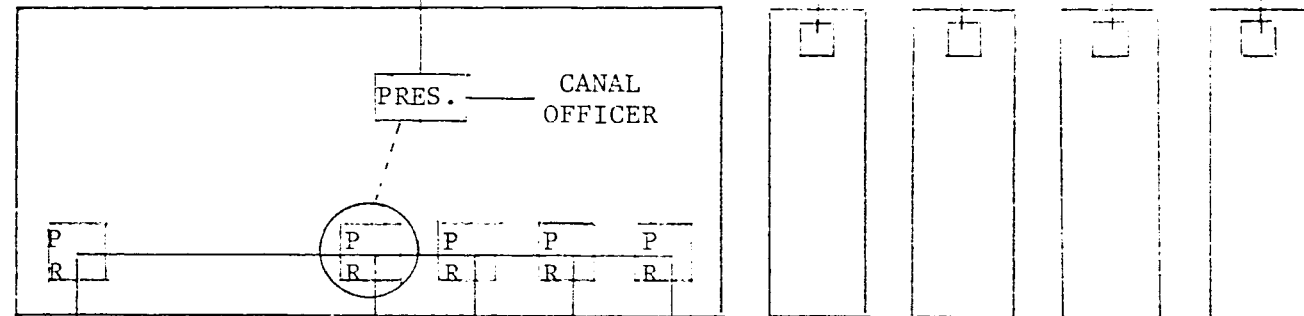
²¹They have prepared a proposal for water user associations in Pakistan based on an analysis of experience in the U.S., Spain, Argentina, Turkey and Pakistan. See *ibid.*, pp. 83-91.

²²S.H. Thavaraj, "The Necessity of Terminal Facilities for Water Management at the Terminal Level" (Paper Presented at National Seminar on Water Management at Farm Level, Kedah, Malaysia, 1973), p. 11.

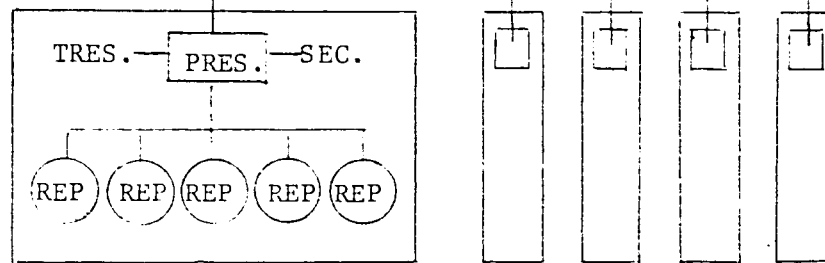
WATER DISTRICT - EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
 ALL CANALS UNDER
 MAJOR CANAL



WATER USERS FEDERATION
 MINOR CANAL LEVEL



WATER USERS
 ASSOCIATION
 WATERCOURSE OR
 VILLAGE LEVEL



WATER USER ORGANIZATION FOR PAKISTAN: ORGANIZATION SCHEME

Source: Radosevich and Kirkwood, Organizational Alternatives to Improve On-Farm Water Management in Pakistan, p. 90.

is when its water comes from main or secondary canals, and does not pass through the territory of another unit. The sense of independence and self-sufficiency appears to encourage greater participation by members of the unit.

iii. Use of Indigenous Roles:

Most traditional irrigation associations have some person or persons responsible for overseeing the operation of water distribution, maintenance tasks, dispute resolution, and so forth, within the community. These water-masters or ditch-tenders have various names. We mentioned already the ulu-ulu and klian subak found in Indonesia. In Sri Lanka (Ceylon) the vel vidane role was taken over and incorporated within the British colonial water administration. Based on his comparative review of the literature, Coward finds that the persons in these roles were largely held accountable to the group served, through small group interaction, local selection, and direct compensation.²³

The familiar danger is that these roles will be exploited by powerful local individuals. To the extent this occurs, traditional roles should not be integrated into contemporary irrigation schemes; but there are examples where the opposite bias is found. In the indigenous irrigation system near Jumla in Nepal, several of the poorest members of the community, landless laborers, were assigned the ditch-tending task and paid a certain percentage of

²³E. Walter Coward, Jr., "Indigenous Organization, Bureaucracy and Development: The Case of Irrigation," Journal of Development Studies, 13, 1 (1976), pp. 95-96. The source of the water-master's fee can greatly affect the possibility for "participatory evaluation" by members. If fees are paid by the association members, then leverage is created since they provide direct job evaluation through paying or withholding their fees. This was the major finding in Coward's case study of the Nam Tam project in Laos, *ibid.*, pp. 100-102. Alternatively, if the project or government water agency pays the fees, then the master is likely to be oriented toward the bureaucracy and not the water users.

the crop when it was harvested.²⁴

Probably more important for farmers than how much the water-master gets, is whether the system operates well enough to insure them adequate water. When the government in Sri Lanka replaced the vel vidane with Cultivation Committees, the authority and discipline behind irrigation rules and enforcement declined. Studies reported by Chambers showed a desire on the part of farmers for a stricter system of local water governance.²⁵ Indeed, farmers in Pakistan were willing to trade off flexibility in the rotational schedule of water delivery under the informal system -- in which small farmers were vulnerable to the manipulations of the more powerful larger operators -- in favor of the security and guarantees of a fixed rotation system.²⁶ The use of indigenous roles should probably be assessed against this criterion: do they assure more certain and timely delivery of water to the farmers, than does some other more modern and formalized role.

²⁴Bihari K. Shrestha, "Study of Diyar Gaon" (Unpublished M.S. diss., Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu, 1977).

²⁵Robert Chambers, "On Substituting Political and Administrative Will for Foreign Exchange: The Potential for Water Management in the Dry Zone," in Agriculture in the Peasant Sector of Sri Lanka, edited by S.W.R. Samarasinghe (Peradeniya: Ceylon Studies Seminar, 1976), pp. 106-107. One-third of the 183 respondents favored the existing system, one-third the vel vidane role, and 15 percent were for direct control by government with stringent rules. The reasons given suggested that the cultivators were less concerned with whether the system was participatory or authoritarian than whether it was honest, impartial, prompt and efficient.

²⁶Freeman and Lowdermilk, "Community and Irrigation in the Pakistan Punjab," pp. 14-17. On irregularities involving the ditch-tenders in this area, see Lowdermilk, Physical and Socio-Economic Dynamics of a Watercourse in Pakistan's Punjab, pp. 48-63.

iv. Membership in Associations:

A major function of water users' associations is to insure irrigation system managers receive good ideas and information on the needs of farmers, the problems they have, the possible effects of various policy options on them, and the present effects on on-going water programs. The accuracy of information and the participatory benefits of this critical feedback role can be greatly increased if specific efforts are made to insure all farmers, regardless of ownership status or size of holdings, can present their views in meetings and interact with responsible administrative agents, as well as their own association leadership. Implementing policies to meet these ends is obviously another matter, and not likely to succeed unless a great deal is known about the local social context and strategies are tailored to fit it.

Elite control can occur by default when absentee landowners, and not tenants, are members of water users' associations. Such owners tend to extract a share of the output, without contributing to the technical side of production. Efforts should be made to insure that tenants have the opportunity to participate in associations, if only because they are the ones cultivating the land with water resources. Obviously, tenant participation serves broader purposes, for organizations that allow them to be members and officers can insure better representation of the views of small cultivators, and facilitate equitable distribution of water resources.

As to voting provisions, each project needs to consider how these can insure fairest participation in decision-making and benefits. The conflicts of interest between those at the "head" of the system, who are closest to the source of water and thus most likely to get water even when it is scarce, and those at the "tail," who have to be satisfied with whatever is left after others have taken water out of the channel,

cannot be resolved unless effective distribution, rotation, policing or other measures have been taken. Since those at the head are often more prosperous, and frequently of higher status, than those at the tail, a wide-open system of representation is likely to favor the former. It seems more common for farmers at the head and middle of the system to combine against those at the tail, than for those at the tail and middle to get together to enforce fair distribution at the head.

Another conflict of interest is between those with large holdings and those with small ones. If decisions are taken simply by majority vote, the latter can prevail. But in an irrigation system, land area has certain claims or rights. One of the purposes of irrigation, usually costly, is to increase output throughout the area. The solution which Radosevich and Kirkwood suggest, based on experience in Spain and Argentina, is a weighted voting formula which gives everyone cultivating within the system one vote and then adds votes in descending proportion for size of holding.²⁷ A weighted voting or weighted representation formula may also be introduced to insure the needs of cultivators at the tail of the system are met, by giving them more than proportional votes in an assembly or seats on an executive council. Often those at the tail are also of lower ethnic or caste status, in which case very specific and firm measures will be needed to support their participation in all phases of the irrigation program. Fortunately, some evidence suggests the farmers at the tail of irrigation systems like farmers in general who are short of water, probably have

²⁷Radosevich and Kirkwood, Organizational Alternatives to Improve On-Farm Water Management in Pakistan, pp. 56-68, 87-91.

greater potential for cooperative action and participation.²⁸

v. Construction, Maintenance and Financing:

In most large-scale government irrigation systems, these functions are handled by the administration, and often unsuccessfully. Construction is costly, and maintenance too, unless handed over to users, who under these conditions often do it poorly or infrequently. Collecting water use fees through bureaucratic procedures is frequently difficult, as well. The whole climate of cooperation is generally unfavorable in large schemes, the more so the larger they are. Getting local participation in construction, maintenance, and financing is attractive to governments, but it should be understood that this must be well-rounded participation. Most farmers are unwilling to contribute labor or money toward implementation if they have no voice in planning the operations, if they are expected to grow crops or plant at times they find inappropriate, or if the relations with irrigation officials are autocratic and one-sided.

China has found that to get effective, large-scale participation in the construction, maintenance and financing of irrigation schemes, requires extensive consultation with the respective communes, brigades and production teams affected. If a group is around the edges of a proposed irrigation or drainage scheme, its participation may be left up to them. If they do not want to contribute resources to be included in the project, they are left out. If a group in the middle is reluctant or obstructive, further consultation and negotiation is begun. It is reported that eventually some consensus is reached, surely with considerable social and political pressure exerted on resistant groups. But they have some bargaining leverage in the process, and may have good reasons for their reluctance. They may have no drainage

²⁸Gekee Y. Wickham, "Farmer Attitudes Towards Irrigation and Farmer Potential for Cooperation," in International Rice Research Institute, Water Management in Philippine Irrigation Systems: Research and Operations (Los Baños: IRRI, 1973).

problem, or their soil might be unsuitable for irrigation, in which case it would not be fair to require them to make the same labor and financial contributions as other groups who benefit more. Such accommodations to local circumstances and interests are made for the sake of fairness and morale, and much more is accomplished than with imperative decision-making solely by the government.²⁹

Current Examples

The move toward greater decentralization of irrigation management and involvement of local groups is illustrated by recent Indonesian government programs in Java.³⁰ There, for almost a decade, the state has pursued a policy of rehabilitating dams, canals, and other works by cooperating with local water user associations. Interestingly, through the nineteenth century, Javanese communities (desa) ran largely autonomous irrigation systems. Dutch colonial government penetrated many of these, particularly in the lowlands. This growing dependency on bureaucratic authority continued into the independence era, and together with other forces, created problems in delivery of water, due to physical deterioration of the systems, reduced capacity,

²⁹Information on irrigation management in China is rather fragmentary, but this appears to be the way systems operate there. See James E. Nickum, "Local Irrigation Management Organization in the People's Republic of China," The China Geographer, 5 (1976), pp. 1-13; and A.Z.M. Obaidullah Khan, The Yellow Sandhills: China Through Chinese Eyes (Comilla: Bangladesh Academy of Rural Development, 1975). See Also Nickum's documentation on "Management of the Merchum Reservoir Irrigation District," Chinese Economic Studies (forthcoming).

³⁰This is discussed in Duewel, A Socio-Institutional Analysis of the Ulu-Ulu System.

increasing silting, and local conflicts over distribution.³¹ To overcome this, the Irrigation Service is giving more attention to local groups and their management practices. Through pilot schemes it is building irrigation channels and forming water-user associations where they do not now exist.³² By granting increased decision-making and management functions to these groups, it hopes to make irrigation performance more responsive to water user needs, and to promote greater cooperation in the upkeep and distribution functions.

The Laur Project in Nueva Ecija Province of the Philippines provides an interesting and hopeful conclusion to this discussion, by showing ways participation can be increased once a decision is made to work with local water groups. Implemented by the National Irrigation Administration, this project is attempting to involve water users in the planning, construction and rehabilitation of their irrigation systems; to harness members' potential for leadership through group dynamics, leadership seminars and group action; to strengthen indigenous organizations that promote self-reliant management of water systems and resolution of conflict related to them; and to transform irrigation

³¹See Gary Hansen, Rural Local Government and Agricultural Development in Java, Indonesia (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1974); and IBRD/IDA, "Indonesia: Irrigation Program Survey, Preliminary Draft" (Washington, D.C.: IBRD, Irrigation and Area Development Division, 1976).

³²Ann Booth, "Irrigation in Indonesia: Part I," Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies, XIII, 3 (1977), pp. 33-74; Donald C. Taylor, Agricultural Development Through Group Action to Improve the Distribution of Water in Asian Gravity-Flow Irrigation Systems (New York: Agricultural Development Council, 1976).

associations into supply and market cooperatives.³³

The project began with community organizers who assessed the problems of farmers and tried to stimulate their interest in improving their conditions. In particular, they encouraged farmers to make their own plans and work collectively to reach them. A series of group seminars was held where community organizers reviewed possible activities with small groups of 30 farmers each for two days. Leadership seminars were also held with officers of local water-user associations. Styles of leadership in particular were discussed, and strategies and reasons for promoting more democratic, participatory organizations were considered. The project is too new to have moved into field production, but the 1978 evaluation indicated that it has achieved its objectives to date. Farmer participation in project-related activities has increased, and the leadership styles in associations have moved from authoritative or directive, to more generally consultative. Evaluators believe the approach represents substantial progress toward active farmer participation in irrigation development.

The next stages of the project will involve associations in the process of making contracts to finance and supervise dam and canal construction, and of repaying over time the loans to build facilities. This case will be particularly interesting to follow because it makes a serious effort to link the technological and organizational dimensions of irrigation. Much more research needs to be done on local organizational forms and their interaction with economic, political, technological, ecological and cultural variables, especially if irrigation

³³See Delia Unson and Cecilia Ochoa, Evaluation of the Social Development of Two Communal Irrigation Associations in Laur, Nueva Ecija, 1976-1978: The Baseline Survey and Monitoring Period (Quezon City: Institute of Philippine Culture, 1978).

programs are to receive greater support in the future. There are some good beginnings,³⁴ but a much broader and deeper base of knowledge is needed for getting more productive participation by rural people in irrigation management.

³⁴We would cite in addition to the works already noted: E.R. Leach, Pul Eliya: A Village in Ceylon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961); Canute Van de Meer, "Changing Water Control in a Taiwanese Rice-Field Irrigation System," Annals of the Association of American Geographers, LVIII (1968) pp. 720-747; Akira Takahashi, Land and Peasants in Central Luzon: Socioeconomic Structure of a Philippine Village (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1970); Clifford Geertz, "The Wet and the Dry: Traditional Irrigation in Bali and Morocco," Human Ecology, 1, 1 (1972), pp. 23-29; John W. Bennett, "Anthropological Contributions to the Cultural Ecology and Management of Water Resources," in Man and Water, edited by L.D. James (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1974); and Susan Lees, "The State's Use of Irrigation in Changing Peasant Society," in Irrigation's Impact on Society, edited by Theodore E. Downing and McGuire Gibson (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1974).

Chapter Ten

PARTICIPATION IN RURAL HEALTH CARE PROGRAMS

Most rural people in underdeveloped countries encounter high infant mortality, short life expectancy and poor overall health. This is particularly true for the estimated 600 million people who have been identified as "absolutely poor," and especially for infants and children under five who account for a large percentage of all deaths.¹ These people have a pressing need for better health care. Yet health services reach less than 20 percent of some rural populations. For some time, the strategy has been to try to get more medical facilities and care extended to the rural sector, but the costs of this are immense, and other constraints work against it. In recent years there has been considerable rethinking about a strategy which, as with agricultural research, would involve rural people much more actively in the process. Participation alone cannot solve the problems of disease, malnutrition and malaise associated with rural poverty; but in much of the recent literature on health in developing countries, it appears to be an essential element for making inroads on these problems.

This viewpoint is well expressed by the report of two workshops on Community Health in Asia. It noted that the Executive Committee of the World Health Organization at its meeting in January, 1975, stated:

¹Shahid Javed Burki and Joris J.C. Voorhoeve, Global Estimates for Meeting Basic Needs: Background Paper (Washington: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Basic Needs Paper No. 1, 1977), p. 35; Allan Berg, The Nutrition Factor: Its Role in National Development (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1973), p. 4.

The majority of the people in the disadvantaged areas of most countries of the world do not obtain sufficient care or otherwise benefit from known health technology. Health services which should provide coverage to these populations in fact provide services to only a very small proportion of the population whom they are supposed to serve....

As a solution to these problems, politicians, planners and professionals increasingly are looking to the community itself to help their efforts to improve health among the world's disadvantaged. They recognize that the community has many resources that heretofore have remained untapped. If the community can be mobilized to participate in improving its environment, preventing diseases and contributing workers to do primary (that is, front line) medical work, then patterns of health care distribution and diseases can be changed.²

Issues in Health Services Bearing on Participation

Three general sets of constraints account for poor health in most LDCs and impede its improvement: (1) medical policies and expenditures are biased toward urban rather than rural sectors, and toward curative rather than preventive measures -- rural health will be difficult to improve, unless the prevalent pattern of providing services through conventional, high-cost

²Susan B. Rifkin, ed., Community Health in Asia: A Report on Two Workshops (Singapore: Christian Conference on Asia, Committee for Health Concerns, 1977), p. 9. A distinction is suggested in the report between "community medical programs" and "community health programs." The first it defines as programs set up and operated by hospitals and doctors, while the second, the community takes responsibility for its own primary health care, drawing on medical facilities and personnel only as resources. Such a tight distinction is not made or accepted throughout the literature, but there is a tendency to look toward the latter kind of program as more promising.

programs based on highly specialized and technical foundations is changed; (2) health manpower is insufficient for reaching and serving more than a small minority of the population, at least using present roles and practices; and (3) popular understanding and acceptance of modern health practices is not widespread. Many nutritional deficiencies and poor health practices could be moderated if people were better informed about them.³ The basic structure and philosophy of health care has been built on a narrow system of technical specialization and professionalism that puts patients in a subordinate and dependent status and does not require that persons take responsibility for their own health.⁴

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to deal with the many philosophical and political issues surrounding health care in developing countries, but we would note that improved and more participatory health care probably cannot be achieved simply by changing a few role definitions or providing health education. The prevailing theories and practice of health care reflect relationships of power and ideology with society.⁵ Yet

³Berg, The Nutrition Factor, pp. 74-75.

⁴This has been argued most forcefully, though in unfortunately somewhat stereotyped terms, by Ivan Illich, Medical Nemesis: The Expropriation of Health (New York: Pantheon, 1976). He does not recognize the extent to which many persons would just as soon not take significant responsibility in this area of their lives, as in other areas. But the basic lines of his argument are instructive and broadly relevant to understanding issues of participation in the health sector.

⁵Some of these issues are gone into in Tom Heller and Charles Elliott, eds., Health Care and Society: Readings in Health Care Delivery and Development (Norwich: University of East Anglia, School of Development Studies, 1977), pp. 1-22 (introduction) and readings.

expectations and demands are increasing most developing countries for more and better health care, with or without greater participation. To the extent that more participatory approaches also facilitate provision of health care to the rural majority, possibilities exist for moving in this direction. Indeed, this majority is unlikely to receive even minimum adequate service, without important reorientations in policies and expenditure, health manpower, and popular understanding and acceptance.⁶

Three ways to deal with these constraints are to give greater emphasis in programming to rural areas and preventive strategies, to increase the use of paraprofessionals in the delivery of health services, and to involve the community in educational programs and health campaigns. All three approaches have important elements of participation in them, though the effects are not unambiguous. It appears that in many rural areas, starved for medical care and not convinced that preventive measures will improve their lot, greater participation in making decisions about health allocations would lead to more curative facilities and services. Indeed, one qualification to the general preference now expressed for preventive approaches, is that introducing curative programs initially may be the best way to get support for more comprehensive local strategies of health improvement, including public health and personal hygiene programs.⁷

⁶In referring to "health" as we do, it should be understood that we are concerned with nutrition as an important aspect of health, even if we do not mention it explicitly. For information on the relationship between nutrition and infectious disease in the Third World, see Michael C. Latham, "Nutrition and Infection in National Development," *Science*, 188 (May 9, 1975), pp. 561-565.

⁷Michael Latham suggests, in a personal communication, that to alleviate this problem medical services might emphasize immunization, which is a preventative measure but which, because it involves injections, is often perceived by local people as curative.

Probably the soundest reason for pursuing participatory approaches to health care is the recognition that the majority of health problems -- no conclusive figure can be cited, but in the range of three-quarters probably -- can be treated with relatively simple techniques. (We are not going to consider how many problems "cure themselves" with time.) Most of the things causing mortality and morbidity are rather well-known -- vitamin deficiencies, diseases like malaria, intestinal parasites, and so forth. They are reasonably amenable to treatment or prevention by persons having limited training or formal education. To the extent that rural areas have been neglected and contain the great majority of health problems to be dealt with, and highly-trained health professionals are unavailable or too costly to provide, solutions need to be based on involving the rural people themselves in education, public sanitation, water supply, health campaigns, resource mobilization, para-professional service, policy formation, and so on.

The state of knowledge is not conclusive about many of the practical elements of a more participatory approach to health programs. Because much experimentation is now underway, more should be known within a few years.⁸ This means, however, that for now, our treatment of the subject cannot be as current or definite as we would like. But we can point up the areas in which work is being done, indicating what the emerging thinking seems to suggest.

⁸For a review of some of the recent and current work on this subject, see Frances M. Delaney, Low-Cost Rural Health Care and Health Manpower Training: An Annotated Bibliography with Special Emphasis on Developing Countries, 3 vols. (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 1977); and American Public Health Association, The State of the Art of Delivering Low Cost Health Services in Less Developed Countries: A Summary Study of 180 Health Projects (Washington, D.C.: APHA, January 1977). As noted in the previous chapter, our Rural Development Committee has begun a comparative assessment of experience with paraprofessionals, which should yield some results by 1980.

Primary Health Care

There seems a consensus that greater efforts are needed to strengthen the "base" of the medical system, the health post or clinic at the community level, that is the most common and accessible source of service and information. Primary health care is described as a "practical approach to making essential health care universally accessible to individuals and families in the community in an acceptable and affordable way and with their full participation."⁹ Existing medical systems have been biased toward urban care and specialized practice of medicine, which can be provided only where there are concentrations of population. The level of technical competence tends to be keyed to the most difficult, not the most common problems. This is not to say that hospitals and high-level technology are incompatible with primary health care; indeed, because primary care requires a functioning system of referral for serious ailments, sophisticated medical centers are needed. But for most countries to reach their populations more effectively will require expansion of the primary care network, particularly the facilities in rural areas.

Primary health care emphasizes the role of paraprofessional health workers and local traditional healers (discussed in the next section) in the extension of health care to the rural majority.¹⁰ They are part of an integrated system of care with referral centers for patients having problems too serious or

⁹World Health Organization, Primary Health Care (Geneva: WHO, 1978), p. 8.

¹⁰See the World Bank's Sector Policy Paper, Health (Washington, D.C.: IBRD, 1975), pp. 1-42, for description and justification of this alternative. To correct the urban bias now prevailing in LDC health systems, the paper argues for (1) extending the coverage of the primary health care system, (2) increasing the responsiveness of existing health posts and district hospitals to the needs

time-consuming to be dealt with on an out-patient basis. This is not a new strategy, and most LDCs already have structures which feed patients into hospitals and medical centers from rural outposts or polyclinics. But improved primary health care requires these facilities to do more than treat minor ailments, screen people requiring hospitalization, or serve as bases for educating people about better nutrition and health practices, essential though these functions are. More important in terms of participation, outposts and clinics can be organized and run with a large degree of involvement from the community. Such medical facilities have the potential to be more effective than conventional clinics, provided they are seen as the people's own, and as responsive to their needs and ideas.¹¹

The problems with such participation should not be glossed over. We have alluded to the possible bias this would give to curative over preventative medicine. It should also be remembered that communities are seldom really homogeneous, and as in other areas of policy and performance, the more advantaged sectors are likely to have more than a proportionate input into

of the primary worker, and (3) planning the extension of primary care with the aim of supplementing the role played by traditional healers in village society (p. 42).

¹¹The general strategy of reoriented health care away from hospital-based medicine has been mapped out in the publication from a symposium at Makerere University: Maurice King, ed., Medical Care in Developing Countries: A Primer on the Medicine of Poverty (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1966); and also in the results of a Rockefeller Foundation study covering Malawi, Senegal, Sudan, a Latin American Country, Thailand and Colombia; see John Bryant, Health and the Developing World (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969). Both studies stressed the primary health care approach and use of auxiliary staff.

and benefit from the programs. Health workers, for example, may be chosen with dominant influence from one group in the village, and may be biased in distributing services (or might be boycotted by other groups). Efforts can be made to correct for such effects, as discussed in Part II. But no presumptions should be made that community participation will necessarily be equitable or effective. The standard for comparison should be whether with participation in providing rural health care, services, and benefits will be more equitable than with current patterns of operation.

Further, there are areas of decision-making in which technical considerations need to be given due weight. Making health staff responsible only to local communities may cut them off from the input and supervision of more knowledgeable persons. A system of dual responsibility needs to be devised, where there is some technical accountability to health professionals, at the same time there is basic accountability to the community. In health more than other technical areas, a firm basis often exists for deciding one practice is better than another. To follow an inferior practice jeopardizes the health of persons often not in a position to appraise the decision themselves. So participation should not override the best technical judgments available when health is at stake. At the same time, we would note that discussion of alternative practices should not be left entirely to professionals. Indeed, the involvement of paraprofessionals and patients can contribute to practices that are under the circumstances more reasonable.¹²

¹²For some examples of how more collaborative decisions on technical matters can have useful outcomes, see Joshua S. Horn, "Hospitals in China," Monthly Review, 22, 11 (1971), pp. 12-30.

So some reorientation of how technical judgments are reached may be desirable, in keeping with the general approach of participation in health improvement.

A strategy of improved primary health care does depend for part of its effectiveness on the backup system of more specialized and technical medicine. It is very important that a referral system with district hospitals and more central medical facilities be in place. This poses complex problems of resource allocation, and few countries are likely to have an optimal distribution of institutional types and locations.¹³ This raises further problems related to participation, in decision-making at least. More popular participation from the rural areas should help increase allocations to this sector, but it is not clear that all communities will be willing to abide by the division of labor a primary health care system implies. They will be tempted to have more advanced medical facilities located conveniently, and may compete with other communities to construct larger and larger medical units. If the full cost is borne by the communities, they may be entitled to proceed if they are satisfied higher level facilities enhance their well-being. But, in a social sense, this is a misallocation of resources, when many other needs are left unattended.

¹³See the excellent analyses using Tunisian data by Peter S. Heller, An Analysis of the Structure, Equity and Effectiveness of Public Sector Health Systems in Developing Countries: The Case of Tunisia (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Research on Economic Development, February 1975); and Issues in the Allocation of Resources in the Health Sector of Developing Countries (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Research on Economic Development, February, 1977). It was found that there is a relatively low level of utilization of in-patient capacity in district and regional hospitals, reflecting inadequacies in the primary health care base.

The basic alternatives are: to adopt a technocratic approach, distributing facilities according to administratively determined economic criteria, or to enter into broader consultation with rural people, outlining alternatives and the costs of each. The former is unlikely to generate as much of voluntary local resources, so the latter approach, even with possibilities of misallocation, would seem more promising if a goal of policy is to serve the health needs of the rural majority more adequately. With the latter approach, communities should regard the facilities more as their own, and should support and cooperate with them more readily. At the same time we recognize that, because the demand for health services is so great in most rural communities, they may sometimes be provided successfully without much public participation.¹⁴ More study and analysis needs to be done to get a firmer grasp on the ways in participation facilitates improvement in health care for the rural majority.

Paraprofessional Health Personnel

Because highly-trained manpower is expensive and scarce in most LDCs, paraprofessionals drawn from the local community can play an important role in the frontline delivery of health services to the rural poor. Many countries have programs using paraprofessional health personnel, such as barefoot doctors,

¹⁴Reference will be made below to the detailed study of cost and services in the Malaysian health system, by Peter S. Heller, A Model of the Demand for Medical and Health Services in West Malaysia (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Research on Economic Development, October, 1976). His study indicates that a reasonably successful system in terms of equity and effectiveness can be operated without much participation in planning and decision-making as we have outlined it.

community health workers (CHWs), and medical auxiliaries.¹⁵ Although recruitment practices, amount of training, and the breadth and quality of services differ widely. Despite the differences, all these programs attempt to make health care more available by using less highly trained manpower as an intermediary between the public and the medical professionals. This intermediary role typically involves the dissemination of basic nutrition and health information, treatment of minor ailments, and referral of difficult cases to more skilled medical personnel. Of central importance in a participatory health program, is the capacity of paraprofessionals to make independent judgements about diagnosis and treatment, which distinguishes them from other subprofessional health staff, such as x-ray technicians, who work under direct supervision of a fully qualified physician.

While not all programs draw paraprofessional health personnel from the client community, evidence suggests this makes them more effective by increasing both their availability and legitimacy.¹⁶ The use of paraprofessionals thus offers opportunities for people to participate in recruitment of health workers. China has had perhaps the most notable experience in this regard. The production team, which is the basic unit for provision of health services, selects from among its own members

¹⁵For presentation of a typology of paraprofessional health workers see Peter Berman, "Village Health Workers: Background and Issues for Analysis" (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1978), pp. 7-11.

¹⁶Everett M. Rogers, Communication Strategies for Family Planning (New York: The Free Press, 1973), pp. 54-56.

candidates for training as barefoot doctors.¹⁷ By allowing local people to choose their health workers, China appears to have facilitated a responsive and accessible health care system. Such an approach, however, may not work as successfully in countries lacking China's social and political structure. Experiments in which villagers choose candidates for training as CHWs have been tried by amateurs in Niger. Although these CHWs made an impressive number of consultations, the turnover rate was high, with approximately one-third dropping out of the program after one year.¹⁸ In Iran similar attempts have resulted in village headmen placing kinsmen into the paraprofessional role. Women were rarely picked, although needed for maternal and child care, and family planning.¹⁹ Such constraints may reinforce the already skewed distribution of health services.

The possibilities for community involvement in paraprofessional health programs are also influenced by training requirements. China's barefoot doctors are in fact quite highly

¹⁷On the Chinese experience see: Shahid Akhtar, Health Care in the People's Republic of China: A Bibliography with Abstracts (Ottawa: International Development Research Centre, 1975); and Susan B. Rifkin, "Health Care for Rural Areas," in Medicine and Public Health in the People's Republic of China, edited by Joseph R. Quinn (Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Health, 1973), pp. 141-152.

¹⁸Guy Belloncle reports that in Maradi Province at the end of 1971, 80 health workers out of 100 trained were at work in villages. In six months they had received visits from 83,600 patients. Impressive results were seen in the treatment of eye diseases, infected wounds and malaria. See "Total Participation in Public Health Programmes: Some Reflections on the Niger Experience" (Paris: Institute de Recherches et d'Application des Méthodes de Développement, 1973), pp. 11-12.

¹⁹See Hossain A. Ronaghy and Steven Solter, "Is the Chinese 'Barefoot Doctor' Exportable to Rural Iran?", in Heller and

trained, receiving 4 months of instruction a year for 3 years in one area reported. Because productive resources are held in common, such extensive and continuous training does not exclude the poor from becoming health workers. But in countries with inequitably distributed property, only the well-to-do can afford to leave their fields for such lengthy training periods. The relatively high level of expertise attained by barefoot doctors also requires that candidates be literate. This qualification would, in most LDCs, restrict paraprofessional activities to the relatively small number of educated persons.

To permit wider participation in paraprofessional training, many countries will have to rely on shorter training courses and employ instruction techniques that do not require literacy. In the Niger experiment, cited above, the CHWs received only 10 days of training in basic hygiene, symptoms of major diseases, and simple first aid. Instruction emphasized learning-by-doing, and to help trainees remember what was taught, a 10 page booklet was issued, with drawings summarizing each day's lesson.²⁰

Shortening and simplifying medical training will, of course, limit the tasks that can be performed by paraprofessionals, but if properly administered, can result in services being extended to persons previously excluded because of poverty or geographical isolation. Such programs cannot be effective, however, without extensive administrative supervision, broadbased systems of training and review, elaborate supply lines for medicine and

Elliott, eds., Health Care and Society, pp. 197-204. Also see David M. Lampton, "Development and Health Care: Is China's Medical Programme Exportable?" World Development, 6, 5 (1978), pp. 621-630.

²⁰Belloncle, "Total Participation in Health Programmes," p. 9.

equipment, and a functioning system of medical referral. Using CHWs or other paraprofessionals to meet basic health needs is not necessarily inexpensive, although we assume it to be more economical than current policies in most LDCs. More research is needed, however, to assess the relative merits of alternative ways of recruiting, organizing, and training paraprofessionals before we can make more specific recommendations.

The issue of costs raises the question of whether and in what form health workers should be remunerated. One approach is to use volunteer workers. This would obviously reduce local manpower expenditures, but probably raise administrative overhead, and perhaps reduce the availability and quality of services to unacceptable levels. If paraprofessionals are salaried issues arise whether funding should come from central or local government resources, local self-help funds, voluntary organizations such as cooperatives or churches, or from service fees. Little evidence is available on the effects of these various options on participation in health care, although a good argument could be made for having salary based on local funds, or perhaps services or gifts in kind, thereby promoting local evaluation and accountability. On the other hand, local funding may exclude health services from the poorest villages, which would lend support to arguments for external subsidies.

Decisions must also be made whether paraprofessional work should be part of a long term career, or a role filled for several years by a rotating set of people. While extensive training makes it more expensive to change personnel, rotation of local people in the role clearly facilitates some participatory goals. Also of relevance is whether paraprofessionals should be allowed to move to higher positions.²¹ Prohibiting

²¹One of the reasons for the success of China's rural health program is that regulations prohibit barefoot doctors from moving to urban areas.

promotion may be advisable, since one of the principle reasons for using local people as paraprofessionals is because government-service medical personnel often resist posting to remote areas, from where promotion is difficult. On the other hand, such a policy seems likely to increase job dissatisfaction and deter highly motivated persons from becoming local health workers.

A final issue with regard to the use of local persons in providing health services, is the role of indigenous healers, such as herbalists, shamens, or midwives. Introduction of western-trained medical personnel often leads to conflict with these traditional practitioners, who find their prestige and livelihood threatened. Such conflicts may sometimes be avoided by retraining and incorporating traditional healers into the modern health delivery system, provided, of course, they are willing to accept this option.²² Because these practitioners have a preexisting clientele, such an approach would also minimize problems of legitimizing new treatments and cures. Furthermore, recent evidence indicates that traditional health practices are often more effective than commonly assumed by western medical experts.²³ These facts suggest avenues should be explored for

²²In Niger attempts were made in some villages to get traditional midwives to participate in animation child care programs. Where this was not done, intense conflicts often developed with the "new" midwives. See Belloncle, "Total Participation in Health Programmes," p. 15.

²³Erwin H. Ackernknecht has estimated that up to 50 percent of native pharmacopoeia contains active ingredients. "Problems of Primitive Medicine," Bulletin of the History of Medicine, XI (1942), pp. 503-521. Further, research on placebos indicates that faith in the cure is an important component of the healing process -- faith which is more often placed with the indigenous curer than with the western technician. Claude Levi-Strauss demonstrates the psychotherapeutic aspects of traditional healing practices. "The Effectiveness of Symbols," in Structural

using traditional healers to supplement the services provided by modern paraprofessionals.

Community Participation

A participatory approach to providing health services will necessitate some organization of the local clientele. We see three major functions for such organizations. First, collective action by rural people may be necessary to get health programs underway and to make them responsive to local needs. Second, local organizations can be effective mechanisms for learning about community health perceptions, and for disseminating information on nutrition, family planning, and other health matters. Third, since many health problems affect entire communities and cannot be resolved by individual effort, organizations are needed to significantly raise health levels in many rural areas.

The role of community organizations in starting, supporting, and overseeing health programs is obvious. Without the active participation of local people more extensive rural health services are not likely to be forthcoming from the central government, and such services as are provided will tend to be monopolized by those who can afford the financial costs of individual treatment. One approach at organizing local groups on a temporary basis has been the animation technique, in which villagers are called together to decide in common on their health needs.²⁴

Anthropology (New York: Basic Books, 1963). For a study of the relationship between indigenous and western systems of medicine, see Harvey Blustain, "Levels of Medicine in a Central Nepali Village," Contributions to Nepalese Studies, 3, Special Number (1976), pp. 81-105.

²⁴See, for instance, Belloncle, "Total Participation in Health Programmes," pp. 7-8.

We suspect, however, that more permanent and formal health organizations are necessary to ensure continuous and effective services.

Participatory health organizations, such as the rural health committees of Guatemala, the rural lunchrooms of La Venta in Honduras,²⁵ and the mothers' clubs of Korea,²⁶ have been effective in informing people about better health practices. In the absence of community organizations, such information must be disseminated directly by health workers on a one-to-one basis, or indirectly through mass media or word-of-mouth. The former approach is time-consuming and will probably overlook the majority of rural poor; the second will not reach persons lacking access to communications media, and what information is transferred may be subject to distortion and misinterpretation. Organized activities have the potential to overcome these difficulties. The Korean mothers' clubs, for instance, have used guest lecturers and group discussions to explore family planning and the advantages of alternative methods of contraception. This has encouraged many club members to practice some form of birth control, which in turn has helped Korea dramatically reduce its birth rate.²⁷

²⁵ John C. Ickis, "The Rural Lunchrooms of La Venta" (Paper Prepared for the Instituto Centroamericano de Administration de Empresas, Managua, Nicaragua, 1975).

²⁶ D. Lawrence Kincaid et al., Mothers' Clubs and Family Planning in Rural Korea: The Case of Orvu Li (Honolulu: East-West Communication Institute, 1976).

²⁷ See Frances F. Korten and Sarah Young, "The Mothers' Clubs of Korea" (Report Prepared for Harvard School of Public Health, November 1977), esp. pp. 4-5. They report that the crude birth rate in Korea has fallen from 44 per thousand in 1960 to 24 per thousand in 1974. For our thinking on family planning see John M. Cohen and Norman T. Uphoff, "Rural Development Participation and Family Planning Programs" (Paper Presented to Conference on Population Studies, Hastings Center, Hastings-on-Hudson, October 1978).

Group approaches can also complement the use of mass media, for instance where a group might collectively purchase a radio to obtain health and other information. One interesting variation on this approach is to have local people participate on radio or television forums related to village health and nutrition.²⁸

Community participation can help professionals learn how local people perceive and treat illness. Under certain conditions insights generated by studying local perceptions and treatments of health problems may have rewards similar to those in agricultural research, discussed in Chapter 9. More relevant, and perhaps more effective medical techniques, may be discovered through collaboration with local health groups.

Finally, group involvement has the potential to deal with community-wide health problems. Again the Chinese experience provides a good example of the possibilities of this approach.²⁹ China's barefoot doctors go beyond treatment to organize patriotic health campaigns and general sanitation work in their locale. Perhaps the most well known community efforts were the campaigns to improve water sanitation and eradicate "the four pests": rats, flies, mosquitoes, and bedbugs.³⁰ Over time these programs

²⁸Syed A. Rahim, Communication and Rural Development in Bangladesh (Honolulu: East-West Communication Institute, 1976). We would also note that the approach of Paulo Freire, noted in Chapter 9, can be of use in health and nutrition education. See Therese Drummond, Using the Method of Paulo Freire in Nutrition Education: An Experimental Plan for Community Action in Northeast Brazil (Ithaca: Cornell International Nutrition Monograph Series, Number 3, 1975).

²⁹Rifkin, "Health Care for Rural Areas," pp. 141-151.

³⁰On these campaigns see J. Horn, Away All Pests (London: Paul Hamlyn, 1969).

became institutionalized, seasonal efforts to attack communicable disease as well. Other programs involving the community have taken place with nutrition and family planning. The culmination of this increasing self-help and community participation came with "the emergence of 'red medical villages' where all inhabitants 'work for better health' by collecting herbs [and] making their own medicines."³¹ The Chinese have not solved their enormous health problems, but their apparent success in organizing people to improve rural health demonstrates the potential of mass involvement for implementing health programs.

Participation Beyond the Clinic

Longer, more healthy lives for rural people result from more than the presence of medical specialists and new technology. Rather, better health and nutrition requires improvements in the rural environment itself. Two specialists summed this fact up more than a decade ago:

Improved agriculture, by providing more and better food, decreases mortality. Better transportation, by reducing the loss of food and decreasing isolation and ignorance, leads to the same result. Improved housing decreases crowding, and the more favorable home environment reduces the spread of communicable diseases. Improved water supply for agricultural, industrial, or other uses not primarily associated with health also reduces the spread of disease. Basic education increases understanding of personal hygiene and the causes of disease. Mass media help diffuse knowledge and ideas.³²

³¹Rifkin, "Health Care for Rural Areas," p. 150.

³²Carl E. Taylor and Marie-Francoise Hall, "Health, Population, and Economic Development," Science, 157 (August 11, 1967), pp. 651-57. See also the useful discussion in James Kocher and Richard Cash, "Linkages and Complementarities in Achieving Health and Nutrition Objectives Within a Basic Needs Framework" (Paper Prepared for the Policy Planning and Program Review Department of the World Bank, December 1977).

Perhaps the most dramatic health benefits can be realized by improving the supply of potable water. While the United Nations Habitat Conference in 1976, and the Conference on Water in 1977, urged large expenditures to bring safe water to all by 1990, evidence is clear that more than construction projects will be needed to achieve health gains. Studies indicated that to be effective over the long run, projects need to be backed by education on hygiene and proper water use,³³ training in maintaining the new water supply system,³⁴ and promotion of local knowledge about waterborne disease and its relationship to drinking, bathing and washing uses.³⁵ Here is a good entry point for participatory strategies allowing local people to select candidates from among themselves to receive training in water hygiene or well maintenance. The hygienists could help educate the community and well-repairmen to keep the potable system running and safe. They could be employed by a local village government unit which might set local water policies and work to change the social and ecological environment in which the potable water system is built.

³³A case study of a Lesotho rural water program found health benefits to be lower than expected, in part because of the lack of attention to hygiene and use education. G.F. White, D.J. Bradley and A.M. White, Drawers of Water: Domestic Water in East Africa (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972).

³⁴If villagers are not trained to maintain the new system it soon breaks down or becomes unsanitary. When systems break down "villagers go back to using their old polluted water source, and everybody's time and money will have been wasted." Bob Stanley, "Water Supply Needs: An Integrated Approach," The IRDC Report, VI, 3 (1977), pp. 11-14.

³⁵This is particularly the case given multiple sources of water. People may drink from a safe supply but then bathe, prepare foods, or wash utensils in unsafe surface water.

Similar approaches can be taken to resolve the related problem of sanitation. Effective and simple technologies now exist for disposal of excreta. Needed is village mobilization using local labor and materials, as well as community understanding of sanitation rules and the willingness to apply them. Opportunities exist here for active local sanitation committees, involving a high degree of participation, local control, and paraprofessional health education.

Crowded, poorly ventilated houses promote the spread of such airborne diseases as tuberculosis and influenza. Cooking fire smoke contributes to bronchitis and lung disease. Here participatory self-help housing programs have a role to play in improved community health. Settlement patterns also create health problems. Close crowding leads to bad drainage and unsanitary conditions. Community-wide participation in implementing cleanup campaigns, drainage ditch construction, garbage disposal, animal control, as well as the water and sewage activities just discussed, can greatly improve this environment.

Lack of knowledge, in addition to poverty, contributes to poor nutrition and health. A major channel for teaching better personal hygiene and an understanding of relationships between diet and disease is primary education. But educational facilities are rarely widely available in rural areas and often the curriculum neglects health information. Some suggest that concentrating on daily behavior of adults, especially mothers, is likely to be more effective in getting better health and nutrition practices than is primary education. Here functionally targeted adult education campaigns where new knowledge can be promptly used is likely to be quite effective.

It is tempting to conclude that participatory approaches to dealing with problems of health and nutrition are invariably better. The logical case for this is very strong. But we need to be careful about moving beyond our base of experience.

Heller concludes from his analysis of experience in Malaysia, which has not been particularly participatory, that that country has successfully elaborated an innovative medical system embodying the use of paramedical workers, mobile medical teams, a referral mechanism and a network of health centers [which] has been extremely effective in reaching out to provide medical and preventive health services to the most disadvantaged groups in the society.³⁶

Neither income nor time cost constitutes an effective barrier to access or utilization of medical care, regardless of ethnic group, in urban or rural areas. Heller found the share of implicit subsidy going to the lower income groups is proportional to their share of the population, implying an increase of 7.8 percent in the real household income for the lowest group, compared with an increase of 0.5 percent for households in the top quintile. At the same time, some experience with participatory health approaches, for example in India and Bangladesh, indicates they do not necessarily reach the poorest people.³⁷ So we can say that while the structure of health programs is undergoing change, toward greater emphasis on primary health care centers utilizing paraprofessionals, the desirable degree of popular participation in their operation and control is still not agreed upon and will have to be the subject of further analysis and investigation.

³⁶ Heller, A Model of the Demand for Medical and Health Services in West Malaysia, p. 48.

³⁷ See "New Rural Health Scheme has Poor Impact: Study," The Times of India (Bombay), June 9, 1978, p. 9; and Zafrullah Chowdhury, "The Paramedics of Savar: An Experiment in Community Health in Bangladesh," Development Dialogue 1 (1978), pp. 41-50.

Chapter Eleven

PARTICIPATION IN RURAL PUBLIC WORKS

In any integrated approach to rural development, public works has an important role to play because invariably, rural areas lack adequate infrastructure. The needs are usually of three kinds: (1) agricultural infrastructure that promotes and stabilizes production, such as irrigation, drainage, reforestation, erosion control structures; (2) economic infrastructure that facilitates transportation, communication and greater activity, including roads, bridges, telecommunications, electrification; and (3) social infrastructure that contributes to people's welfare, such as through health clinics, schools, vocational institutes, community centers, or piped water. Some of these can be constructed both effectively and at lower cost through labor-intensive methods, involving rural people, not only in construction, but in planning and decision-making as well. In this chapter we will consider experience with such an approach, to see its limitations and possibilities.

Rural public works programs can be viewed along a continuum, as suggested by Thomas and his associates, from those primarily for creation of employment, to those aiming primarily at asset creation.¹ Most programs have both objectives, though in

¹See John Woodward Thomas and Richard M. Hook, Creating Rural Employment: A Manual for Organizing Rural Works Programs (Cambridge: Harvard Institute for International Development, February, 1977). The manual was prepared from a study on public works by John W. Thomas, Richard M. Hook, S.J. Burki and David G. Davies, "Employment and Development: A Comparative Analysis of the Role of Public Works Programs" (Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 1975). This chapter draws from numerous of the conclusions of their comparative analysis of public works experience in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Mauritius, Morocco, Pakistan, South Korea, Trinidad-Tobago and Tunisia.

different combinations. Here we will be concerned with public works as they contribute to different kinds of rural infrastructure, though we recognize the validity of generating employment; indeed, the approach of labor-intensive public works is intended to create employment, both in the construction phase and in subsequent operation. But here we are concerned with the role participation may play in helping rural areas get the irrigation, roads, clinics, and so forth they need to productivity and welfare improvements, as well as to develop local skills in implementing future community generated and directed efforts to improve agricultural and social infrastructure.

Rural works programs, according to Thomas and Hook, have the potential of:

- (1) creating employment without sacrificing productivity.
- (2) quick implementation.
- (3) rapid and visible impact.
- (4) providing benefits to a wide range of rural groups, as well as to the unemployed, becoming politically attractive.
- (5) being flexible to location and timing, allowing them to be operated when and where they are needed most.
- (6) attracting foreign aid.²

On the possibly negative side, are problems mostly of implementation: whether work will be completed within reasonable cost and time limits, whether it will be of sufficient quality, whether the number of beneficiaries will indeed be broad, and whether enough resources will be available for a significant effort. The answers to these questions depend largely on the kind and extent of popular participation in the programs.

²Thomas and Hook, Creating Rural Employment, p. 8.

In purely economic terms, a good case can be made for labor-intensive rural works. The internal rate of return for the projects on which data were available, ranged between 13.8 percent and 18.4 percent for irrigation and reforestation projects, with benefit-cost ratios of 2.0, 3.4 and 3.6 for road and irrigation projects.³ The multiplier effect for employment creation was significant. For every two and one half to five years of work put in on new construction (irrigation or land reclamation), one year of permanent employment would be created, and for reconstruction or rehabilitation (drainage and irrigation works), two years of employment would result from every one year invested in public works.⁴ Thomas and his associates conclude that although the number of cost-benefit studies is limited, they show "rural works can be productive in rigorous economic terms; if they become inefficient makework programs, it is as a result of poor planning and implementation."⁵

Decentralized Planning and Implementation

By their nature, a decentralized approach to rural public works makes the most sense. The structures to be built are dispersed over large areas. The labor force to be mobilized and employed comes from scattered communities and works on many sites. Detailed local information is needed for determining

³Ibid., p. 30.

⁴Ibid., p. 28.

⁵Ibid., p. 31.

the type of program needed and the specific activities to be supported.⁶ A strictly centralized approach is not viable, but the question remains of what kind of decentralization will be adopted. Thomas and Hook suggest the alternatives are bureaucratic, with project decisions and implementation carried out through existing departments, or participatory, with the public sharing in the decision-making through councils or local representative bodies.

The appropriate choice in a given country depends on the relative competence, honesty and staffing of local government and local branches of central ministries, as well as the desired degree of public participation. The authors feel that if local conditions permit, some participatory decentralization is highly desirable. A number of countries, including Bangladesh and Indonesia, have discovered unused and unrecognized capacity at the local level. It is important to develop and exploit these capabilities.⁷

The ILO team seeking to formulate a more equitable and efficient development strategy for the Philippines, concluded

⁶ Among the kinds of information needed are: (1) extent, location and seasonality of underemployment and unemployment to determine availability of labor, to plan the size, timing and location of the program; (2) economic and social characteristics of target groups, reasons for their unemployment, pattern of their non-agricultural activities and employment; (3) existence, location and condition of existing rural infrastructure; (4) administrative and technical competence, public and private, at local and intermediate levels; (5) nature of income and asset distribution (particularly land) in areas where rural works are planned, to predict distribution of benefits; and (6) density of population, incidence of unemployment by area, and labor supply response at given wage rates to determine whether sufficient numbers of workers will be available. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-16.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68

that neglect of the rural areas and failure to mobilize resources there for development were major impediments to growth. It emphasized the possibilities for productive, labor-intensive investment in rural infrastructure (roads, irrigation, storage facilities, and so forth), identifying strengthened local government "at the truly local level" as a "first priority," because it can be "the most efficient in terms of diagnosing local problems and needs."

Over-centralization of decision-making has, we believe been a major constraint on sustained rural growth in the past; many 'bargain' investments and programs have been passed over because of the inability and/or disinterest of higher levels of government in the design and implementation of policies in the rural sector.⁸

Complementing decentralized decision-making should be active, participatory local organization, as suggested by Krishna. He argues that, along with a major restructuring of existing administration, there needs to be effective organization within the poorest class; otherwise rural works programs "may further enrich the rural oligarchy and bureaucracy and increase inequity and tension in the countryside."⁹

An understandable fear is that if decisions are delegated to the local level, they may be monopolized by local elites, as discussed in Chapter 3. Yet centralized administrative approaches do not seem more effective. District officials in Maharashtra State of India reportedly kept project siting decisions

⁸Sharing in Development: A Programme for Employment, Equity and Growth for the Philippines (Geneva: International Labour Office, 1974), pp. 66-67.

⁹Raj Krishna, "Presidential Address to Indian Society of Agricultural Economics" (1973).

out of the hands of local panchayats because they feared project type and location would be dominated by the larger landlords. Yet an investigating team studying the program found, nevertheless, that the siting of percolation tanks systematically favored the large landholders.¹⁰ This finding is consistent with Hadden's study of centralized versus more participatory, decentralized decision-making on rural electrification in the state of Rajasthan. There, handing decision-making to local government bodies produced allocation of village hook-ups that better met pre-determined criteria of economic and agricultural efficiency, than did allocations made by the central bureaucracy, supposedly following only "technical" considerations.¹¹

Certainly, delegation of authority to local units controlled by members will have serious distortions; but if the government wishes equity in the effects of public works, this can be as well served by participatory decentralization as by centralized control. One requirement is that criteria and guidelines for local decision-making be well and clearly laid out. For example, the analysis by Thomas and associates shows certain kinds of rural works have a more favorable ratio of benefits accruing to laborers relative to landowners.¹² To get a more equitable

¹⁰Achyug Godbole, "'Productive' Relief Works for the Rich," Economic and Political Weekly (Bombay), April 28, 1973, p. 773.

¹¹Susan G. Hadden, Decentralization and Rural Electrification in Rajasthan, India (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1974).

¹²The benefits accruing to landowners under irrigation projects are about 3.5 times greater than those going to the laborers employed in the work. The range for different kinds of rural works, however, is from about 3.3 (for land reclamation) to 4.7 (for drainage), so emphasis could be put in guidelines or allocations of funding favoring the former over the latter. Thomas et al., "Employment and Development," Table IV-9, p. 110.

distribution of benefits, certain kinds of projects might not be allowed under the program, limits might be set on them, or payment for the work by the main beneficiaries might be required.¹³ Possible steps identified by Thomas and Hook for minimizing program distortion include: regular reporting and analysis of project decisions; inclusion in project descriptions of the land holding pattern in the areas to be benefited; fees or user charges where projects clearly benefit farmers whose land holdings exceed some minimum level; and adequate staff to investigate promptly allegations that undue influences are affecting project location decisions.¹⁴

The link between people's participation in decision-making and implementation comes through in a wide variety of cases. Lele reports on a water supply project in Kenya. The authorities did not trust local self-help organizations to do the work, so it was planned without them and begun with hired labor. When

¹³ Thomas and Hook report that in East Pakistan, irrigation projects were initially excluded from the World Program for five years, despite local demand. During this time, organization techniques and methods were tested, so that when such projects were put on the list of eligible ones, they were more appropriate. A contrary example is from West Pakistan, where the range of acceptable projects was very wide, from poultry raising to latrines and road construction, well beyond the technical capacity of the government to supervise and service. "The results were poor performance in employment creation, many projects that served private rather than public interests, and little central control of any sort over program results." Creating Rural Employment, pp. 78-79.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 105.

this proved very costly, the government tried to revert to voluntary labor, but at this point, the local people were unwilling to pick up the project on this basis. "Clearly," she says, "if the local people had been consulted more carefully during the planning stage, these problems in sequencing could have been dealt with more effectively."¹⁵ Experience in Nepal with construction of suspension bridges indicates the importance of involving local people in decision-making. A study funded by USAID/Nepal found that unsuccessful bridges had all been selected and planned without consulting local people. One particular district (Baglung) showed how much can be accomplished, on the other hand, by turning the planning and implementation over almost entirely to local communities, with the central government just providing materials not locally available.¹⁶ In their analysis, Thomas and Hook stress the involvement of rural people in decisions, and not just in providing labor for construction. In most programs, they say, it is desirable to allow local people to make decisions about project selection:

Villagers will know their needs and have a good idea of their capacities to implement projects. They will also have detailed knowledge of the local environment, such as high and low water areas, or the alignments for roads that will generate the most traffic. Involving the local community also has the important advantage of mobilizing local energies and interest behind the program. If it is 'their' project, the chances of

¹⁵ Uma Lele, The Design of Rural Development: Lessons from Africa (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1975), p. 148.

¹⁶ Trail Suspension Bridge Study, Part B, Vol. 1 (Interim Report) (Kathmandu: East Consultant Engineers, 1977); and Trail Suspension Bridge Study, Part A, Vol. 1 (Final Report) (Kathmandu: East Consultant Engineers, 1978).

success, of creating public involvement and of insuring continuing maintenance, all become much better.¹⁷

Issues Affecting Participation

This all makes good sense. But there are many specific problems in trying to plan and implement rural public works in a more participatory manner. The literature is not very large on this subject yet, but a number of issues can be raised and illuminated.

i. Scale of Projects:

Many agree that participation is more likely and more effective if the size of public works projects is kept small, or if large projects are subdivided into small sub-projects, decentralizing the implementation, if not necessarily the planning. Two examples from experience with Chinese methods of labor-intensive construction are instructive.

- (1) In Nepal, on a major highway being built with Chinese financial and technical assistance, the size of sub-contracts for earthmoving, putting in culverts and small bridges, and so on was only 10-20 percent that of the contracts let out by U.S., British, Indian and other donors. This meant, of course, that the highway had to have been planned in considerable detail (but there was also flexibility in adjusting the plans when local conditions warranted). It also meant that there had to be more technical supervision, with one supervisor per 1.5 kilometers compared with one per 6-7 kilometers for another donor. But supervision was then done on foot and more intensively, rather than from a vehicle.

¹⁷Thomas and Hook, Creating Rural Employment, p. 78. For analysis of the decentralized rural works program in Indonesia which provides for such local inputs to decision-making, see Richard Patten, Belinda Dapice and Walter Falcon. "An Experiment in Rural Employment Creation: Indonesia's Kabupaten Development Program" (Stanford University Food Research Institute, Stanford University, 1973); and Y.B. de Wit, "The Kabupaten Program," Bulletin of Indonesian Economic Studies, IX, 1 (1973), pp. 65-85.

The result of this approach was that local communities could and did undertake construction of the various segments of the road with their own tools and methods. The cost was lower, the work was completed more quickly than scheduled, and at an acceptable quality. Moreover, there were people in the area who could be called on or hired for maintenance because they knew the road and had the skills. Other donors who relied on more capital-intensive methods, employing large gangs of laborers (often brought in from outside the country), encountered many difficulties of cost, quality control and completion on schedule.¹⁸

- (2) In China, construction of the Red Flag Canal in Lin County required putting a 42-mile main canal through rugged mountains, with over 900 miles of main distribution channels. This was all done with local labor and supervisors, since the central government at that point refused to assist the project, which it judged too large and costly. Initially the local authorities tried to build the canal with masses of labor ("human ant hill" techniques, one might say), but this proved unmanageable. At that point, the task was broken down into many parts and these were given to the work teams from different communes. Some 39 million man-days were invested in the canal over nine years in this way, with remarkable results.¹⁹

One of the lessons for getting effective participation in public works is, then, that undertakings be of a size which can be both well comprehended and managed by local people. Where the project must be large, it can be clearly divided into tasks that can be delegated. The larger the project, the more people need to be

¹⁸ See report for the ILO, Comparative Evaluation of Road Construction Techniques in Nepal, Part III (Kathmandu: Centre for Economic Development and Administration, 1973).

¹⁹ This feat of construction with massive popular participation is written up in Peking Review, December 1 and 8, 1972, but the visual evidence of the film, "Red Flag Canal," is more impressive.

consulted in the initial decision to proceed with the project and in the design phase. Unless this is done, little participation can be expected in implementation.

ii. Use of Existing Social Organization:

When popular participation is talked about, the image conjured up is often that of "masses" toiling away, but experience shows that having "mass" participation is less effective than building on existing groups, and delegating work to them. This both produces better results and provides those participating with more personal satisfaction; the latter surely contributes to the former.

- (1) A report on bridge construction in Tanzania by community labor shows the advantages of working through social organizations where they can be involved. When this bridge project was started, too many workers showed up. They were divided into three units, each connected with a lineage, and one worked each day in rotation. This was better than having all trying to work at one time. When the supply of stones ran low, school was recessed for each child to bring two or three rocks during "outdoor activities period." Such innovation helped get the work done quickly.²⁰
- (2) In Sri Lanka, the Sarvodaya Shramadana movement has built up over the last 17 years, having begun in a single village. Now 600 villages are organized to make community improvements through voluntary labor. The work is undertaken in the context of local religious and cultural traditions, and meditation, singing, dance and story-telling. Local needs are discussed and identified with village leaders. In this way, tasks are done often in two to three days at minimal cost.²¹

In the examples cited in the previous section, this principle was also clear. The road in Nepal was constructed by labor groups, not labor gangs. These were often large families or

²⁰ James L. Brain, "A Bridge in Meru," Community Development Journal, 4, 1 (1969), pp. 17-23.

²¹ A.T. Ariyaratne, "Sarvodaya Shramadana in Sri Lanka," Development Digest, 1 (1976), pp. 87-90.

groups of relatives, working under the direction of one of their elders or respected members. Motivation or discipline were not major problems, since slacking off would disadvantage others whom they valued, in contrast to the atomistic milieu of a labor gang. The same was true in building the Red Flag Canal, as each brigade within the communes of the county sent groups to work for several months at a time, and rotated them, replacing them with another group of workers from the brigade. The groups were fed and equipped by their respective brigades, thus sharing the total cost broadly and effectively. Each already had an authority structure that could be used in communicating with workers, in maintaining work discipline, and in generating morale. We have already discussed in general terms the use of indigenous organizations (Chapter 2); such organizations seem particularly effective for getting participation in all phases of rural public works.

iii. Use of Indigenous Technology:

To the extent that the techniques and materials employed in rural works are familiar to local people, their participation in decision-making and implementation can be increased.

- (1) In constructing suspension bridges in Baglung district of Nepal, using local labor and materials produces bridges at one-tenth of the cost of government-built bridges. One of the keys is use of indigenous technology. Local people are skilled in stonework (and stone is a plentiful local material), whereas concrete is unfamiliar, and costly and difficult to transport into the mountains where bridges are needed. Local blacksmiths also know how to forge simple iron chain, which is used to suspend the bridges from cables. Only the cables need to be supplied by the government, and they are brought in by voluntary labor from the respective communities. The conventional, non- or minimally participatory bridge-building methods are both much slower and more expensive than with local participation

in decision-making and implementation.²²

- (2) In installing tubewells in Bangladesh, there have been several choices of technology. One technology, developed at Comilla, has employed labor to sink the wells with hammering or water jets. The diesel pump used is locally-manufactured, as are the brass pipes and screens. The employment and training effects are much greater than for the more capital-intensive method adopted for the most part by the government (with foreign assistance). It uses drilling rigs and imported diesel pumps and materials. The cost per cusec of water delivered is several times higher with this latter method. There is little local participation in either decision-making or implementation. Moreover, because the rigs cannot move about very well during much of the year due to flooding, work is restricted to 9 of the 16 provinces, limiting the distribution of benefits.²³
- (3) In building the Red Flag Canal, the people of Lin County had no outside technical assistance, and had to rely on technicians, overseers and skilled workers from within their own communities. In the process of construction they had to improvise designs for aqueducts, bridges and culverts, to devise appropriate earthmoving and tunnelling techniques, and to invent a way of making their own cement, but this was done successfully.

²² See East Consultant Engineers, Trail Suspension Bridge Studies. A report on the Baglung system is given by Prachanda Pradhan in the first issue of the Rural Development Participation Review, published by the Rural Development Committee at Cornell University under its cooperative agreement with USAID.

²³ See John W. Thomas, "The Choice of Technology for Irrigation Tube-Wells in East Pakistan," in The Choice of Technology in Developing Countries: Some Cautionary Tales, edited by C. Peter Timmer (Cambridge: Harvard Institute for International Development, 1975), pp. 31-57.

Clearly advanced technology must be used at times, providing little opportunity for participation by the local people. Digging wells where the water table is several thousand feet down, as in parts of Yemen, requires capital-intensive methods that leave little scope for participation, except in benefits. Where these are great enough and broadly distributed, a lack of participation in the other aspects of public works construction is certainly justified. But government projects frequently tend to select more complex and "modern" technologies, for reasons Thomas discusses in his Bangladesh tubewell case study. These technologies are not only often less efficient in using the country's scarce resources, but preclude the kind of participation more and more desired.

iv. building Capacity:

Too often in planning public works, all thought is focused on specific projects, and not on developing local capacity to continue works construction and to maintain them. Participation and capacity for public works should be developed together, as Thomas' Bangladesh study indicates. There the goal of constructing 20,000 tubewells in five years could be attained by putting in 4,000 a year with capital-intensive means, or by starting more slowly with labor-intensive means. The advantage of the more participatory route, which involved people in decision-making and enlisted their labor and skills, was that by the fifth year, 16,000 tubewells could be installed through dispersed operations using local technology. (The trajectory of building capacity would be 1,000 wells the first year, and with training the number could accelerate: 2,000 the second year, 4,000 the third, 8,000 the fourth, and so forth.) Beyond the five-year project, many more tubewells could be put in at lower cost than with the method the government used. The drilling rigs would be worn out within five years, and since so few people would have been involved, there would be no local capacity for repair and

maintenance, which are neglected in many public works programs. If people have helped to decide on the infrastructure facility and have helped to construct it, they have a stake (and some know-how) which is missing in the non-participatory approach.

v. Involvement of Women:

Work on infrastructure construction and maintenance is heavy work, but need not discriminate against women's participation in the various phases of planning and implementation. If local people are making decisions, they can make appropriate exemptions where the labor may be too taxing. In both the Nepal and China cases of construction cited above, women participated actively.

- (1) A road and bridge project in Sierra Leone found that women were a major "untapped resource." Women leaders were appointed for each section of the work, and they decided how to organize the activity. "This they did with considerable enthusiasm and efficiency on account of being involved in a communal project." To solve the shortage of tools, women brought their own baskets and shovels, and it was discovered that on the days that women worked, there was a far greater turnout of men.²⁴
- (2) In Bangladesh, it had been assumed that women would not be willing or permitted to participate in works projects because purdah was still widely observed in this Muslim country. But during acute food shortages in 1974-75, the local government, together with UNICEF, hired "destitute" women to carry out agricultural projects. This involved establishing small gardens, but also digging irrigation and drainage channels, heavy work. When the crisis was over and the project was scheduled to terminate, women demanded that it be continued and expanded. Since then the program has steadily grown and been augmented to

²⁴P.S. Mould, "Rural Improvement by Communal Labour in the Bombali District of Sierra Leone: A Case Study," Journal of Local Administration Overseas, 5, 1 (1966), pp. 29-46.

include functional education.²⁵

Women should not be exploited any more than men, in carrying out rural public works, but there is every reason to involve them on similar terms.

vi. Use of Self-Help Methods:

"Self-help" in construction of rural works has generated a great deal of enthusiasm, though more from government planners than rural people themselves. When planners speak of "participation in development," they are often thinking of contributed labor to projects they have decided on. Experience has been rather mixed, since often, local people do not appreciate what the planners propose and are unwilling to work on it. Frequently, they are expected to work at a time when they have other, more pressing demands for labor. At the other extreme, are self-help construction projects undertaken entirely by rural communities, such as school-building in Kenya's harambee scheme, which exceed the government's capacity to staff and maintain. Such efforts have led to considerable "waste."²⁶ The implications are that participatory rural works are best undertaken with cooperation between the local community and the central government.

The experience in Nepal's Baglung district is instructive on this point. There, the local panchayats indicated what bridges were needed to complete a network of transportation throughout the district, and what they would contribute to construction. The district panchayat then determined about half of the 118

²⁵ Thomas and Hook, Creating Rural Employment, pp. 57-58.

²⁶ See Robert Chambers, Managing Rural Development: Ideas and Experience from East Africa (Uppsala: Scandanavian Institute of African Studies, 1974), pp. 102-103; also Frank W. Holmquist, "Toward a Political Theory of Rural Self-Help Development in Africa," Rural Africana, 18 (1972), pp. 60-79.

proposed bridges to be built in the first phase. In deciding this, it looked at the urgency of the need, the size of population served, the willingness of the community to furnish labor and materials, and the concentration of disadvantaged ethnic groups. At the same time it tried to get a good distribution of bridges built across the district. The virtue of a comprehensive plan was that those persons not assisted in phase I could have reasonable expectation of getting served later. This created a greater sense of fairness than when just a few bridges are done at a time, and thus more total resources could be mobilized.

The district construction committee was headed by a member of parliament and included district panchayat members as well as recognized community leaders. Each bridge to be built had a project committee, which drew up plans and mobilized and supervised labor. These worked through the local panchayat, if it was willing to assume the responsibility, or through committees of informal local leaders, if they were better able to get the job done. This made for more flexible, task-oriented administration than if the work were always done through the formal structures -- an interesting lesson, since construction time was half to a third that required by government departments working with panchayats in the usual procedure, and as noted, construction costs were a fraction as much. All unskilled labor was contributed by the respective communities, with skilled workers -- carpenters, masons, blacksmiths (incidentally, usually from the lower castes) -- being paid.

The question of payment is an important one. Reliance upon voluntary labor is often a form of exploitation, since it is usually the lower classes who build the road or dig the ditches for water supply, while the higher status members of the community abstain, or make a nominal financial contribution.

Seldom are contributions according to "ability to pay."²⁷ The conclusion Thomas and associates draw is that market wages should be paid to persons engaged in public works, unless they are themselves beneficiaries of the construction, in which case a lower than market rate can be justified.²⁸ If they are the sole beneficiaries, voluntary labor may be reasonable, or some system of compensation as in Baglung may be devised, paying skilled labor and getting unskilled labor contributed free.

The form of payment is worth considering. The most common pattern in rural works programs is daily wage rates. But experience in a number of countries suggests that piece rates are more effective for getting work done, but also for fostering a sense of fairness among participants about remuneration. When fixed time rates are employed, the possibility, indeed the probability, is that some persons will slacken off, and this has a snowballing effect. The piece rates should, if possible,

²⁷ A study by John Cohen of an AID-supported water project in Ethiopia showed that not only did the rural poor contribute most of the labor to dig the trenches and lay pipes for the system, but once it was finished they had to pay for water when they had previously gotten it free. This is reported in "Rural Change in Ethiopia: A Study of Land, Elites, Power and Values in Chilalo Awraja" (Unpublished Ph.D. diss., University of Colorado, 1973), pp. 459-464. A similar problem in Nepal, where the poor are often expected to do most of the work in community shramdan (self-help) projects, thereby discouraging labor contributions because they are unfair, is commented on in Norman Uphoff, "Rural Public Works," in A New Dimension in Nepal's Development, edited by Prachanda Pradhan (Kathmandu: Centre for Economic Development and Administration, 1973).

²⁸ Thomas and Hook, Creating Rural Employment, pp. 92-93.

be fixed by joint agreement between the program agency and the working participants.²⁹

vii. Choice of Projects:

As suggested above, different kinds of public works projects have different distributions of benefit. It is true of these projects as of most others, that persons who already have assets benefit more than persons without any. Roads, irrigation, drainage, and similar public works obviously are of more value to landowners with produce to sell, than to persons who have only their labor for gaining income. In general, the advantaged classes or groups use schools, clinics, and other services more extensively. Still, if new facilities are not created, the poorest groups may have even fewer employment opportunities and less access to public and social services. So even if the benefits are not equally distributed, one can justify certain investment in infrastructure as a means of helping the poor. This said, the pattern of benefits accruing from new investment is still of concern, and restrictions may be placed on certain kinds with demonstrably inequitable distribution (at least they should not be undertaken with public funding), or limits on the amount of such projects might be set and enforced, or those who benefit most might be required to pay a fair share.

viii. Full Disclosure of Financing:

Corruption is possible in any decentralized, participatory scheme of public works. The question is whether there will be more corruption with this approach than with the alternative;

²⁹This last conclusion comes from experience with the Chinese methods of road construction in Nepal. See ILO, Comparative Evaluation of Road Construction Techniques. On the efficacy of piece rates vs. time rates, see also W. Graeme Donovan, Rural Works and Employment: Description and Preliminary Analysis of a Land Army Project in Mysore State, India (Cornell University: Department of Agricultural Economics, 1973), p. 9. Workers interviewed reported that they preferred piece rates. In addition to fairness, they make possible higher income for more work performed.

whether petty diversion of funds on small-scale projects will total more than the "commission" commonly siphoned off large, capital-intensive ones. One cannot answer this question in general, only in specific cases. Based particularly on a comparison of experience in West and East Pakistan, Thomas and Associates recommend "maximum use" of public information and disclosure to develop public interest and support for the program, but also to reduce the chances for graft and fiscal misappropriation. Such information, they find, is the most effective means of ensuring that officials do not misuse rural works program funds.³⁰ This amounts to what the ILO team in the Philippines called the "goldfish bowl" approach to curbing corruption in a decentralized system. Rather than have an army of auditors controlled from above, where corruption can also cover up improprieties, it appears wiser to let the public know all the details of cost and expenditure.³¹ The Chinese road-building project in Nepal insisted on paying work group leaders in the presence of at least five of the workers, so all would know how much was paid and how it should be distributed. Hadden's study of rural electrification in Rajasthan,

³⁰Ibid., p. 91. The decision-process in West Pakistan was much less open and participatory, and got into more contractor, as opposed to community, construction, with attendant diversion of funds. See S.J. Burki, "Interest Group Involvement in West Pakistan's Rural Works Program," Public Policy, 19, 1 (1971), pp. 167-206. In East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), at least through the first 6-8 years, with planning and implementation done by thana and local councils, there was reportedly much less corruption. See John Woodward Thomas, "The Rural Public Works Program in East Pakistan," in Development Policy II: The Pakistan Experience, edited by W. Falcon and G. Papanek (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 186-236.

³¹ILO, Sharing in Development, pp. 68-69.

also found less illegitimate allocation of village connections to the electrical grid when decisions were made publicly by local government bodies.

ix. Simplified and Standardized Procedures:

If the government wishes to have fuller local participation in decision-making and implementation, it needs to give some attention to streamlining the administration of public works. Many rural leaders are barely literate or illiterate, but are intelligent and diligent, and as important, enjoy the confidence of their fellow villagers. Many local craftsmen are skilled in construction, but cannot read a blueprint or meet exact specification. If there are no people trained in accountancy, bookkeeping methods must be simple and easily understood. In fact, such modification can be introduced. Thomas and Hook conclude:

Grass roots knowledge is available and can be utilized in a rural works program, particularly if it is organized on a participatory, decentralized basis. An innovative approach, coupled with a continuing effort to simplify and standardize procedures, can locate many substitutes for scarce technical skills and stretch the available talent pool to permit the most rapid expansion of implementation consistent with minimum acceptable quality standards.³²

x. Foreign Assistance:

Foreign donors need to consider how their own regulations and procedures make participatory approaches to rural works construction more difficult. In the survey of experience in 14 countries, Thomas and associates found that 6 of the 7 most centralized, and by implication, least participatory, public works programs were foreign-assisted.³³ Unfortunately, many

³²Thomas and Hook, Creating Rural Employment, p. 54.

³³Ibid., pp. 68-69.

aid officials value what is "modern," as do LDC administrators and technicians, attitudes which buttress the procurement and accountability procedures favoring capital-intensive methods, as Thomas shows in the case of tubewells in Bangladesh.³⁴ One official reportedly stated, upon seeing Bangladesh farmers sinking a well in a "sea of mud," using water jet methods to sink the shaft, "you can't build a good well that way." Yet the cost-analysis figures showed that many more wells of acceptable quality could be installed this way with a given amount of money, and perhaps more important, such wells could be maintained by local people with their own skills and resources. The same could not be said of the more "sophisticated" wells installed with foreign credits. For more local participation in rural works, international donors will have to be willing to tailor their rules and procedures, just as LDC governments must do.

Other questions could be raised: whether hiring should be restricted according to some "needs" test, or whether it should be on a first-come, first-hired basis; whether or how local overseers and artisans can be used, instead of more highly-trained government engineers; how to deal with efforts to inject political considerations into public works programs. This chapter has highlighted some of the major concerns in following a more participatory approach to rural works, but obviously more extensive analysis and more comparative research on methods and experience is appropriate. Especially given the probable emphasis on extension of irrigation works, discussed in Chapter 9, and the growing need for resource conservation measures (reforestation, soil protection, and so forth), this area is one to which donors and LDCs government should devote more attention and resources.

³⁴Thomas, "The Choice of Technology for Irrigation Tubewells in East Pakistan."

Chapter Twelve

EMERGING GENERALIZATIONS

In this brief conclusion we shall not summarize the issues and lines of analysis laid out in the preceding chapters. We would like to reemphasize, however, that this is very much a state-of-the-art paper, intended to stimulate research and practice in the field of rural development. It is not intended as a bibliographic essay, though many of the most important works related to participation have been cited and their ideas presented in the text. We and our colleagues are currently pursuing a number of topics flowing from the analysis in our earlier monograph, summarized in Chapter 2, and this state-of-the-art paper.¹ Based on what we now know, we set forth the following major points.

1. Participation is not a single thing. It is rather, a rubric or heading under which a number of distinct, though related activities can be analyzed and promoted.
2. Participation for development is not the same thing as participation in politics. The voting, campaigning, lobbying, and so on associated with institutionalized politics may be part of developmental participation, but more and different things should be considered with regard to participation in development.
3. Participation is not just an end in itself, but it is more than a means. The debate whether participation is to be regarded as an end or a means is fruitless, as people can

¹This work is being done under a four year cooperative agreement between the Rural Development Committee, Cornell University, and the Office of Rural and Administrative Development, USAID. For more information contact the project director, Norman T. Uphoff.

consider it either or both. Pronouncing it one or the other will not end what is essentially an ideological dispute.² Participation might best be viewed as a proximate but instrumental goal in development, much as employment is viewed in contemporary development strategy.³ It is valued mostly for other benefits associated with it, but at the same time, has value in its own right. People who are simply provided income without jobs tend to feel less fulfilled and satisfied as human beings. Similarly, "make-work" participation, provided for its own sake, has little to commend it. But on the other hand, for people to get benefits without any personal role in their creation or acquisition is not generally held to be satisfactory. We conclude on both normative and practical grounds that a middle position is justified in the debate whether participation is an end or a means. It appears to be more than just a means, but at the same time it is not simply an end which is always good in itself.⁴

²One of the most extended arguments that participation is a necessary end is made by Denis Goulet, who argues that "development is liberation," a view which sees participation as an end that promotes consciousness and less dependence. The Cruel Choice. A New Concept in the Theory of Development (New York: Atheneum, 1971).

³We would like to thank Erik Thorbecke of Cornell University for suggesting this analogy.

⁴We find useful the distinction made by Butterfield and Campbell in a recent paper. They would identify participation in benefits on a broad and increasing basis as the goal of most development programs. To this end they suggest that participation in decision-making, implementation and evaluation are necessary and useful to increasing participation in benefits. They say: "Our concern as developers is with weighting the importance of these other kinds of participations as a means to reaching our goal. It is the job of politicians and statesmen to determine to what extent different kinds of participation are

4. Participation is not a panacea. While its neglect has been often devastating to project results, simply striving to introduce it will not necessarily make projects successful. In many instances, participation appears to be necessary but not sufficient for good results. There are many reasons why getting productive participation started is difficult, and why the results are not always those intended. Having "more" participation is not always "better," as its value depends on what kind of participation, under what circumstances, by and for whom.

5. Participation should not be separated from administration. Distrust of bureaucracy has led some to argue that only the people can help themselves. The assumptions of the "populist front" are as unreflective as those of its opposite, the paternalistic position. While popular initiative and support are crucial, administration creates preconditions for participation, providing balance and needed information.⁵

also important as ends in themselves." Samuel H. Butterfield and J. Gabriel Campbell, "The Meaning, Value and Implications of a Participatory Approach to Development," Seminar on People's Participation in Rural Development in Nepal (Kathmandu: Agricultural Projects Service Center, August 1978). Butterfield is director of the USAID Mission in Nepal.

⁵This is the conclusion of John D. Montgomery whose persuasive article on land tenure reform and participation has provided much support for populist proponents (see footnote 8, below). In a forthcoming article he stresses the important role a progressive bureaucracy can play. John D. Montgomery, "The Populist Front in Rural Development: Shall We Eliminate the Bureaucrats and Get on With the Job?," Public Administration Review, (forthcoming, January 1979).

Participation may be required to restrain and guide bureaucracy, but civil servants may be necessary to help create, nourish, and even counterbalance biased participation. The fallacy that planners and policy makers are all-wise is no less a problem than the view that all wisdom rests with the people. Progressive administrators can help insure that participation is broad based and equitable, that linkages to other areas and institutions occur, that limited financial resources and management capabilities are augmented, and that vital technical information is available. In this regard, the orientations and perspectives of civil servants appear critical. If their bureaucratic environment is not infused with participatory behavior they can hardly be expected to understand the value of participation or ways to nurture it among groups of people they are charged with serving.⁶

6. Participation can be both frustrating and helpful. Participation implies going at the peoples' pace and can be forced only at the cost of some of its benefits. Hence at times it can frustrate logistical design, donor schedules, and project evaluations. Yet, as we hope this monograph illustrates, its benefits can offset these delays. Beyond this, participatory strategies further strain already limited government and donor administrative capacity. Rural development projects targeted at the poor majority are difficult enough to design and manage without the increased burden of promoting meaningful participation. The insight of Chambers that "simple is optimal" can

⁶For some interesting thoughts on this see: Theodore H. Thomas and Derick W. Brinkerhoff, Devolutionary Strategies for Development Administration (Washington, D.C.: American Society for Public Administration, SICCA Series No. 8, 1978), and Derick W. Brinkerhoff, "Inside Public Bureaucracy: Empowering Managers to Empower Clients" (Draft Manuscript, Harvard Center for International Affairs, November 1, 1978).

help to limit the effects of this constraint.⁷ And involving local people in project design, implementation, and evaluation can minimize the problems created by lack of administrative capacity.

7. There is a connection among different kinds of participation. This relationship has not been well demonstrated, in part because participation has not been widespread in rural development, and in part because participation has not been analyzed and studied in a disaggregated way. But fragmentary evidence suggests in projects ex ante participation, such as in decision-making, is related to ex post participation in benefits.⁸

⁷ Robert Chambers, "Project Selection for Poverty-Focused Rural Development: Simple is Optimal," World Development, 6, 2 (1978), pp. 209-219.

⁸ It is apparent that one should expect connections among the different kinds of participation, yet there have been few empirical studies that begin to sort out and establish such relationships. There is one innovative analysis of the linkage between benefits from land reform and the manner of its implementation (and decision-making). This was done by John D. Montgomery using 30 case studies prepared for USAID's Spring Review of Land Reform in 1970. This analysis showed a strong association between the degree of decentralization in decision-making and implementation, including more local participation, and the frequency with which tenants got benefits in terms of increased income, security and political power. "The Allocation of Authority in Land Reform Programs: A Comparative Study of Administrative Processes and Outputs," Administrative Science Quarterly, 17, 1 (1972), pp. 62-75.

A comparative study of 36 rural development projects intended to benefit small farmers in Africa and Latin America, done by Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI) in 1974-75, showed similar association between project success and small farmer involvement in decision-making and resource commitment to the project. Development Alternatives, Inc., Strategies for Small Farmer Development: An Empirical Study of Rural Development Projects (Washington, D.C.: DAI, May 1975), and the reanalysis

This seems especially true of the poor majority. Relying on paternalistic approaches, neglecting the organization and mobilization of poor people to act on their own behalf, seems to produce limited results. We would be among the first to say, however, that more work needs to be done to understand these relationships. We need more information to be able to specify what kinds of participation under what conditions produce the desired results.

8. Participation even in "developmental" terms is inescapably "political." Broader participation is likely to change the use and allocation of resources in society. Indeed, this is often why participation is advocated. People make wide-ranging value judgments about changes in society's resource distribution patterns, however, and these differences should be openly acknowledged. If anyone refuses to recognize and accept this aspect of participation, his or her cooperation in participatory development approaches is doubtful. We are not saying that participation is always political, in the sense of adversely affecting the government. Indeed, support of participation can have the opposite effect of building a stronger political base.

As our efforts continue we will develop additional generalizations, and reevaluate, expand and develop those set forth here. At present our overall conclusion is that participation is possible and, under many conditions, desirable to achieve the development goals set by LDC governments and development agencies. It can be difficult to promote and have unpredictable results. The knowledge base to work from is not yet consolidated. But there is enough experience and theory so that incorporating more elements of participation into development strategies is

of DAI data by Iqbal Sobhan, The Planning and Implementation of Rural Development Projects: An Empirical Analysis (Report prepared for AID under contract AID/CM/ta-147-533, December, 1976) which confirms the DAI findings).

feasible and appropriate.

Reasons for these tentative but emerging conclusions have been examined. As a state-of-the-art paper, neither the analysis supporting these generalizations, nor the explanation of numerous issues specific to projects, can be considered conclusive. This monograph is a beginning rather than a summary of answers to questions about rural development participation. The state of knowledge is not as advanced as the importance of the subject warrants. The theoretical and empirical underpinnings of more participatory approaches to rural development have not been consolidated within any of the relevant disciplines, and in fact, a synthesis will have to transcend them anyway. We should be better able to deal with many of the questions about applied participatory strategies when work under the cooperative agreement is further along, when we will have been able to consider in greater detail and with more comparative perspective, the experience in specific countries and projects. At this point, we have tried to assess where thinking based on research and practice has arrived, drawing on work already done. We hope this has helped define the field of concern, so that others' efforts can contribute further to advancing the state of knowledge.

Appendix One

PARTICIPATION AND DEVELOPMENT: FROM POINT FOUR TO THE CONGRESSIONAL MANDATE

Participation and Development: Changing Views

Questions about the relationship between participation and social and human development have a long history in political and social theory.¹ Conceptions of development have changed a great deal in recent decades, however, owing to improvements in technological possibilities and infrastructure, as well as to changes in social organization and human aspirations. This has sparked new interest among politicians and administrators, as well as academicians, in the role of participation in economic growth and social and political change.

Though the following characterization is simplified, we think it represents the recent evolution of thinking about participation in development. When the U.S., and other "more developed" countries, became concerned about problems of "underdevelopment" following World War II, they focused on differences in the level of technology. A "technology gap" between the more and less developed countries was perceived. As embodied in what came to be known as Point Four, foreign assistance was conceived as filling this gap through technical assistance and transfer of technology. The requisite participation was adoption of the new technology. This assumed that the technology would invariably be more productive, an often incorrect assumption. Rather than examine whether the new technology was indeed appropriate and productive, social

¹See for instance, Carol Pateman, Participation and Democratic Theory (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 1-44.

scientists and practitioners all too often tried to explain why people in LDCs did not adopt it. Issues of people's participation in development were commonly framed in terms of "traditionalism," contrasted with "modernity." Non-participation was attributed to people's "traditional values" and "resistance to modernity," concepts by now thoroughly disputed.²

In the 1960s, the focus of development efforts and foreign assistance began to shift to resources, and theorists analyzed various "resource gaps," between government revenue and expenditure, between exports and imports, between savings and investment. Investment in modern capital formation was regarded as the crucial ingredient for development, and the corresponding participation required from the people was conceived in terms of resource contributions. They were to pay taxes, consume domestic products, produce more for export, save and invest, and hold down their consumption. This approach to participation was hardly one to be enthusiastically approved by the majority of citizens. Indeed, the lack of public support was seen as grounds for excluding popular participation in decision-making on the argument this would increase demands and consumption, thereby thwarting growth.

Both these technology and resource based theories of development are essentially capital-centered, and imply a passive role for the majority of people, vesting all crucial decision-making authority in the few who are highly trained technologically and

²See Reinhard Bendix, "Tradition and Modernity Reconsidered," Comparative Studies in Society and History, IX, 3 (1967), pp. 292-346; Joseph R. Gusfield, "Tradition and Modernity: Misplaced Polarities in the Study of Social Change," American Journal of Sociology, LXXII, 4 (1967), pp. 251-362; Lloyd and Susanne Rudolph, The Modernity of Tradition: Political Development in India (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967); Alejandro Portes, "Modernity and Development: A Critique," Studies in Comparative International Development, 7, 3 (1973), pp. 247-273.

skilled in managing national resource flows. There were, however, two important approaches to rural development during the 1950s and 1960s -- community development and animation rurale -- that aimed at mobilizing local people's participation. These are discussed and assessed at some length in Chapter 1. Here we need only note that they both held narrow views of participatory activities and have been judged largely ineffective in transforming rural communities.

As scholars and administrators reviewed nearly two decades of experience with development efforts, in the latter 1960s, a considerable revision of thinking emerged. Among the conclusions reached, was that there appeared to be a critical "organization gap" in LDCs.³ Relations in most countries between national centers and rural communities were truncated, thus stunting development potential and response. All too often, the few existing linkages were only one-way, top-down and extractive, in keeping with prevailing development theory, rather than cooperative and mutually supportive. The emerging new approach to development put participation into a more active and complete role, which we will be considering here. The greater concern with the use of labor as an abundant resource, with greater employment generation and with the distribution of benefits, was markedly different from the development theory emphasizing technology and physical capital formation, which relegated popular participation to a

³See Norman T. Uphoff and Milton J. Esman, Local Organization in Rural Development: Analysis of Asian Experience (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1974).

derivative role.⁴ This newly evolved approach will be helpful as long as it builds on past experience. Organization and participation alone are not sufficient. Development rests on at least three reinforcing foundations: technology, capital, and organization.

Political Participation

Aside from experiments like community development and animation rurale, when participation was considered in the social sciences during the 1950s and 1960s, what was usually meant was

⁴There emerged during the latter 1960s another explanation of underdevelopment known as "dependency theory," associated with the work of Gunder Frank, Amin and others. This theory stressed the "power gap" between "metropolitan" countries and the LDCs, with attendant exploitation and stagnation in the latter. They constituted the "periphery" of a world economic system which was structured by international capitalism and imposed "neo-colonist" relationships on the dependent Third World. This theory is still much disputed, passionately advanced by advocates and staunchly resisted by critics. Some of the latter resist it because of its political and economic implications, others because its empirical foundation is not well established. It is descriptively appealing but substantiation is made difficult by certain circularities, as analyzed by Thomas Weisskopf, Dependence as an Explanation of Underdevelopment: A Critique (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Center for Research on Economic Development, Discussion Paper No. 65, February, 1977).

This question cannot be resolved in a state-of-the-art-paper. We find some merit in the theory and considerable value in the issues it raises. In our view, however, we find it too monolithic, regarding class revolution as the only useful kind of participation for development. While there are some valid grounds for this position, especially in countries where national power holders and their extra-national supporters are resistant to development which benefits the broad majority, we see a range of possible productive participation in most countries. If revolution is the only hope for development, there is little prospect for much development in the foreseeable future. In this paper, we are examining ways in which the range of participation can be expanded and thus have not incorporated dependency theory, though we think all development students and practitioners should be aware of its tenets and its arguments even if the theory is not fully accepted. The alternative to expanding the range of participation may be the participatory strategy recommended by dependency theorists.

political participation, activities centered around electoral and other decision-making processes. There was also some concern with what was called "social participation,"⁵ but neither focus encompassed what might be called development participation. Social science theory regarded different levels of political participation -- voting, organizational membership, and the like -- as a consequence of development or as characteristic of different kinds of political systems.⁶ As long as participation was defined operationally in terms of voting, membership, office holding, financial contributions and other activities relating to the workings of a (presumably liberal democratic) political system, and as long as it was treated essentially as a dependent variable, it was not really relevant to development.⁷

The prevailing view was that political participation would increase as development proceeded. Probably the most important work along these lines was by Almond and Verba.⁸ They found that

⁵See Donald G. Hay, "A Scale for the Measurement of Social Participation of Rural Households," Rural Sociology Review, XX (1948), pp. 431-438; and J.M. Foskett, "Social Structure and Social Participation," American Sociological Review, XX (1955), pp. 431-438; also the application to India by P.C. Deb, "Socio-Cultural Correlates of Community Participation," Man In India, 49 (1969), pp. 259-266. It was used essentially as a descriptive concept not applied to development concerns.

⁶Perhaps the most influential work on this was S.M. Lipset, Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics (Garden City: Doubleday, 1960).

⁷For a review of the literature in this regard, see Lester Milbrath, Political Participation (Chicago: Aldine, 1965); Robert R. Alford and Roger Friedland, "Political Participation and Public Policy," in Annual Review of Sociology, edited by Alex Inkeles (Palo Alto: Annual Reviews, Inc., 1975), pp. 429-479.

⁸Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba, The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations (Boston: Little, Brown, 1963).

citizen participation was greater in the U.S. and Great Britain than in Germany, Italy and Mexico. These two countries happened also to be the most advanced economically and educationally. A "participant" political culture was seen as growing out of economic and social development, as roles became specialized and persons became oriented to the inputs and outputs of government. That an active citizenry would result was also argued on the basis of cross-national analysis by Deutsch.⁹ He had found that political activity and demands increased as a concomitant of such factors as economic growth, spread of mass communications, and occupational mobility. There was thought to be a bundle of orientations and actions associated with "traditional" society, which would be replaced by a new, more participatory set with the advent of "modernization."¹⁰

This theory fit very conveniently with the prevailing economic development theory, stressing technology transfer and capital formation. These instrumentalities of development could be wielded only by a highly educated ruling elite, able to understand advanced technology, to formulate national development plans, and to manage the fiscal manipulations which would accelerate capital formation. The "big push" for development was to be made possible by the "big squeeze" put on the majority. What were seen as the requirements of economic development, justified a "strong" state in which popular participation, unless controlled by the governing elite, was an unnecessary luxury and quite possibly an impediment to increasing the GNP. Lacking technological

⁹Karl W. Deutsch, "Social Mobilization and Political Development," American Political Science Review, IV (1961), pp. 493-514.

¹⁰The most influential statement on this was by Daniel Lerner, The Passing of Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East (Glencoe: Free Press, 1958).

sophistication and having a strong desire for improved living standards like those of the elite, the majority was either to be mesmerized by charismatic leadership into accepting the dictates of "modernization," or to be kept in check by institutional channels controlled from above. This would amount to "guided" participation or even de-participation.¹¹

Such views were, it should be made clear, premised on the theory that development was largely induced by capital resources, with planning a matter of maximizing the stock of investable funds and then of allocating them optimally among sectors. Since agriculture was seen as a low-productivity sector, where peasants were thought unable or unwilling to save, investment in agriculture was to be less than that put into industry and infrastructure. One might argue that this pattern, which Lipton characterizes as "urban bias,"¹² was possible only because the rural areas had been

¹¹For an analysis of the political and administrative requirements of the prevailing economic theories of development, see Warren F. Lichman and Ravindra C. Bhargava, "Balanced Thought and Economic Growth," Economic Development and Cultural Change, 13 (1966), pp. 385-399. Some of the leading exponents of such political strategies were David E. Apter, The Politics of Modernization (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965); Samuel P. Huntington, Political Order in Changing Societies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968); and Gunnar Myrdal, Asian Drama, 3 vols. (New York: Pantheon, 1968), who argued that "soft states" were incapable of producing development. On de-participation, see Fred M. Hayward, "Political Participation and Its Role in Development: Some Observations Drawn from the African Contest," Journal of Developing Areas, 7, 4 (1973), pp. 591-612; and Nelson Kasfir, "Departicipation and Political Development in Black African Politics," Studies in Comparative International Development, 9, 3 (1974), pp. 3-25. (The latter endorses this approach, while the former contends participation for development was not really given a chance.)

¹²See Michael Lipton, Why Poor People Stay Poor: Urban Bias in World Development (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1977).

effectively disenfranchised. It is instructive that an extensive analysis of political participation done under the auspices of USAID, in furtherance of its mandate under Title IX, could have concluded that having either more or less participation was likely to contribute to political instability, with attendant adverse implications for economic development.¹³ This conclusion may have derived from misspecifications of both "participation" and "development." Certainly, economic development theory has been undergoing considerable change since the late 1960s. But participation theory has unfortunately lagged behind, being largely fixed on a fairly narrow view of political participation.¹⁴

Development Participation

Around the turn of the decade, more and more economists came to challenge the prevailing view that capital was the prime

¹³See Samuel P. Huntington and Joan M. Nelson, No Easy Choice: Political Participation in Developing Countries (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976). This book summarized a comparative study of political participation in LDCs done for the Title IX Office and completed in 1973. It suggested that both "populist" and "technocratic" strategies would increase demands and instability, leading respectively to a participation implosion or explosion. Huntington's view of participation is somewhat more positive than in his 1968 book, Political Order, but still he reaches an essentially negative conclusion about its contribution to development.

¹⁴On this, see the review article by Mitchell Seligson and John Booth, "Political Participation in Latin America: An Agenda for Research," Latin American Research Review, XI, 3 (1976), pp. 95-120. Also Leonard Binder, "Review Essay: Political Participation and Political Development," American Journal of Sociology, LXXXIII, 3 (1977), pp. 751-760; and Robert M. Salisbury, "Research on Political Participation," American Journal of Political Science, XIX, 2 (1975), pp. 323-342.

mover in development.¹⁵ They stressed the productive utilization of labor, as LDCs' most abundant resource, as a way to get economic growth which was more socially efficient but also more equitably distributed. The dominant role of advanced technology was modified to emphasize "appropriate" technology, which if not always smallest in scale was more manageable by the majority. Instead of relying on top-down planning, more attention was given decentralized, local approaches to development. In this theoretical and practical context, popular participation becomes as important as it was peripheral when capital formation occupied center stage. Still, the impetus for concern with participation came not from economists or political scientists in academia, so much as from development practitioners and members of Congress. To some extent, the politicians were more sensitive than the academics to events in China, Cuba, Vietnam, and other countries where popularly supported guerrilla movements in the countryside had been critical to major political shifts in world politics. A plausible argument is that the new emphasis on rural development, green revolution, popular participation, and basic needs grew out of concern with counter-insurgency. The role of participation and the need to control and shape the "green uprising"¹⁶ is seen in

¹⁵See Dudley Seers, "The Meaning of Development," International Development Review, 11, 4 (1969), pp. 2-6; Keith Marsden, "Towards a Synthesis of Economic Growth and Social Justice," International Labour Review, 100, 5 (1969), pp. 389-412; Mahbub ul Haq, "Employment in the 1970's: A New Perspective," International Development Review, 13, 4 (1971), pp. 8-12; and Edgar Owens and Robert Shaw, Development Reconsidered (Lexington: D.C. Heath, 1972). On the shift, see Derek Healey, "Development Policy: New Thinking about an Interpretation," Journal of Economic Literature, X, 3 (1972), pp. 757-797; James Grant, "Development: An End of the Trickle Down?" Foreign Policy, 12 (1973), pp. 43-65.

¹⁶The concern with "containing the green uprising" by policy makers with ties to Washington is seen in Huntington, Political Order, pp. 433-461, entitled "The Green Uprising: Party Systems and Rural Mobilization."

the language of Title IX of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1966. This recognized and supported the contribution of popular participation in development:

Over the years, in exercising legislative oversight with respect to the administration of the Foreign Assistance Program, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs has observed that there is a close relationship between popular participation in the process of development, and the effectiveness of that process.

...it has become increasingly clear that failure to engage all of the available human resources in the task of development not only acts as a brake on economic growth but also does little to cure the basic causes of social and political instability which pose a constant threat to the gains being achieved on economic fronts.

...Unless the people benefit from development efforts, no meaningful progress can result from foreign aid. It is equally true that unless the people contribute to development efforts, no meaningful progress can result from foreign aid...

The great potential for planning and implementation of development activities, contained in the mass of the people of the developing countries is still largely untapped, which slows down the achievement of the objectives of the foreign assistance program.¹⁷

The amendment called for USAID to assist in furthering popular participation in connection with development efforts overseas. But the concept was unclear and it gained little operational effectiveness within the agency. To the extent it was equated with political participation and political development, the call for participation was liable to criticism as unacceptably

¹⁷ These statements are from reports on Title IX, cited in David Haggood, ed., The Role of Popular Participation in Development, Report of a Conference on the Implementation of Title IX of the Foreign Assistance Act (Cambridge: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1969).

interventionist or ideologically ethnocentric, pushing American "liberal" ideals on the Third World.¹⁸ To some it seemed part of a larger effort to persuade late developing nations to base their revolutions on Locke, rather than Marx. To be sure, the emphasis on participation was influenced by the Jeffersonian myth of small town democracy, and the views of participatory America preserved in the writings of de Tocqueville; still, in so far as it challenged purely economic or technocratic ways of approaching development projects, it was resisted by many practitioners. One of the tangible results of Title IX, was the report of a conference on its implementation, held at MIT in the summer of 1968.¹⁹ This report did give some useful definition to "development participation," but had no evident impact on AID programming.

¹⁸This view is presented by Robert Packenham, Liberal America and The Third World: Political Development Ideas in Foreign Aid and Social Science (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973). While some of the Title IX supporters probably had this orientation, the logic behind Title IX is presented most thoroughly in Owens and Shaw, Development Reconsidered, and this is certainly not the kind of "liberal" ethnocentrism which Packenham alleges behind the amendment. Owens worked with Congressmen Donald Fraser and Bradford Morse on Title IX.

¹⁹See Hapgood, The Role of Popular Participation. Few of the political scientists participating in this conference had much experience with or inclination toward participatory development. (One of the exceptions was Douglas E. Ashford, who had studied the role of local government units in national development efforts); see his Local Reform and National Development: Political Participation in Morocco, Tunisia and Pakistan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967). On background to Title IX, see Ralph Braibanti, "External Inducement of Political-Administrative Development," in Braibanti, ed., Political and Administrative Development (Durham: Duke University Press, 1969), pp. 4-21.

Experience of practitioners and observers of development continued to mount, however. In a trenchant analysis some ten years ago, Haggood addressed questions of development participation:

Advocates of peasant participation in decision-making run into the inevitable objection that there are many decisions peasants are not competent to make. This is true: If one asks how peasants can run an agricultural research station, the answer obviously is that they cannot. But participation (or decentralization, or 'peasant power') is not anarchy. In any decentralized system of agricultural development, the state would continue to make a great many decisions. Participation simply means that peasants would take part in the design of agricultural projects at the local level, where their knowledge in some respects is greater than that of the technicians. In addition to producing better plans, this might also release the latent creative and managerial energy of the farmers.²⁰

It was also becoming apparent that trying to proceed with development in most LDCs by use of coercive efforts was bearing little fruit. Perhaps some progress could be made in the industrial sector by emulating Soviet or Japanese methods; but most developing countries, for better or worse, depended on the growth and efficiency of their agriculture for overall economic development, and this sector was not so amenable to centrist or command approaches. In the absence of popular support and cooperation, the result could indeed be stagnation.²¹

²⁰David Haggood, "The Politics of Agriculture," Africa Report, 12 (1968), p. 10.

²¹For a statistical analysis covering 58 countries 1959-1968, see G. William Dick, "Authoritarian vs. Non-Authoritarian Approaches to Economic Development," Journal of Political Economy, 84, 4 (1974), pp. 817-827. See also the recent case analysis by Francine Frankel, "Compulsion and Social Change: Is Authoritarianism the Solution to India's Economic Development Problems?," World Politics, XXX, 2 (1978), pp. 215-240.

In the field, at the project level, it was also becoming clearer that success was critically affected by the extent of participation in various aspects of development efforts. In her review of rural development projects in Africa for the World Bank, Lele found the element of popular participation to be consistently important, noting for example the experience of the Special Rural Development Projects in Kenya: "the neglect of local input has had an unfavorable effect on the performance of the rural development effort."²² In general, she found:

Local participation may mean involvement in planning, including assessment of local needs. Even if local people do not participate in planning, at the very minimum, they should be informed of the plans designed for their areas if they are expected to consent and to cooperate in program implementation. Participation in planning and implementation of programs can develop the self-reliance necessary among rural people for accelerated development.²³

²²Uma Lele, The Design of Rural Development: Lessons from Africa (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1975), p. 150.

²³Ibid., p. 162. She cites a water supply project (p. 163) where step-by-step implementation with the people had this result. "Public support was even greater than anticipated. Original plans had called for project's trenches to be dug by hired labor. As the project got underway, however, it became possible to rely entirely on self-help labor for the trenching operations." An earlier study of such efforts in Tanzania found that it took some time to reach consensus on the work, "however, once having decided what was to be done, people work harder and faster than they would have done as paid laborers, and a lot of fun and joking always took place." The government had to spend only £200, instead the engineer's estimated £3,000, for construction of a bridge. The followup activity, largely at local initiative, included building a school and opening up literacy classes at 7 a.m., re-aligning the village road, and paying taxes promptly (which had been notoriously late in previous years). See James Brain, "A Bridge in Meru," Community Development Journal, 4, 1 (1969), pp. 17-23.

An analysis of 50 programs for introducing technological change found that the only effective strategy for doing this was with popular participation.²⁴

Certainly there were cases where attempts to foster participation had unsuccessful development outcomes. Perhaps more often, the institutions and roles set up for participation did not really provide it. Much of what was called participation, through Village Development Committees, or consultations in village assemblies, or local planning exercises, was superficial or cosmetic. Still, the climate of opinion was becoming ever more favorable toward participatory approaches. The alternative, non-participatory approaches had been so often unsuccessful, that practitioners were ready to try something else.

The content of development efforts was also changing, to be more suitable for local initiative and management. Technology would usually be simpler when more appropriate. There was to be more reliance on labor for production and infrastructure creation, and less on capital equipment. It was seen that with conditions of security and profitability, poor people would save and invest. The benefits of development were to be more broadly distributed, as economists no longer agreed this would hold back development.²⁵

²⁴ See Larry M. Lance and Edward E. McKenna, "Analysis of Cases Pertaining to the Impact of Western Technology on the Non-Western World," Human Organization, 34, 1 (1975), pp. 87-94. Of the 50 programs, 29 were partial or total failures. Most of the successful ones had a participation element. Alternative strategies considered were pressure, education, and hands-off (introduce technology and leave).

²⁵ Economists were moving from the previous doctrine that unequal income distribution promoted economic growth. It was no longer so clear that greater savings resulted from income inequality, that more productive investment resulted from greater savings, or that economic growth itself resulted simply from the volume of investment. See D. Hamberg, "Savings and Economic Growth," Economic Development and Cultural Change, 17, 4 (1969), pp. 460-482; Montek Ahluwalia, "Income

And more broadly distributed benefits appeared more likely to result with wider participation. It was in this context of redefined development strategy that the U.S. Congress undertook to rewrite its foreign assistance legislation in 1973. The evidence was not one-sided or overwhelming, but the tide of thinking was definitely turning.

Inequality: Some Dimensions of the Problem," Redistribution with Growth, edited by H. Chenery, et. al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 3-26; and William Cline, Potential Effects of Income Redistribution on Economic Growth: Latin American Cases (New York: Praeger, 1973), and his "Distribution and Development: A Survey of Literature," Journal of Development Economics 1, 4 (1975), pp. 359-400.

Appendix Two

GETTING SPECIFIC ABOUT PARTICIPATION: ANALYSIS FOR PROJECT DESIGN, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

Rubric Rather than Concept

Because participation is essentially a descriptive term, comprising numerous different activities and situations, there is much room for confusion about its causes and effects, its amounts and distribution. It is necessary to specify what is meant by participation in any particular situation, if we are to speak usefully about it in any specific rural development effort. This we have elaborated elsewhere and the following is a summary of that exercise.¹

Our framework is based on the crucial assumption that "participation" is not a thing that exists in certain quantities, and that can be measured like a dam's capacity or a farm's agricultural production.² While some studies treat participation

¹John M. Cohen and Norman T. Uphoff, Rural Development Participation: Concepts and Measures for Project Design, Implementation and Evaluation (Ithaca: Cornell University, Rural Development Committee, 1977). In the second half of this monograph, the framework is applied to the Chilalo Agricultural Development Unit (CADU) project in Ethiopia assisted by the Swedish International Development Agency, pp. 176-315.

²Participation is much like such blanket concepts as power and energy. We use them to describe and particularly to make comparisons, but any analysis is best done in terms of specific kinds: economic power, physical power, social power, moral power, and so forth, or electromagnetic energy, thermal energy, nuclear energy, gravitational energy, and so forth. With regard to energy and power, there is clearly some convertibility among the forms, and even some established units of measurement for comparing forms of energy. When it comes to participation, as suggested below, there is observationally some connection among the different kinds, but no accepted measures or demonstrations of conversion. For each kind there are possibilities of measurement, especially with respect to changes over time, so

as a clearly defined concept capable of measurement, we have chosen to treat it as a rubric under which a number of clearly definable elements can be assembled.³ Although these elements can be related under a framework called "rural development participation," it would be quite misleading to try to define the framework concretely to allow summary measurement by specific empirical indicators. In this sense, participation is an overarching concept best approached by looking at its more specific components.

At the heart of our elaboration of rural development participation is the distinction between dimensions and contexts of participation. Briefly, dimensions of participation concern the kind of participation taking place, the sets of individuals involved in the participatory process, and the specific characteristics of that process. The context of participation focuses on the relationship between the rural development project's characteristics and the patterns of actual participation that emerge. In addition, the context concerns the project's task

we are not without some basis for empirical examination. But the state of art is fairly rudimentary. The first step toward establishing more reliable and useful knowledge is specifying more concretely what are the elements or units to be analyzed.

³In this sense we treat it in theoretical terms rather than observational terms. See: Abraham Kaplan, The Conduct of Inquiry (San Francisco: Chandler, 1964), p. 54. Theoretical concepts cannot be defined in the strict sense because of the openness of their meanings. We think it often more useful to speak of participation in terms of an adjective, describing whether certain kinds of development activity are participatory or how participatory they are. This does not suggest quite as reified or homogeneous a thing as when one speaks of participation as a noun.

environment, specifically the historical, ecological, and societal factors that strongly affect emerging patterns of participation. Figure 1 provides an overview of the dimensions and contexts of rural development participation that will now be elaborated.

Dimensions of Rural Development Participation

The framework we have devised delineates three dimensions of participation. These answer the questions: What kinds of participation can take place? Who participates in them? And how does the process of participation take place?⁴

We discuss each of these below, to show how it is possible to be specific about participation. The first dimension--what--is the basic one to distinguish, since participation in decision-making can be different from participation in implementation, for example. For project designers and evaluators, the second dimension--who--may be most salient, since this deals with

⁴The only study we have found that deals fairly comprehensively and analytically with rural development participation takes a somewhat similar view. Robert Chambers, Managing Rural Development: Ideas and Experience From East Africa (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1974), pp. 84-113. It suggests three ways of analyzing participation: who, what institutions or channels, and what objectives or functions? The first is the same as our second dimension noted above. The other two appear somewhat more descriptive, nor encompassing as much variation in analytical terms as the other two dimensions we identify, but they will be taken up in the course of the discussion since they raise important questions about participation's role and effectiveness in rural development.

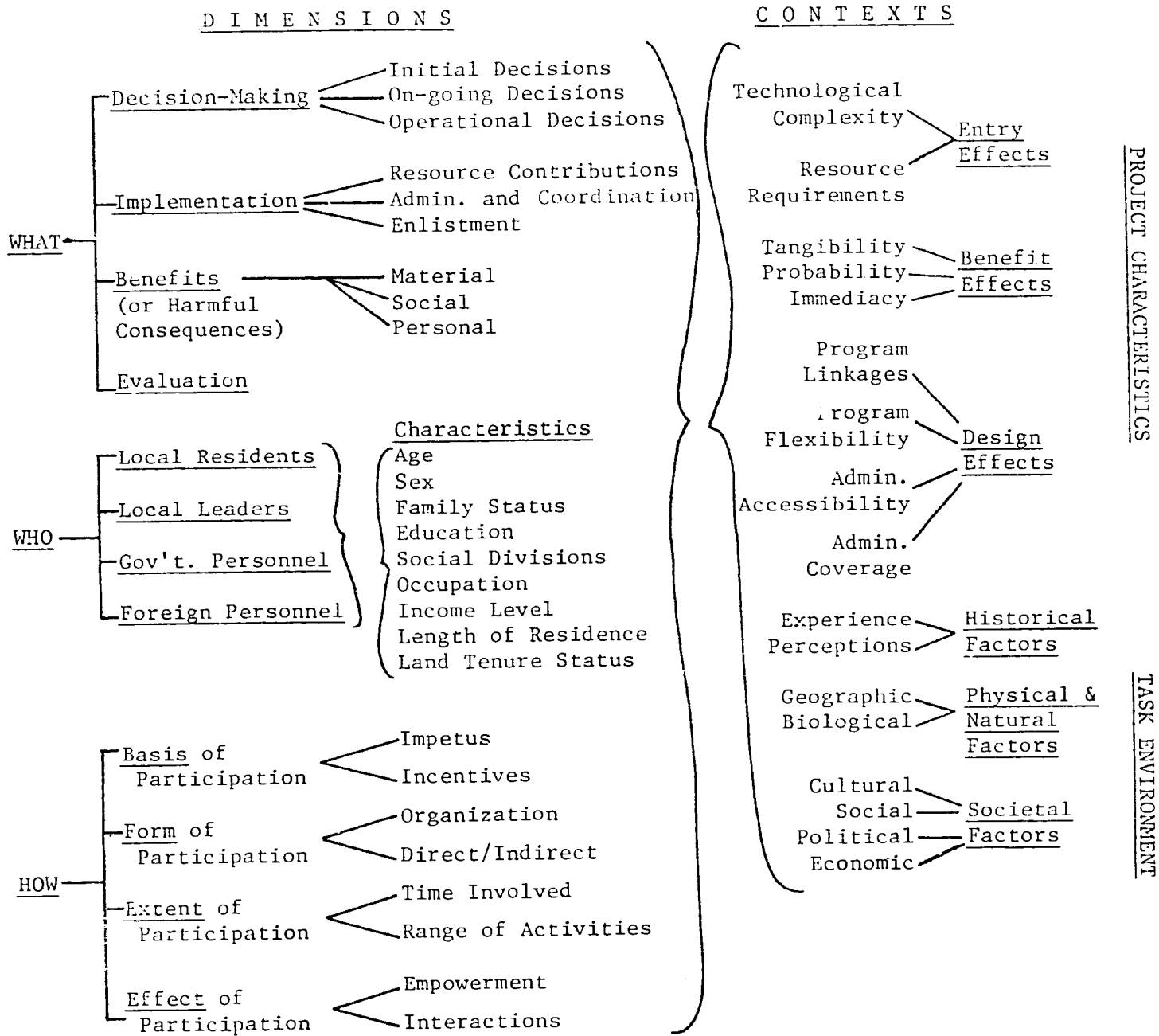


Figure 1: Basic Framework for Describing and Analyzing Rural Development Participation

intended beneficiaries or target groups,⁵ whose participation is to be provided for. The third--how-- adds a qualitative dimension to consideration of participation, one which may often be more difficult to ascertain, but which remains important for purposes of diagnosis or evaluation. It may well be crucial whether the participation by a certain group of persons is voluntary or coerced, continuous or intermittent, effective or ineffective. What kinds and conditions of participation are relevant in a given situation will depend, of course, on certain other factors, such as the project's task and environment.

i. What Kinds of Participation?

The kinds of participation that warrant major concern are: (1) participation in decision-making; (2) participation in implementation; (3) participation in benefits; and (4) participation in evaluation.⁶ We find the first three kinds of participation

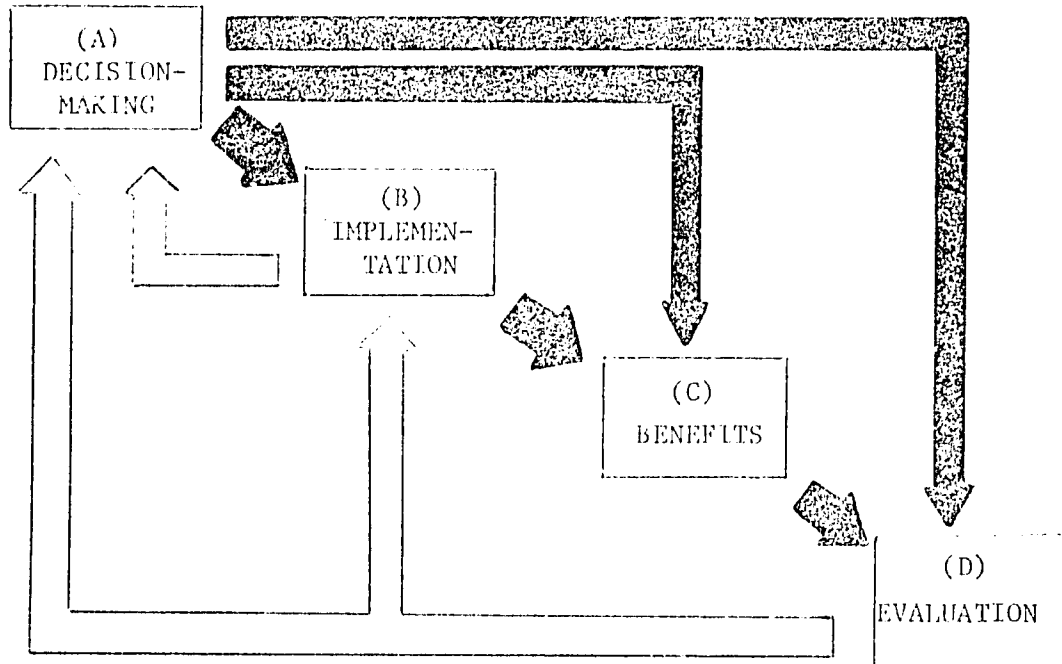
⁵One may well take exception to the terms "target group" or "intended beneficiaries" in the context of supporting participatory development, since these are "top-down" concepts. They involve quite possibly no participation by the people so identified in determining whether or not they are or should be regarded as a group to be served in specified ways by a project or policy. Unfortunately, no less paternalistic term has come into use and we have no more precise alternative to propose. We would welcome some improvement in the terminology.

⁶The 1968 conference at M.I.T. on implementation of Title IX came up with the first three. David Hapgood, Role of Popular Participation in Development (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1969), passim. After a close look at the literature we confirm these and add the fourth. Participation in evaluation occurs even less frequently than the others, but it deserves increased attention if development efforts are to be progressively improved, and its underscoring is consistent with efforts being made in the development community to introduce systematic evaluation activities.

are now reasonably well defined by development assistance agencies,⁷ and see no grounds for objecting to the fourth. Indeed, while evaluative participation occurs even less frequently than the others, it deserves increased attention if development efforts are to be progressively improved. Our underscoring of participation in evaluation is consistent with efforts being made in the development community to introduce systematic evaluation activities.

Together, these four kinds of participation constitute something of a cycle for rural development activity. In practice, there is seldom a consistent or complete cycle of interactions, such as shown in Figure 2, and participation in these different activities is often quite limited or unequal. Yet they constitute a tangible set of things to focus attention on and represent the major ways in which participation in rural development can be assisted and assessed.

⁷ For example, in a report prepared for the FAO's Rural Organizations Action Program in 1977, the first three kinds of participation were specified as elements of popular participation: (1) decision-making regarding development; (2) contribution to development efforts; and (3) sharing in development benefits. Bernard Van Heck, The Involvement of the Poor in Development Through Rural Organization: Framework for Research-cum-Action (Rome: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, June 1977), p. 25. For similar language in USAID documents see: Implementation of "New Directions" in Development Assistance (Report prepared by USAID for Committee on International Relations on Implementation of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1973, 94th Congress, 1st Session, July 22, 1975), pp. 7-8: (1) Decisions concerning the activities to be carried out are made, preferably, by those benefited (for example, the poor), and if not, at least with effective consultation and substantial acceptance by those benefited; (2) the poor make a significant contribution in effort and resources to the activities from which they benefit, for example, through personal savings, or serving as members of local planning or project implementation committees, or through actual project implementation; and (3) economic benefits are widely and significantly shared by the poor with the objectives of narrowing the relative income gap between rich and poor, for example, the coop which benefits small farmers.

Figure 2: Four Kinds of Participation

Participation in decision-making is what political scientists most often refer to when they think of participation, whereas administrators are likely to focus on implementation participation. On the other hand, economists have in the past stressed participation in benefits as the most important thing. No one has been much concerned about participation in evaluation, just as evaluation itself has been neglected. Participation in decision-making and implementation pertains to the "inputs" of rural development projects, providing authority, information, labor and other resources, while people's involvement in benefits and evaluation of development activity concerns "outputs." (When considering "benefits," however, it is important to recognize harmful consequences can flow from participatory activity, an issue returned to shortly.)

Decision Making: More specifically, this kind of participation centers on the generation of ideas, formulation of options, evaluation of options, and making of choices about them, as well as the formulation of strategies for putting selected options into effect. For this reason we discern three types of decisions; (1) initial decisions; (2) ongoing decisions; and (3) operational decisions.

Initial decisions begin with the identification of local needs and how they will be met through a particular project. Often this is the most crucial stage of the project, when some of the most critical decisions are made. In most cases these very early decisions remove a large number of options from the decisions that follow. For this reason, initial decisions need to be carefully distinguished and focused upon.⁸

Probably the most fundamental decisions concern what is defined as a "problem" and which "problems" need to be addressed most urgently. These initial decisions, generally described as "project identification," may or may not involve local participation. Ideally, local people and their leaders should be involved at this early stage, where they can provide vital information on the local area and prevent misunderstandings on both sides about the nature of local problems and the strategies for their resolution. Among the initial decisions in which local people can be involved are whether the project should start, where it should be

⁸In a comparative study of 36 rural development projects intended to benefit small farmers, Development Alternatives, Inc. undertook to analyze who participates (farmers, project planners, or both) in "idea generation" and "idea refinement" (seen as having two stages--communication and experimentation) before there is "decision-making" about a project. This latter phase is not analyzed in any detail with regard to participation. DAI, Strategies for Small Farmer Development: An Empirical Study of Rural Development Projects (Washington, D.C., DAI, May, 1975), I, pp. 95-107.

located, the ways it should be financed and staffed, the paths by which local people will participate in the project, and the contributions they are expected to make.⁹

⁹The range of possible decisions can be elaborated using the basic conceptual framework set forth in Figure 1. (1) Where Decisions: Decisions on the location of specific project activities or sub-project units can be very important, and may be open to local participation. These decisions are most crucial in projects involving construction such as farm-to-market roads, schools, health clinics, irrigation canals or cattle dips. But they may affect the location of services where establishing certain centers is involved. (2) How Decisions: Decisions on the ways and means of project implementation are necessary in all projects, though local people and even local leaders or lower-level government personnel may not be included in them. Some of the kinds of decisions that may be analyzed to see who participated in making them are: (a) strategy--the specific approaches to be taken to meet the project's goals and to help resolve the problem that led to the formulation of the project; (b) financing--whether the project shall be financed in whole or in part with local resources, and if so, whether in cash, in labor, or in material contributions; (c) staffing--whether personnel shall be drawn in part from the community or shall be entirely from "outside"; what will be the terms of service; to whom shall staff report; (d) standards--what quality or coverage shall be sought, such as all-weather or dry weather roads, universal enrollment or selective enrollment in programs; and (e) enforcement--what sanctions shall be invoked to ensure contributions to or participation in the project, who shall be responsible for enforcement, and so on. (3) Who Decisions: Decisions on who will participate in the other phases of the project deserve consideration because they are central to its operations and effects. One should be interested not only in who decides the where and how design features of a project but also in who decides which persons or groups will be involved in: (a) implementation--who is required or expected to perform what tasks in carrying out the project; (b) benefits--who is eligible for the benefits which the project is expected to confer; and (c) evaluation--who, if anybody, is expected or authorized to make appraisals of project effects and success.

Ongoing decisions occur after the initial decisions have been made, and some evidence suggests participation in them may be more critical to project success than participation in initial design decisions.¹⁰ It is possible for local people not to participate in initial decisions, but to be asked to join in ongoing decisions once the project has arrived. Here opportunities exist for searching out new needs and priorities the project might respond to. Moreover, local people might be given an opportunity at this stage to participate in decisions to continue or terminate particular aspects of the project, if not the project itself. Finally, local people can be involved in decisions on the structure and content of activities already in progress, as well as new decisions about the project's goals and the means to achieve those goals.¹¹

¹⁰See Section B of the Executive Summary of DAI's report, Strategies for Small Farmer Development. Project success was measured in terms of increases in farmer income and agricultural knowledge as well as in self-help capacity and probability of project benefits becoming self-sustaining. Local action taken by farmers to complement outside management and resources accounted for half the variation in overall success rankings, and farmer involvement in decision-making in the implementation phase was one of the two factors found most significant in promoting overall project success.

¹¹These include: (1) a continuing search for other needs and priorities that the project might respond to; (2) an evaluation of whether a project should continue or be terminated; and (3) a continuing elaboration of the structure and content of established activities, such as: (a) where decisions--there may be decisions on relocation of service centers or on the location of new facilities (roads, schools, canals, and so on); (b) how decisions--there will certainly be decisions on implementation with respect to financing, staffing, standards and enforcement; and (c) who decisions--there will also have to be continuing decisions--or review of decisions--on who will be required or expected to contribute what and how to implement projects, as well as on who will be eligible for benefits.

Operational decisions relate to specific local organizations established by the project, or linked to the project to involve local people in delivering services. Here the focus is on voluntary associations, cooperatives, traditional associations, women's clubs, and other organizations involved in the substantive activities of the project. Our framework suggests the need to focus on membership composition, meeting procedures, leadership selection, and influence of such organizations. More specifically, we would address such questions as whether membership is universal, what groups are represented or underrepresented, what continuity or turnover in membership exists, and what obligations are placed on members. Moreover, our concern with operation decisions would lead us to focus on the procedures for calling meetings, the way meetings are publicized, whether people attend them regularly, the amount of influence or authority held by those who attend, and the degree of independence under which the meetings are held. We would also look closely at the leaders of such groups, to explore their social and economic background, the process by which they are selected, the terms of their office, the ways in which they are rewarded, and processes by which they can be replaced or removed. Finally, and most importantly, it is essential to give attention to the influence of such organizations on projects, their ability to affect the activities of project personnel, the amount of effort they undertake to influence the project, and the degree of success they have in reaching their selected goals.

Implementation: Rural people can participate in the implementation aspects of a project in three principle ways: (1) resource contributions; (2) administration and coordination efforts; and (3) program enlistment activities.

Resource contributions can take a variety of forms, such as the provision of labor, cash, material goods, and information. All such inputs are vital to projects seeking to incorporate local resources in the development enterprise. Through such participation local people may lend their labor to dig wells, give land for a school, contribute timber for construction of the health station, donate tools for work on a local road, donate money for financing community grain storage bins, or provide crucial information on crop yields, tenure arrangements, pest problems, sources of nutrition and so on.

The relation among the three dimensions of participation is illustrated clearly with regard to resource contributions. It is particularly important to know who is contributing, how their contributions are made, whether they are voluntary, remunerated or coerced, the degree to which they are provided on an individual or collective basis, and whether they occur intermittently or continually. These are particularly important questions, since resource contributions can often be unequal and exploitative.¹²

Participation in administration and coordination of projects is a second way rural people can be involved in implementation. Here they can participate either as locally hired

¹²We have found that one way to insure careful analysis of these interwoven participatory dimensions is to establish tables representing a particular kind of participation with, for example, the "who" categories on one axis and the "how" factors on the other, with the table representing a particular kind of participation. We have presented some 30 illustrative tables for one project in Cohen and Uphoff, Rural Development Participation, p. 204.

employees, or as members of various project advisory or decision-making boards. They can also be members of voluntary associations that coordinate activities with the project. Having local people help administer and coordinate a project not only increases their self-reliance, but also gives officials valuable inside information on local problems and constraints affecting the project.

Finally, perhaps the most common form of participation in implementation is the enlistment in programs. Distinguishing between enlistment and participation in benefits is essential, because enlistment does not necessarily assure benefits. Such a distinction is justified also by the fact that harmful consequences may result for rural people who have enlisted in project programs.¹³

Benefits: Enlistment in a project can lead to at least three kinds of possible benefits: (1) material; (2) social; and (3) personal. While participation in benefits is usually a relatively passive phenomenon, we would emphasize participation in benefits is a desirable goal, which can often be realized through participation in decision-making, implementation, and evaluation. Perhaps the only danger in focusing on this kind of participation is that it can sometimes be quite high and lead observers to overlook the fact that participation in other important aspects of the project, such as decision making, have either not occurred or been quite limited.

¹³For example in a project inoculating a herd against diseases like brucellosis, it is the reduction of morbidity in one's cattle herd that is the benefit, and not the inoculations themselves. That is, some services yield only uncertain benefits. Planting HYV seed does not assure a better harvest, for seeds may not be suited to the particular environment or they may encounter weather that nullifies their yield potential.

Material benefits are basically private goods.¹⁴ They can perhaps be summarized as an increase in consumption, income, or assets. Increases in consumption can result from higher food grain yields, and income benefits can come from selling surplus production. Increased assets can be seen in the acquisition of land, livestock, implements, improved farm dwellings, savings, and so on. As with all other aspects of participation discussed in this paper, breaking down aggregate data, by analyzing the participants and the participation process, is essential.¹⁵

¹⁴For a good discussion of the difference between "private" and "public" goods, see Mancur Olson, The Logic of Collective Action (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965). While it is a valid and often revealing distinction, in examining projects and the relationship between public and private goods appears less significant than how either kind is distributed.

¹⁵Here particular attention should be given to quantity, distribution and quality measures, such as: (a) higher average or total income for a particular group, or similar data on consumption, possibly just for food but preferably measures for all consumption; (b) more equitable distribution of income or consumption within a community or population, particularly a narrowing of the "gap" between highest and lowest incomes within a community; and (c) more security of income and consumption, i.e., less risk that these will be reduced or interrupted. With regard to assets capable of producing an income flow over time attention should be given to: (a) greater per capita or total stock of assets for a particular group; different kinds of assets may be assessed separately or summed in terms of monetary values; (b) more equitable distribution of assets within a community or population; and (c) more security of assets, e.g., legal recognition and enforcement of tenants' previously de facto right to cultivate their land.

Social benefits are basically public goods, usually services or amenities such as schools, health clinics, water systems, improved housing, and better roads.¹⁶ Increasingly, as rural development projects are designed to be more "integrated," and as efforts are increased to improve the "quality of life" for poorer sections of the population, participation in such benefits will have to be assessed. Particular attention should be given to the amount, distribution, and quality of these services and amenities.¹⁷

¹⁶We would consider education separately in recognition of the special place it occupies in increasing productivity, welfare and power for the poor majority. See Norman T. Uphoff and Warren F. Ilchman, The Political Economy of Development (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), p. 329 ff.

¹⁷Examples of the kind of objective measures needed are: (1) greater availability of certain services to a community or a particular group, measured in terms of total amount or as some ratio to the specified population. In measuring the effects of a water supply project in different neighborhoods, one could compare number of water taps per 1,000 population or figuring a certain maximum usage rate (e.g., one tap can serve up to 500 persons per day), one could estimate how much of the specified population was being served; (2) wider access to certain services for a given community or group, accounted for in terms of reduced cost and/or time to utilize the services. Availability and access are certainly related, but efforts to measure access would look at more water taps as distinguished from a larger reservoir capacity in a water supply system; reduced average distance to health clinics; more bus stops or more frequent bus service; and (3) improved quality of certain services, such as shift from curative to preventive medicine (lowering morbidity rates), purer water (reducing incidence of water-borne diseases), or bus service more reliable and punctual (fewer breakdowns and more predictable schedules). Another example could be inspection of markets to ensure accurate scales and measures in addition to providing more stall facilities. In the case of amenities, quality may be a considerably less important criterion than availability and access in service-starved rural areas. But this judgment in the choice of measures depends, as in all such choices, on the nature of the project and on its context.

Personal benefits are usually greatly desired, though often not attained, on an individual basis, coming rather to members of groups or sectors as these acquire more social and political power through the operation of a project. We term them "personal" benefits to distinguish them from "material" and "social" benefits, but this does not imply that they are necessarily "individual" in their causes or effects. Among several possible project-generated benefits of this sort, three appear particularly important: self-esteem, political power, and sense of efficacy.¹⁸

The focus on benefits should not cause us to overlook the many harmful consequences that can follow from participation in a project. These might include seeds that do not germinate, cross-bred dairy cattle that do not survive, or more extreme results, such as the erosion of the local culture, or the eviction of tenant farmers. While harmful consequences are obvious to careful observers, they are often not studied as benefits are.

¹⁸Self-esteem comes from improvement of an individual's status according to whatever criteria of "worthiness" prevail in the community or among his or her associates. It probably has to be measured in each case by locally-determined standards, such as land ownership, literacy, possession of belongings like a wristwatch or bicycle, freedom from debt, and so on. Acquisition of political power is even more difficult to assess. It affects how able a person is to avail himself or herself of the other benefits discussed here. Essentially it relates to the enhancement of a person's ability to influence authoritative decisions, whether through the electoral process, official administrative channels, or private negotiations with officials. Sense of efficacy, an increase in the individual's recognition that he or she can play a role in the development process, can be a result of almost any kind of rural development project. If a project can enhance this orientation within various rural groups, its contribution to developing will be multiplied beyond its direct benefits.

As suggested earlier, we concluded that to analyze participation in benefits from a particular project, consideration should be made of whether harmful consequences have also occurred. If so, any differential rates of participation will be significant data to determine. The main concern will be who is participating in adverse outcomes of the project. Once this is known, one will want to try to establish why, in case remedies can be found for the outcomes and can be built into a re-designed project. For this reason, broad participation in the evaluation of projects is very important.

Evaluation: Because little is written--or actually accomplished--on participation in evaluation, it is difficult to conceptualize how this kind of participation might best be analyzed and measured.¹⁹ Still, rural people can participate in project evaluation through three major activities.

Direct or indirect participation can occur with project-centered evaluation. If there is any formal review process, one would want to know who participates in it, how continuously, with what power to get action on suggestions, and so on. People

¹⁹Two particular methodological issues exist. Donors and local people may have very different perceptions about what evaluation means or what is being evaluated. Moreover, they may well use different criteria. In addition, evaluation literature confirms that negative evaluations are generally more spontaneously offered because people suffering a loss are more likely to complain, other things being equal, than those gaining something are to express approval. On the other hand, when evaluations are solicited, positive evaluations may misleadingly predominate because of a common disinclination to express disapproval under such circumstances (often reflecting differentials in power between the person asking an opinion and the person being asked). Such considerations should be kept in mind.

may be consulted informally only, in which case we would want to know answers to the same kinds of questions. Most probably, however, unless evaluation is specifically provided for in the project design, local people or local leaders will not participate in evaluating the project. Government personnel may themselves join in annual budget reviews that fulfill a certain kind of evaluative function, but local-level officials are generally not involved.

More likely is that whatever local involvement in project evaluation there is will occur through political activities of one sort or another. Where there are elected officials, such as members of parliament, local residents and village leaders can voice complaints and suggestions through their ballots. Participation in elections at local, regional or national levels can possibly enable local evaluations to be fed into policy processes, though such inputs are likely to be gross, reflecting simply dissatisfaction or satisfaction with what the project has accomplished.

Even where such "democratic" political processes are not available, local people and local leaders can engage in lobbying--possibly through some organization like a cooperative or peasant league--to communicate their views to the project or the government. Alternatively, but not necessarily more effectively, people may demonstrate or protest to force officials to attend to local grievances. Indeed, some projects have stimulated sustained conflict and violence. Such activities should be studied to determine if they provide indirect evaluation of the project, or reflect other issues in the task environment. If the former, the content of the protest as well as the characteristics of those making it should be the subject of inquiry.

Less direct would be participation in evaluative activities that aim at influencing public opinion, to build support to

continue or possibly modify a project. Usually such efforts seek to use the media, for example through a "letter to the editor," to promote a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the project or to suggest some improvement. This is a diffuse approach, but might be one possible form of participation in evaluation and better than no such participation at all.

ii. Who Participates?

The participation of most concern to development agencies and governments these days is that of the "rural poor" or the "poor majority." But if the poor are considered an aggregated mass, assessing their participation is difficult, for they are a large and heterogeneous group, differing in occupation, location, land tenure status, sex, caste, religion, or tribe. To talk about "the participation of the rural poor" is to compound one complex and ambiguous term with another, even more complicated and amorphous. If we want to deal usefully with the problems of the rural poor, we need to begin making some analytical distinctions among them.²⁰

²⁰We will not here delve into the difficult question of the outer parameters of the "rural poor." We appreciate that the distinction between "rural" and "urban" is generally hazy, as there is much movement back and forth between what are called, often arbitrarily, rural and urban areas. The measurement of "poverty" has become confused with conflicting definitions of the term and various poverty lines being drawn, based on alternative minimum consumption levels, nutritional requirements, imputations of subsistence income, etc. Since we are concerned with identifying who participates in what activities, we can leave for others to decide where some boundary is to be drawn. The measures derived from our framework would give a descriptive continuum and show concentrations and absences of participation, to be assessed according to the objectives set for the project.

Our framework begins with a more differentiated scheme than others have suggested.²¹ The merit of scheme, we think is that it can be used to analyze the entire rural community, as well as important sub-groups, such as the rural poor. We would distinguish four general types of participants whose characteristics warranted specific attention. Depending on the setting and the goals of the project, certain characteristics of participants would be more significant than others. We would distinguish: (1) local residents; (2) local leaders; (3) government personnel; and (4) foreign personnel. Each of these sets of persons can be further subdivided, according to background characteristics that are essential to the analysis of individual participation.

The first two sets of people are those who have local roots; the last two are, to varying degrees, outsiders. Local residents is a residual category. It is large and heterogeneous, made up of self-sufficient farmers, tenants or landowners, farm laborers, herdsmen, craftsmen, and so on. This group of people is usually the target of rural development projects.

Local leaders have a long run commitment to the area in which they work. Usually they are local elites, such as landowners, major merchants, and professionals. The definition of

²¹For example, Chambers identifies two groups whose participation should be of concern: (1) local people; and (2) government staff who are liable to transfer elsewhere. Participation by both sets of persons he calls joint participation. Managing Rural Development, p. 85. Alvaro Chaparro develops a very specific set of classifications for the FAO: (1) small owner-farmers; (2) tenants and sharecroppers; (3) landless agricultural laborers; (4) rural artisans (some categories, mostly part-time farmers or fishermen); (5) hunters-gatherers, fishermen or shifting cultivators (may be self-provisioning tribal people); (6) forestry workers; (7) nomads, semi-nomads or refugees (non-settled people); (8) females and children (as special categories of rural poor). "Participation of Rural Workers' Organizations in the Development of Agriculture and Rural Life in Latin America" (Paper Prepared for Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, Rome, ESM: TU/LA/76/2, August, 1976).

local leader will vary from area to area, but basically there are three types: (1) informal leaders, such as clan chiefs, religious figures, influential professionals, and local notables; (2) associational heads, elected or appointed to a formal organization, such as a cooperative league president, the head of a voluntary association, or the leader of a local trade union; or (3) local office holders, such as headmen, elders, mayors, or tax collectors. Sometimes the nature of officeholding, given requirements to uphold local interests, makes it difficult to distinguish these people from government personnel.

Government personnel are assigned to an area for a certain period of time. Even if from the local area, their career rests with the bureaucracy at the center and is not usually determined by what happens in the local area. Government personnel are typically subject to transfer, and often have higher education and social status than do locals. It is important to look at the participation levels of these people to evaluate what role they may be playing in promoting, controlling or blocking project activities.

Some consideration should also be given to foreign personnel. While often not important, they can at times play a crucial participatory role. This category would include foreign donor employees, heads of private voluntary organizations, missionary personnel, expatriates, or immigrants who live and work at the local level.

Personal background characteristics are important to various kinds of participation. A wide range of such characteristics exists, and judgment is needed to ascertain the most significant in the given case. We would suggest the following are among the most important of the background characteristics: (1) age and sex (with special attention to male/female differences); (2) family status (household head, other members); (3) educational level (functional literacy, formal schooling); (4) social divisions

(if relevant, according to ethnicity, religion, caste, language or region of origin); (5) occupation (typically agriculturalists); (6) level of income and sources; (7) length of residence and distance of residence from the project, service or activity; and (8) land tenure or employment status (tenant with or without security, casual vs. permanent laborers, and so forth).

Each of these background characteristics can be subdivided and amplified. The occupation characteristic, for instance, can be divided into agriculturalist and non-agriculturalist. In some cases, further distinctions among agriculturalists may be necessary. Here important distinguishing features may well be: (1) size of holding; (2) ownership status; or (3) percentage of income from agricultural production only. Likewise, one could distinguish between (1) large-scale land owners; (2) small-scale owner-cultivators; (3) tenants (either renters or sharecroppers); and (4) agricultural laborers. Even tenants might be subdivided into those without permanent leases and those who have considerable security on the land. And, non-agriculturalists might be subdivided in a similar way into (1) businessmen; (2) artisans or craftsmen; (3) professionals; (4) day laborers or domestic servants; (5) students; and so on into a large number of possible classifications. This kind of breakdown could be applied to any of the suggested background characteristics. The background characteristics used will depend on the type of project one is evaluating.

Several principles are involved in deciding what information to gather for assessing who participates in what activities. First, not all of these characteristics are relevant for all projects. Obviously, age and sex would be crucial for a family planning program, while one might want to know whether certain ethnic minorities or immigrant groups or casual laborers and

their families were utilizing health facilities.²² Second, often the data are not readily available for making some of these distinctions, though some fairly simple, even observational data can be used to make meaningful categories.²³ Finally, where persons are using services such as schooling, credit, or clinics, the data on participant characteristics can be gathered. Rather than complete enumerations, simple sampling (like three random days a month) can be done. Where surveys are conducted,

²²The Chilalo Agricultural Development Unit (CADU) in Ethiopia when it first started extending agricultural credit was not particularly aware of the emerging pattern of distribution, with tenants getting only 4 percent of the total and landowners with more than 100 acres getting one-third. Within three years, by paying attention to who was participating in the program, the latter category had been eliminated from the scheme and tenants' share was raised to 36 percent, while small farmers (under 25 acres) received 57 percent of the credit. See Table X-II in Cohen and Uphoff, Rural Development Participation, p. 248.

²³In his analysis of extension services in Kenya, David K. Leonard wanted to determine who was being served. To do this he divided farmers into three groups constituting a continuum of practices from commercial to subsistence. Farmers who planted both hybrid rather than indigenous maize and had a cash crop such as pyrethrum or tea he put in one category; those who did either, went into a middle category; and those doing neither fell in a third. This proved to be both an easy and a revealing way of classifying persons for analysis. The "progressive" farmers (10 percent of the total) who received 57 percent of the extension visits, were 44 times more likely to be served than the "traditional" farmers (47 percent of the total) who got only 6 percent. The middle group, 43 percent, got 37 percent of the visits. See Reaching the Small Farmer: Organization Theory and Practice in Kenya (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977).

most of the information on characteristics can be obtained.²⁴

iii. How is Participation Occurring?

The how dimension adds something qualitative to the analysis of participation. It generates insights into such questions as why participation takes place, continues or declines, and why it has the particular patterns which it does. The amount, distribution and trends of participation can be assessed basically by looking at the who and what dimensions. But one should not be oblivious to the way in which participation is occurring, such as: (1) whether the initiative for participation comes mostly from above or from below.²⁵ or (2) whether

²⁴For example, a study of the effects of land reform efforts in Nepal in which Uphoff participated in 1973 compared households according to ten occupational/land status categories, from insecure (unregistered) tenants and agricultural laborers to large landowners and business personnel. The survey with four enumerators covered 1,711 households (95 percent) in the area where pilot reform measures had been introduced 10 years before. In five weeks' time, extensive land tenure, agricultural production, economic income and political participation data were obtained. On agricultural innovation, for example, it was determined that secure (registered) tenants used four times more modern inputs per acre than insecure ones (because of the combined effect of lower income and less security); large landowners (more than 25 acres) were lower in their expenditure on modern inputs per acre than all but the insecure tenants. When asked whether land reform had improved their status, those owning land all responded about 80 percent "yes," as even the largest holdings were broken up. Among tenants, however, only 69 percent of insecure tenants said "yes" while 95 percent of secure tenants did. Revisit to Budhbare (Kathmandu: Centre for Economic Development and Administration, 1973).

²⁵This distinction is analyzed by Huntington and Nelson under the heading of "mobilized" versus "autonomous" participation in No Easy Choice: Political Participation in Developing Countries (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 7-10.

the inducements for participation are more voluntary or coercive.²⁶ It may be relevant to analyze and compare over time, (3) the structure and (4) the channels of participation, whether it occurs on an individual or collective basis, with formal or informal organization, with direct participation or indirect representation.²⁷ Further consideration should often be given (5) the duration and (6) the scope of participation, whether once-and-for-all, intermittent or continuous, and whether it covers a broad or narrow range of activities. Finally, it will usually be useful to consider (7) empowerment, how much capacity people have to get intended results from involvement in decision-making and implementation.²⁸

²⁶It is suggested by Sharon Perlman Krefetz and Allan E. Goodman that one should distinguish between voluntary and mandatory participation as an important "condition" of participation. "Participation for What or for Whom? Some Considerations for Research," Journal of Comparative Administration, 5, 3 (1973), pp. 368-438. They would also query whether participation was determined by the participants themselves or by others, the distinction we outlined in terms of initiative.

²⁷Chambers suggests that the most convenient categories for considering experience, lessons and prescriptions are "the institutions through which local participation occurs." The channels he lists as important in East Africa are local government authorities, development committees, community development committees, self-help groups, public meetings, and local interest groups such as churches, women's groups and political parties. Managing Rural Development, p. 85.

²⁸Some examples might prove helpful here: (1) initiative--villagers contribute labor to help build a village health clinic on the basis of their recognition of the need for such a clinic or in response to a request from the project director or another government official; (2) inducement--individual participation in a cooperative association because a person is persuaded by a friend of the need to act cooperatively, because he can get fertilizer at a subsidized price, or because the law requires all farmers in the area to belong to it; (3) structure--

To focus on who instigates participation is important. Does the initiative come from the grassroots or from the national center? More specifically, does it flow from the people themselves, from local leaders, from project staff, from local or national officials, or from foreign personnel? This question addresses the distinction between top-down and bottom-up initiation. Different patterns of initiative can mark different aspects of the project, and patterns of initiation can change over time. For example, the Minister of Education may tell the local people to raise funds to build a school, but the people may go further and offer to build it themselves. This combines both top-down and bottom-up initiative in the same project.²⁹ As projects progress, one frequently finds an increasing number of initiatives coming from the grassroots level.

Incentives to participation are particularly important to consider. Usually one looks to see if the participation is

participants in a community come to work on a school construction project as individuals or work together as members of a formal association characterized by leaders, rules and permanence over time; (4) channel--individual attends cooperative meetings and votes on all issues or is represented instead by a person who votes for all members in his area; (5) duration --self-help project requiring two days of labor from each person to build a bridge vs. a cooperative society requiring monthly attendance at meetings for an indefinite period; (6) scope--road building projects involving just labor inputs vs. participation in farmers association urging members to attend meetings, contribute savings, listen to radio programs and have wives and children participate in women's and youth clubs; and (7) empowerment--farmers able through their associations only to suggest what crops the extension service would promote vs. being able to determine what crops would be promoted.

²⁹The basis for participation is likely to be stronger where there are mutually reinforcing impetuses. See discussion of a successful project with high participatory levels and mixed idea origins in: DAI, Strategies for Small Farmer Development, I, pp. 95-101.

voluntary or coerced, and participation initiated at the grass-roots tends to be more voluntary. Actually, a subtle continuum runs from voluntarism to coercion. Often it is difficult to distinguish where an action is on that continuum, for participation usually results from a combination of inducements, both voluntary and coercive.³⁰ In addition, one must look at the relationship between an initiative and the particular group of persons affected by it. Frequently, the degree of coercion will shift, depending on what particular group is being used in a given activity. For example, local leaders may voluntarily join the project, and call on the government to force landless workers to labor on it. Coerced participation is generally regarded as inconsistent with democratic values, yet there might be cases where it is required, such as ensuring compliance with a range management scheme to pool cattle, adhere to herd

³⁰ There are various ways one can characterize these different kinds of inducements. At one end of the continuum there are voluntary actions undertaken irrespective of any particular reward, because people think such actions are right, correct or socially useful. Introducing rewards for actions people would or might undertake anyway begins to change the basis of compliance to that which is voluntary but rewarded, and moving along the continuum one comes at some point to actions people would not have done otherwise but which they will do if rewarded. Beyond this, at some point one gets to things which people do not want to do but which they must do because of the threat (and possible use) of sanctions against them. In some circumstances, the positive inducements and negative sanctions may be mixed--in what we call "carrot-and-stick" situations. But along the continuum, the former diminish until we find only coercive measures left. For the sake of simplifying exposition, if not always analysis, we identify three major positions along the continuum. They correspond to the three types of compliance relationships dealt with by Amitai Etzioni in A Comparative Analysis of Complex Organizations (New York: Free Press, 1961): normative, remunerative and coercive.

size limits and follow rotational grazing requirements. Finally, impetus to participate and motivation for participation can combine in several different patterns, such as volunteered participation initiated from below, to enforced participation initiated from above. And, the type identified for a given project can be enriched by using the rest of our framework to ask which groups are involved in what kind of activity.

The organizational pattern greatly affects the process of participation. One of the first questions here is whether a person enters into participation as an individual or as a member of a group. For example, can any farmer get credit from the project, or must he belong to a cooperative to be eligible? Another issue relates to the complexity of the organization. Do legally-established leadership roles and well established rules govern activities? Are there clear standards for evaluating the performance of leaders? Or are the roles traditional and the procedures unwritten? If organizations are too complex it may be very difficult for local people to participate in them. More important, local elites may be able to "capture" such organizations to promote their own ends. Indeed, complexity can be designed into a project to keep participation under close control.³¹

The process of participation is also affected by whether

³¹One should not assume that the existence of formal organization, with well-defined leadership roles, regular meetings and votes, etc., means participation of some significance is occurring. Care should be taken to determine whether the organization that exists, or certain aspects of it, serve to block or facilitate the kind of participation which a project should promote.

one participates directly or is represented by someone selected by him and others.³² Direct participation probably allows the individual greater control. Unfortunately, direct participation is often difficult to achieve because of the number who might be involved,³³ especially in rural areas marked by inadequate infrastructures, where people have great difficulty finding time to journey to far-away meetings. In general, indirect participation is more likely with decision-making activities, and direct participation in either benefits or implementation.

The time required of the participant affects the amount of participation that occurs. The longer and more regular, the participatory experience the greater the likelihood that a formal participatory organization exists.³⁴ Projects should

³²This points attention to the channels, if any, between a rural person, the project and the larger community. Direct participation is exhibited on projects where rural people attend meetings themselves, work personally in a school-building project, or borrow credit from a cooperative society. Indirect participation occurs where farmers are represented in deliberations by a spokesman, whether elected, appointed or hereditary, where they contribute money to have skilled workers build a school, or where tenants receive credit from their landlords because they have no freehold land to offer as collateral for a loan.

³³The scale of the organization operates to limit direct participation the larger the membership or the more complex the undertaking.

³⁴A singular involvement is illustrated by the gathering on a particular market day of all or most of the rural people living in a certain district in order that they might help decide whether and where a new elementary school would be built with funding by a foreign donor. Possibly there might be follow up meetings to involve the rural people in building the school or making decisions about admissions, school fees, etc. Regular, continuous participation would occur if a parents' association were formed as a concomitant of building the new school and monthly meetings were held, dues paid, etc.

carefully monitor changes in the frequency of participation, giving particular attention to the emergence of more regular and continuous patterns of involvement, as well as trends in the opposite direction.

The intensity of participation in a given project is frequently related to the range of project activities involving participation.³⁵ Here one should consider the number of possible activities persons being analyzed could participate in. And, it is important analytically to determine whether project procedures make participation in one activity a precondition for other activities.³⁶ Careful attention should be given to the number of activities people are participating in, as well as the effects of that range on their overall participation. Multiple participatory activities may lead to inadequate participation in all of them. On the other hand, the multiple activities may reinforce each other, returning more concrete benefits to participants, and also raising their awareness of the importance of actively engaging the wider society.

Careful evaluation should also be given to participants' power. The degree of empowerment ranges widely, and it is important to know whether or not participation is a formal action, with little meaning, or an activity that allows the

³⁵In an undertaking characterized as "integrated rural development," one might find members of a farm household involved in a cooperative society, a savings group, an adult literary program, youth clubs, women's organization and so on. At the other extreme, participation might be restricted to selling farm produce to a marketing society.

³⁶For example, a farmer may have to belong to the project's cooperative society before he or other members of his family can attend adult education classes.

individual greater control over his or her life.³⁷

From our reading, we would give particular attention to the structure and channels for participation. Participation can be individual and unorganized, but usually needs organized expression and support to be effective and sustained. One of the hypotheses most worth examining is the extent to which organization conditions the amount, kind and success of participation, recognizing that these may vary for different tasks or for different groups.

We believe these different characteristics will illuminate the possibilities, dynamics, and consequences of participation, if applied appropriately to the assessment of who participates in what rural development activities. They may be combined in interesting and different ways,³⁸ or compared to each other in

³⁷ Empowerment could be high for relatively inconsequential choices, such as where to build a cooperative's new storage sheds, and yet minimal for controlling the actions of the cooperative's director, who may be making adverse decisions affecting the farmer's earnings. On this, see Mathew D. Edel, "The Colombian Community Action Program: Costs and Benefits," Yale Economics Essays, 9, 2 (1969), pp. 3-55. This aspect of participation is sometimes characterized as "genuine" versus "symbolic" participation. See Krefetz and Goodman, "Participation for What or for Whom?"

³⁸ For example, Mary Hollnsteiner presents six modes of participation that represent degrees of empowerment partly because they reflect differences in structure and channels as we have defined these terms: (1) unofficial and indirect representation of the people by "solid citizens" who discuss and endorse programs planned outside the community; (2) appointment of local leaders to positions in the government bureaucracy, coopting them into planning and administration; (3) choice of final plan from among predetermined options provided to community; (4) ongoing consultation with community, starting with plan formation; (5) representation of people's spokesmen on official decision-making bodies; and (6) community control over expenditure of funds in programs affecting its

various matrices.³⁹ Such analysis can illustrate the complexity of the how dimension. No single assessment about participation can be made, because, for example, there is no way to conclude that participation of narrow scope but high empowerment is "less" participation, than that of broad scope but little empowerment (combination B and C in the figure below). One can probably say that A is more participatory than B or C, and either of them more than D.

Figure 3: Two Dimensions of How Participation Occurs

		<u>E M P O W E R M E N T</u>	
		High	Low
<u>S C O P E</u>	Broad	(A) High Empowerment Broad Scope	(C) Low Empowerment Broad Scope
	Narrow	(B) High Empowerment Narrow Scope	(D) Low Empowerment Narrow Scope

According to most views of participation, that which is initiated from below, voluntary, organized, direct, continuous, broad in scope and empowered would be the "most" participatory. But judgments can differ about anything diverging from this ideal-typical form. This is now only because people have different values and expectations about participation, but because different aspects of participation are relevant to different

area. "Local Initiatives and Modes of Participation in Asian Cities," Assignment Children (UNICEF), 40 (1977), pp. 19-27.

³⁹See for example our Table IV-2, Cohen and Uphoff, Rural Development Participation, p. 106.

projects. Indirect participation through representatives may be appropriate and satisfactory in some situations, but not in others. For maintaining irrigation canals, periodic participation may suffice, whereas continuous participation may be needed for distributing water. In analyzing the how dimension we want to alert persons to the ways participation by certain groups (who) in given activities (what) can vary. Even if no quantitative value is attached to these aspects, one should be sensitive to what they are and particularly to changes, such as shifts from bottom up to top down initiative, or from voluntary to more coerced performance.

Contexts of Participation

i. Project Characteristics:

Briefly, we have identified ten major characteristics in rural development programs and projects. These also are elaborated at length elsewhere,⁴⁰ and will only be listed here with a brief illustrative example of their effects. (1) Technological Complexity: a cooperative society organized for a comprehensive agricultural package program that requires complex accounting and marketing practices, may exclude less educated persons from leadership roles, and thus bias participation toward local merchants or professionals. (2) Resource Requirements: a mechanized cultivation project may require participants to have a minimum amount of land to be eligible for tractor services, thereby excluding persons with less land; similarly, credit schemes requiring collateral may exclude tenants from participation. (3) Tangibility of Benefits: farmers already actively participating in a cash crop economy may join a project that offers to increase yields 25 percent, while

⁴⁰ Cohen and Uphoff, Rural Development Participation, pp. 112-138.

more "traditional" farmers may not join unless they can see yields double. (4) Probability of Benefits: larger owner-cultivators may be more likely to participate in a cotton-growing project than are smaller cultivators, because the former will still have enough land to grow food for their families, in case the new cotton crop fails or the price drops. (5) Immediacy of Benefits: farmers are more likely to be willing to participate in building a bridge that helps them get their crops to market, than in a reforestation project, the benefits of which will take a long time to result. (6) Equity: a poultry project requiring participants to invest capital is likely to have more restricted participation in all phases, than is one providing week-old chicks free or cheaply to all who want them. (7) Program Linkages: women's participation in a population control program is likely to be greater when connected to a child care program; similarly, farmers' use of fertilizer is likely to be affected by its being connected to a credit program. (8) Program Flexibility: an adult education program that does not provide for local input could lose participants, if it failed to respond to local demands for a voice in selecting or removing teachers, or designing lessons. (9) Administrative Accessibility: a project to promote local handicrafts is likely to attract more participation if artisans can meet with and get suggestions acted upon by those who control the staff and funding for the project. (10) Administrative Coverage: a low ratio of extension workers per farmer will likely limit the farmers' participation, as the program's services will not be widely available; it is possible, on the other hand, that too high a ratio may discourage farmers' participation in decision-making. Because these project characteristics appear self-explanatory, we will not elaborate them here. They need, however, to be considered since project design can leave little scope for participation, or allow only certain kinds of participation to emerge.

ii. Task Environment:

As with project characteristics, the project's physical setting, the history of the region, and the social system operating in it, have powerful and subtle affects on participation patterns. We have identified six sets of factors, which should be immediately recognized by most social scientists working at the rural level. (1) Physical and biological factors: a long rainy season may make it impossible to hold regular cooperative meetings throughout the year, because roads and paths are impassible; or poor soil fertility for upland farmers may mean they must work harder than lowland farmers, leaving no time for participating in farmer organizations. (2) Economic factors: land tenure conditions may obligate tenant farmers to landlords, who are opposed to the formation of new cooperatives. (3) Political factors: local government units may be more an extension of central government authority than representative of local population, and lack a tradition of exercising local authority; or the national center may fear grassroots mobilization and give only superficial support to participatory activities. (4) Social factors: farmers may live in isolated homesteads making cooperatives difficult to organize; similarly, cumulative social cleavages can make it difficult to form cooperatives not controlled by wealthy, landed, and dominant groups. (5) Cultural factors: in certain communities, males may not let women leave house compounds, let alone join home economics clubs; or general attitudes of family loyalty and inter-family competition may inhibit farmers' associations. (6) Historical factors: prior experience with a project whose rice seeds failed to germinate may make farmers unwilling to adopt new high yielding varieties; or an experience of previous embezzlement of self-help funds raised by the community may lead many local people to distrust new community development efforts.

There is no definite list of critical environmental or task factors.⁴¹ Rather programs and projects need to be sensitive to the relevant ones and their likely effects. In this way participatory goals are more likely to be reached and obstacles to participation circumvented.

Participation for What?

It is important also to consider the purposes of participation. Because it involves normative judgements, assessing

⁴¹ Examples of the kinds of factors that should be considered are: (1) Physical and biological factors: climate, weather fluctuation, rainfall, soil fertility, water supply, elevation, terrain, vegetation patterns, insect and animal pests, population size relative to land resources. (2) Economic factors: land tenure and ownership patterns, agricultural production patterns, land rents, occupational patterns, crop and livestock resources, income and expenditure levels, savings, investment and credit; employment possibilities, level of industrial development, markets and transport, physical infrastructure. (3) Political factors: centralized vs. decentralized structure of government, competitive vs. single party system, tradition of local government (or none), linkages if any of central elites to rural areas and problems, prevailing ideology, orientation toward participation by rural people. (4) Social factors: settlement patterns, nuclear vs. extended family structure, clan, ethnic or voluntary association memberships, caste or race divisions, social stratification and class, cumulative vs. cross-cutting social cleavages, local institutions for conflict resolution, rural-urban differences, patterns of migration. (5) Cultural factors: values relating to place of agriculture in people's lives, sex roles and division of labor, orientation toward future and toward change, attitudes toward group activity and cooperation, patterns of political and social deference, attitudes toward role of women in local and national society. (6) Historical factors: past relationships between this area and the national center (cooperative or hostile), traditional rivalries between towns within area, past experience with central government initiatives for rural development, levels of technological sophistication in area.

purposes is even more likely to lead to disagreement than are the more descriptive dimensions, discussed above. Many different purposes for participation can be listed, such as Chambers offers in his book.⁴² The difficulty with constructing an analytical framework for purposes is that their assessment, and even their factual basis, shifts depending on whose perspective one takes. The government, for example, may view taking credit for new maize varieties as a means for reducing national food deficits, or for helping stabilize the regime; farmers may see the same action a way to augment family income and food consumption.

As with all objectives, they may be intended or unintended, stated or unstated, achieved or unachieved. Considering the purposes for which participation is undertaken or advocated is useful, but analysis of purposes cannot be as rigorous as for the three dimensions outlined already. One of the key questions to ask, is whether the authorities' objectives for getting people to participate are the same as, or compatible with, the purposes the people would accept as their own. Where governments want things from or for the people that the people do not want for themselves, ambiguities and obstacles affecting the intended participation are likely. We can imagine sinister purposes

⁴²Chambers says "local participation can be analyzed in terms of objectives and functions." The values ascribed to participation in its various forms include: making local wishes known; generating developmental ideas; providing local knowledge; testing proposals for feasibility and improving them; increasing the capabilities of communities to handle their affairs and to control and exploit their environment; demonstrating support for the regime; doing what the government requires to be done; extracting, developing and investing local resources (labor, finance, managerial skills, etc.); and promoting desirable relationships between people, especially through cooperative work. Managing Rural Development, pp. 85-86. These categories are, unfortunately, more descriptive than analytical.

such as encouraging critical participation from the public to identify malcontents (some thought this was done during the campaign in China to "let a hundred flowers bloom"). On the other hand, some may try to use the opportunities for participation provided by a government to effect its downfall.

Some distinctions about purposes of participation need to be made, the most important of which relate to agreement and openness. Specifically, consider action is important of whether the government, project staff and local people agree on the purposes of participation. And one needs to know if the stated purposes of participation are operative, irrelevant to the situation, or masking concealed intentions.

Questions can be raised about participation's purposes in terms of who is supposed to benefit from it--participation for whom?⁴³ According to Holm, the Village Development Councils in Botswana could operate only under tight political-administrative control, and the plan gave no funds for local projects, so popular participation was mostly an instrument for bureaucratic domination of the village modernization process.⁴⁴ This may or may not be true, and may or may not be common elsewhere, but is certainly a valid question to consider in evaluating participation. Some would dismiss activity such as Holm describes, as not constituting "participation." But we think it more appropriate to make qualitative assessments of the kind of activity involved and its effects. An analysis which identifies who is participating how in decision-making and implementation, and who is participating in benefits and evaluation should illuminate substantively concern with "participation for whom and for what?"

⁴³ See Krefetz and Goodman, "Participation for What or for Whom?"

⁴⁴ John Holm, "Rural Development in Botswana: Three Basic Political Trends," Rural Africana, 18 (1972), pp. 80-92.