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A PROJECT TO HELP PRACTITIONERS
HELP THE RURAL POOR
Case Study No. 4

THE SARVODAYA MOVEMENT:
Self-help Rural Development in Sri Lanka

NANDASENA RATNAPALA

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PREFACE

This report of a case study of the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Sri Lanka is one of a series of case studies prepared under a project of the International Council for Educational Development (ICED) on rural family improvement programs. The focus of the project is on deriving useful operational lessons for national and international practitioners in the field of rural development by examining relevant experiences.

In keeping with the policies and procedures of the project, the main responsibility for conducting the study was given to a Sri Lankan researcher, Nandasena Ratnapala of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Sri Lanka, Vidyodaya Campus. Earlier, a member of the ICED staff had visited the Sarvodaya headquarters and some of the project sites, discussed the purpose and value of the ICED project with the Sarvodaya leaders, received the assurance of their full cooperation for the case study, and worked out a tentative outline and plan for the study in consultation with the Sarvodaya leaders and Dr. Ratnapala.

Dr. Ratnapala, assisted by a group of research assistants, conducted the field work for the study. Seven selected villages, representing a spectrum of Sarvodaya villages, were visited by the investigators. A set of standard questions were applied to a sample of households in each village to elicit basic information about its socioeconomic situation. "Unstructured" interviews were also held in each village with members of the sample households, Sarvodaya volunteers, and village officials. These interviews provided an opportunity to explore the performance and problems of the Sarvodaya program in the village and also the villagers' perception of Sarvodaya as an institution. The village visits also permitted a first-hand observation of Sarvodaya activities in the villages. Besides making visits to the villages, Dr. Ratnapala's team reviewed relevant files and documents at the Sarvodaya headquarters, the Research Centre, the Development Education Centre, and selected Gramodaya extension centers. Extensive discussions were also held with Sarvodaya workers at all levels, with members of the Executive Council, and with the president of the movement, Mr. A. T. Ariyaratne.

Dr. Ratnapala prepared village reports and a preliminary draft of the case study report on the basis of the information gathered by the research team led by him. The draft of the case study report was edited and partially rewritten, and summaries of the village reports were incorporated into the main report by ICED staff in Essex. An introduction highlighting the significant points brought out by the case study, written by Manzoor Ahmed, Deputy Director of the ICED project, was added to the report. The study that follows is the result of this collaborative effort.

The following people assisted Dr. Ratnapala in the field investigation for the case study:

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We take this opportunity to extend the deep appreciation of the International Council for Educational Development to Nandasena Ratnapala and his co-workers for their diligent and competent efforts in producing this report.

We also wish to express our deep gratitude and respect to Mr. A. T. Ariyaratne, the president and inspirational leader of the Sarvodaya Movement, who graciously welcomed and cooperated with this independent examination of the useful lessons imbedded in the Movement's experiences. He was the first to suggest that an objective examination of this sort, viewed from the village level looking upward rather than from the top down, might provide Sarvodaya itself with useful clues and insights for improving still further its important work.

We add our thanks also to Mr. Ariyaratne's fellow Sarvodaya workers at all levels and to the many villagers who opened their hearts and minds to Dr. Ratnapala and his co-investigators.

We of the ICED who were but the catalysts of this effort are confident that the results recorded here will be of considerable interest and value to readers throughout the developing world who, like the members of Sarvodaya, are dedicated to improving the quality of life of the rural poor.

Philip H. Coombs
ICED Vice Chairman and Project Director
Essex, Conn.

May, 1978

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION*

ORIGINS AND EMPHASIS

The Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement of Sri Lanka has earned a well-deserved international reputation as a national development organization with many accomplishments. It originated some two decades ago from the sense of social responsibility and moral obligation of a small group of young teachers and students from Colombo who organized the first shramadana work camp in a "low-caste" village 58 miles from the capital city. Since that small beginning the Movement has grown into a national organization, articulated the philosophical basis and moral principles for a national development program, persuaded some 300,000 people to volunteer their time and labor for the Movement, and reached out in one form or another to 2,000 village communities all over the island.

The literal meaning of the organization's name--universal awakening through sharing of time, thought, and energy--indicates the emphasis placed on the spiritual and moral aspects of development at every level: the individual person, the community, the nation, and the world. It is recognized, however, that spiritual fulfillment cannot be achieved without meeting basic mundane needs. As A. T. Ariyaratne, the president of the Sarvodaya Movement, put it:

In the ultimate analysis, the end result of social development is optimum happiness of man through spiritual fulfillment. But spiritual fulfillment can never come about without adequate satisfaction of basic human needs. Hence the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement has harmonized these two, by placing before the individual four principles of personality awakening; namely, respect for life, compassionate action, joy of service and mental equipoise. These principles are always applied to and integrated with all developmental actions undertaken by the Movement.¹

*The main body of this report was prepared by Nandasena Ratnapala of the University of Sri Lanka. This introductory chapter, however, was prepared by Manzoor Ahmed, Deputy Director of the ICED project of which this report is an important component.

¹A. T. Ariyaratne, "Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement for Social Development in Sri Lanka: A Study of Experience in Generating People's Participation." Working paper prepared for United Nations Children's Fund, April 1977.

Sympathetic observers of Sarvodaya admire the strength of the Movement that is derived from spiritual and moral foundations anchored in Buddhist philosophy and traditional cultural values leavened by the principles of the Gandhian Independence Movement in India. They also ask whether and to what degree spiritual fulfillment and basic human needs have indeed been harmonized and whether and how effectively the moral principles have been translated into appropriate forms of development action. This case study of the Sarvodaya program attempts to answer these questions, and in doing so sheds light on some major concerns in all programs aimed at inducing self-sustaining socio-economic development among the disadvantaged segments of the population. A few of the major points that emerge from the case study and are likely to be of interest to readers are presented in these introductory comments.

It should be said at the outset that the founders of Sarvodaya set for themselves an excruciatingly difficult goal--the goal of elevating the condition and lifting the spirits of the poorest people in the poorest village. In relation to today's internationally popular rhetoric on improving the lot of the rural poor, Sarvodaya's experience teaches one important lesson above all others. It is the simple but profoundly important lesson that translating this rhetoric into practical deeds and meaningful results is a far more difficult and painstaking task than many users of this rhetoric may realize. Although the Sarvodaya Movement's progress toward this goal has been outstanding by any normal standard, it has been a hard road and the negative lessons of the experience are no less valuable than the positive ones.

DECENTRALIZED PROGRAM MANAGEMENT, COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND SELF-RELIANT DEVELOPMENT

The principle of self-reliant development for communities is an extension of the moral principle of one's personal obligation to strive for self-fulfillment and to take responsibility for his spiritual and material well-being. The aim of promoting self-reliance obviously requires a decentralized planning and management approach. The management structure of Sarvodaya, however, is centralized with major policy and program decisions concentrated in the central headquarters. The activities of the regional centers and the local Gramodaya extension centers are guided and controlled by the central program coordinators. This control has created a uniformity of program approach and content, with an apparent dampening effect on local initiatives.

In the sample villages examined by this study we see an almost mechanical repetition of a pattern of program activities, clienteles, methodologies, and organizations. The village activities are initiated and sustained by an alliance of the Sarvodaya worker from the regional extension center (or sometimes posted by the headquarters) and the village monk or priest. As long as both of them (or at least one of them) have a genuine interest in the Sarvodaya activities and can command confidence and respect among the village people, the Sarvodaya program continues with relative vigor and provides useful services to the villagers. However, when this external leadership is removed,

the village program often loses vitality or continues in a somewhat moribund fashion. Rarely do the institutional capacities in the village community itself develop sufficiently to take over and run the program. The leadership training activities and the elaborate efforts to form various village organizations do not seem to have made a sufficient difference in this respect in many of the Sarvodaya villages.

The education and training activities of Sarvodaya are commented upon below. The village organizations for children, youth, mothers, farmers, family elders and so on--the ostensible vehicles for participation and self-management--do not appear to have matured as yet into viable instruments for self-management of community programs. Often only a fraction of the eligible community people has participated directly in the several group activities; indeed, most of the participants have remained only passive beneficiaries of services, and the organizations and their programs have been kept propped up by the Sarvodaya staff and the local monk rather than by the initiative of the local people.

The Sarvodaya experience, therefore, offers negative as well as positive lessons regarding community participation and self-reliant community development. The essence of these lessons is that mere leadership training courses for youth and a predetermined pattern of local organizations formed at the instance of a voluntary organization that is external to the village community do not necessarily result in meaningful forms of community participation, nor do they initiate a self-reliant development process.

What might have been done in the situation Sarvodaya found itself --a situation typical of rural areas in many poor countries--can only be speculated upon. One can seldom be sure of the right course until it is tried out, tested, and found to be working. We suggest three propositions.

Despite the universalist preachings of Sarvodaya, the rural participants in the village organizations have not been able to transcend their factional vested interests and conflicts to rally behind programs that make a real dent on the life of the disadvantaged members of the community. That is why there is much emphasis on innocuous and "harmless" service activities and not enough on significant economic programs that rescue the disadvantaged from their grinding penury and successfully combat the interests of the local traders, moneylenders, and landowners. It seems that some clear-cut choices will have to be made. To the degree that Sarvodaya seriously backs the poor, it will have to face the risk of opposition from the wealthy. Program activities that offer hope of substantial socioeconomic change in the lives of deprived groups will command their active support and very likely lay the basis for strong local organizations. Organizations concentrating on social service activities that do not address needs perceived to be critical by the deprived population cannot attract the support and involvement necessary for building effective self-management institutions.

As the author of the case study has suggested, decentralization and capacity for local level management can probably be promoted by identifying entrepreneurial skills in the communities, putting the competent local people with such skills to work in program activities, and utilizing them for developing further skills and competence among other

local personnel. This is not an easy task.

Certain changes can be adopted in the Sarvodaya organizational structure to establish a greater measure of collegial relationship between the headquarters coordinators and the field staff by delegating authority and responsibility, posting really outstanding personnel in the field, giving the field personnel status and rewards comparable to those of headquarters personnel, and by rotating personnel between the field and headquarters.

IN PURSUIT OF AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

If the concept of integrated development embraces such elements as an overall development strategy, a relationship of mutual reinforcement among different development activities, mobilization of all available resources, and participation of the beneficiary population in planning and managing the activities, then the organizational structure Sarvodaya tries to build in each village should provide an ideal setting for pursuing the integrated approach. Various functional groups and the overarching village reawakening council, representing all interest groups and all development and service agencies in the community including the government ones, in principle, create the participation and mobilization mechanisms for pursuing the goals of integrated development.

For example, one notes with satisfaction that in some of the more active Sarvodaya villages the organizations for youth and mothers have become instrumental in initiating diverse community services by drawing upon the voluntary labor and enthusiasm of these groups. The mothers' group and the preschool center have often brought the services of the government health department to the village. The government agricultural extension service has sometimes found a vehicle for serving the rural residents in the young farmers' groups. The Sarvodaya village council has sometimes served as the unofficial coordinator of development activities undertaken by different government and private agencies.

On the whole, however, the strength and character of the local Sarvodaya organizations vary widely and achievement of an integrative role has not been fully realized. The factors that have impeded the growth of strong local organizations and discouraged autonomy and local participation have also become obstacles to the integrated development approach. For the absence of a broad community consensus about priorities and goals and commonality of interests, it is difficult to come up with a village-wide development plan as the basis for an integrated development program. Again it appears that Sarvodaya has first to identify the disadvantaged groups in the rural areas, align itself with these groups, and then develop concrete strategies to safeguard and promote the social and economic rights and interests of these groups. This means nothing less than facing the risk of opposition from other groups in the village. The integration of activities has to be predicated on the needs of specific deprived groups rather than on much broader village or regional needs because the needs and interests of all the groups in the village are by no means the same. The application of the universalist principles of Sarvodaya has to be reassessed in order to make its development activities practical and truly effective.

A voluntary organization like Sarvodaya is subject to obvious limitations of resources, authority, and responsibility in pursuing an integrated development strategy. The most fruitful role it can play is to help build the institutional structures for participation of the local people and mobilization of the local resources. Local government bodies backed by appropriate national policies and programs must bear the burden of carrying out the development program. In Sri Lanka the national government is still in the process of evolving the structure, development functions, and authority of the local government bodies; and the principles of a mutual working relationship between the local authorities and Sarvodaya are yet to be formally worked out. The relationship that exists now is contingent almost entirely on the individual personalities and attitudes of local government officials and Sarvodaya workers. The change in government in 1977 may have created an atmosphere for evolving a closer and more systematic working relationship at the local level between the government and Sarvodaya. It is reassuring that some thought is now being given by Sarvodaya leaders to collaboration with the government on preparing and implementing comprehensive development plans for Sarvodaya villages.

ROLE OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Inculcation of Values and Attitudes

As an ideological movement concerned with changing people's attitudes and values, all Sarvodaya activities are frankly educational. All components of the Sarvodaya program include elements of "consciousness raising," transmission of new information, and dissemination of new social attitudes and perceptions. The more the leaders and workers of the program are aware of the educational nature of the program and their own educational role, the more likely it is that the educational objective will be served. Effectiveness of the educational function in each program activity, whether it is a community kitchen or a young fishermen's group, affects the overall performance of the particular activity. On the other hand, the validity of the activity itself (for example, in terms of its objectives, clientele, and feasibility) and how successfully it is managed determine whether the activity will have an educational impact. A community kitchen, run poorly and irregularly, not perceived as an important need by the local people, cannot be a vehicle for spreading ideas of nutrition and sanitation, nor a means of stimulating local initiatives, community cooperation, and other useful ideas and practices.

Shramadana--the work camp through which Sarvodaya volunteers and villagers join together in an essential construction project--is the basic means for learning about village life, analyzing village problems and possibilities, and introducing Sarvodaya ideals and objectives to the villagers. With planning and guidance, it can be an intense educational experience for all concerned and exert a

strong impact on the nature and quality of the development efforts that may follow in the village.

Besides the general "consciousness raising" and educational role of the total Sarvodaya program, there are also three main categories of specifically organized educational activities to which a large proportion of the Sarvodaya resources and efforts are devoted. These are the training of women for managing preschool centers and community kitchens, the training of youth for community development work, and skill training. Only one of these, training for the management of preschool centers and community kitchens, is linked directly with a definite program for actually utilizing the trainees in Sarvodaya villages where preschool centers and community kitchens are such distinguishing features of the Sarvodaya program. In their training course, the young women trainees are given a clear view of how and where their new knowledge and skills will ultimately be used. This cannot be said of the other training activities.

Community development training for youth appears to be a hold-over from the early days of the community development movement when leadership training courses sprouted up everywhere and reflected a naive faith in training as the means for promoting local leadership and initiative. There are manifest weaknesses in the Sarvodaya training course, as the author of the case study points out, with respect to such considerations as course content, competence of instructors, and teaching methods. These can be readily remedied if the basic approach is valid. But whether the approach is valid is questionable, when, for example, a group of rural youth selected rather indiscriminately is brought to one of the Sarvodaya centers and for a period of three to six months is subjected to a series of lectures about Sarvodaya principles and goals and exposed to some of the Sarvodaya activities in the village. It is intended that this contact with Sarvodaya and the experiences of community living in the Sarvodaya center will turn the youngsters into zealous agents of social change and initiators and organizers of development activities when they return to their villages.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE EDUCATIONAL APPROACH

Many questions arise about Sarvodaya's approach to training for the youth. What are the real motivations and interests of the youngsters? Do they have the motivation to be Sarvodaya workers in their own villages or do they come to the training course only because they have nothing better to do? How can the motivated ones be identified or the motivation created? To what extent can the young trainees fit into the social structure and the traditional leadership hierarchy in the villages and do something of significance? To what extent can qualities of leadership, dedication, and ingenuity be developed through a training course? What follow-up and backstopping are needed once the trainees return to their villages, and how can these effectively be provided?

These are just some of the questions that have to be resolved before a training program for community development workers can have positive results. A minimum need, it appears, is a definite follow-up program that reinforces training and gives specific and continuous support to the trainees when their formal training is over. Training, by

itself, even if it is carried out well, cannot be very effective unless its fruits are nurtured in ultimate community development activity.

In skill training Sarvodaya has attempted to introduce realistic approaches by relying heavily on on-the-job experience and apprenticeships with village artisans. Yet the training effort does not often achieve the goals of opening up productive employment opportunities and increasing the income of the participants. Reasons for this abound. There may indeed be a lack of knowledge about specific production skills, but this is the least of the obstacles, and it can readily be overcome. More serious are such considerations as demand and market for the products, supply of raw materials, availability of capital, and management efficiency. In the rural economy functioning at a near-subsistence level, economic opportunities are indeed limited. Once opportunities are identified, various alternatives for skill development, if that is needed, can be found even without setting up special training courses. Organizing training programs without proper attention to the opportunities for utilizing the skills they teach may create new problems, particularly when those already practising certain trades and occupations are living on meager earnings.

The combination of the preschool center, community kitchen, and mothers' group--the hallmark of Sarvodaya programs--not only opens up a unique opportunity for educating the mothers and the community at large about the social and physical development of children and basic health care for the entire family, but at the same time, makes important educational, nutritional, and health services available to both mothers and children. The women workers involved in these activities--young women recruited from the same village in which the activities take place and given a short training at a Sarvodaya center--have generally proved to be able and dedicated workers who look upon their responsibilities, not as just another job, but as a service to their communities at large. This experience demonstrates the potentiality and promise of utilizing women extensively as community development workers and agents of social change.

The opportunities created by the children's and mothers' activities, however, cannot be realized if and when the local leadership, such as the Sarvodaya council and the Sarvodaya representative in the village, does not or cannot create a favorable climate of support. In a good climate a high ratio of attendance among eligible children is achieved, many mothers become active and interested participants, and local resources become more abundant.

Sarvodaya has paid considerable attention to getting the children of compulsory schooling age, years 6 to 14, to attend school, although this is not discussed in this report. Several school buildings have been constructed through Sarvodaya efforts and have been handed over to the Ministry of Education. Among the schemes implemented by Sarvodaya in support of primary and secondary education are supplying textbooks to rural children, opening up village and school libraries and book-banks, buying clothing for children, conducting special remedial and tutorial classes for children after school hours, organizing

shramadana to construct school playgrounds and wells and so on. A recent program calls for Sarvodaya to work with the Ministry of Education in improving the physical condition of 2,500 most backward schools in the island. All of these efforts, however, are carried on very much in the context of the conventional, formal school system which do not seem to serve well the most disadvantaged groups of children. In the "low-caste" Sarvodaya villages, described in this report, various social and economic factors have caused a high rate of nonenrollment and early dropout. Opening up educational opportunities for the children of these villages calls for changes in the organization and content of schooling that would fit education to the work cycles and economic circumstances of the poor families in these villages. Ensuring access to and effectiveness of basic educational opportunities for all requires more than sprucing up the existing school system. Sarvodaya, which devotes so much attention to children, probably has to be more concerned with the larger issues of educational reform.

LOGISTICS AND STRATEGY OF EXPANSION

A common question regarding most voluntary organizations is how its program activities, effective on a small scale for a limited number of participants, can be multiplied and given a wider, even national, impact. The Sarvodaya organization has attempted consciously to reach out to as many village communities as possible in all corners of the island and has encouraged the involvement of as many people as could be persuaded in the shramadana voluntary labor projects. During the decade since 1968 the number of villages that Sarvodaya has reached in one form or another has increased ten-fold without a commensurate increase in resources and personnel that were rather thinly spread in the first place.

It is natural for an ideological movement to attempt to spread its message widely, to generate a psychological momentum, and to create a favorable environment for its acceptance. However, when the ideology is translated into an operational program for socioeconomic development, mere transmission of ideals and values is not enough. At this stage, resources, personnel, logistics, and management come into play, and all of these factors set a limit to the expansion that can be prudently undertaken.

It may well be necessary for a development organization to make a distinction between a general "consciousness raising" phase which may be aimed at the total population and a more limited operational phase that is subject to relatively rigid logistical, management, and resource constraints. The implication for Sarvodaya is that the ideological message of Sarvodaya can be spread nationally, even internationally, through all appropriate and available forums, but that village level Sarvodaya organizations should not be set up indiscriminately until a minimum level of effectiveness and performance can be reasonably assured. This will require the formulation of criteria that can be applied to villages before their inclusion in the program and a careful assessment of the preparatory steps and the process of program development in the villages. A further implication is that the Sarvodaya leadership should embark on a consolidation program to bring the present 300 or so villages with the Sarvodaya

organizational structure to a minimum level of performance before other organizations are set up in new villages. Such an effort may require a shift in the allocation of authority and responsibility from headquarters to the field, a redeployment of personnel, identification and provision of forms of guidance and technical assistance needed for the village organizations, and discovery of new and effective economic projects, probably in collaboration with the government, that tackle with determination the problem of absolute poverty.

A final point to put the Sarvodaya performance in perspective: it must be remembered that Sarvodaya has deliberately sought out some of the most difficult rural communities as its program locations--villages that are victims of age-old social discrimination and economic oppression, villages that have few economic resources or natural endowments on which to build the foundation of anything developmental at all. In these villages Sarvodaya has helped to soften the harshness and to moderate the cruel aspects of the most invidious forms of caste discrimination. It has helped to provide some essential community services, even when it has failed to make a dent on the economic situation of the poor. As is pointed out in the case study, the capacity of a voluntary organization is obviously limited in effecting basic changes in the economic structure at any level, unless a favorable climate is created and a collaborative hand is extended by the national government. The significance of the accomplishments of Sarvodaya and the reasons behind the unfulfilled expectations can be properly understood only by comparing them with the nature of the obstacles that Sarvodaya faces. These factors also explain why Sarvodaya survives, expands, draws national and international support, and continues to stir the idealistic spirit among its devotees in Sri Lanka and abroad.

BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

THE NATIONAL SETTING

Sri Lanka is an island in the Indian Ocean having an area of 25,332 square miles and a population of 13,393,000.¹ The island may be divided geographically into four different zones--the wet zone, dry zone, arid zone, and the hill country. The southwestern and central parts of the country comprise the hill country, while the rest, except for a few elevations, is comparatively flat. The rainfall of the island varies from 100 inches or more in the wet zone along the southwestern coast to 25-50 inches in the arid and dry zones in the northeastern part of the country. Rain is received by means of southwestern (May-September) and northeastern (October-December) monsoons.

The island has a recorded history from the third century B.C., when Buddhism was introduced to the island. The early settlers from India settled in the northeastern and north-central areas of the country where they developed agriculture by means of an ingenious system of storing rain water in man-made ponds and canals. Ancient and medieval kingdoms flourished in the north-central and also southern areas of the island, but with the progress of time, because of the influx of South Indian invaders and also perhaps of epidemics such as malaria, the population was driven towards the south until finally the last royal city came to be situated at Kotte (near Colombo) and then at Kandy.

The island ruled by Sinhalese monarchs following a feudal system of government retained its independence but suffered various vicissitudes, until finally the maritime provinces were conquered by the Portuguese, then the Dutch, then the entire island in 1815 by the British. The island regained its independence in 1948 choosing to remain a member of the Commonwealth. In 1972 with the promulgation of the new Constitutions, Sri Lanka became an independent republic while retaining its Commonwealth membership.

The island is inhabited by different races: of them the Sinhalese tracing their ancestry to Aryan stock are in the majority (71.9 percent); next come the Tamils of whom there are two distinct groups. The Jaffna Tamils (11.1 percent) are the descendants of Dravidians who came to the island from time to time either as invaders or peaceful settlers. During the British times cheap labor from South India was introduced into the island in order to assist in the cultivation of first coffee and then tea. Such laborers, found mainly in the hill country and employed on tea and to

¹Census of 1974.

a lesser extent on rubber estates, are known as Indian Tamils (9.4 percent). Next in importance are the Moors, descendants of Arab traders who settled down in the country. There are scattered groups of Malays, Burghers, and Europeans who constitute an insignificant portion of the island's population.¹

The Sinhalese are predominantly Buddhists, although a small portion of Christians may be found among them. The Tamils are again mainly Hindus, yet even among them adherents of Christianity are found scattered throughout the island. The Moors and Malays are as a rule followers of Islam. According to the census of 1974 the breakdown by religion is as follows: Buddhists--67.4 percent; Hindus--17.5 percent; Muslims--7.7 percent; Roman Catholic and other Christians--7.7 percent.

The island's economy is mainly dependent on agriculture. Main commercial crops are tea, coconut, and rubber. Gems, spices, and plumbago are other significant exports that bring revenue to the country. In the past during the reign of Sinhalese kings rice farming was the main economic activity, done collectively in each village. Tanks, or man-made water reservoirs, were used to collect rainwater for irrigating the rice fields. During foreign rule the cultivation of rice was relegated to the background in favor of plantations of tea and rubber. Tanks were willfully destroyed or neglected. With the neglect and destruction of tanks and the decline in rice cultivation the cooperative pattern of village life was discontinued.²

There are approximately 24,000 villages in the island in which about 78 percent of the people live, although the towns are now experiencing a heavy influx of migrants. Among the rural residents 70 percent are estimated to be unemployed or underemployed. Only 3 percent of their housing units possess electricity and 5 percent have tap water. The literacy rate is relatively high with 65 percent of the rural children attending school.

National development efforts and resources have generally been concentrated in the cities, although less than a quarter of the people are city dwellers. For instance, the capital city of Colombo has 15 percent of the nation's population and 125 hospitals with 26,254 beds and 60 percent of the medical specialists, for all of which the government spends Rs. 225 million per year. By comparison the rest of the country has 308 hospitals with 7,044 beds and 40 percent of the specialists, for all of which Rs. 24.6 million is spent in a year.³

The attention paid to urban areas by the central government is not confined to the sphere of health. It is the same picture in other areas of development. Some efforts have been made since the early '70s to remedy obvious imbalances, yet the scene, except for certain details, remains very much the same.

¹Sri Lanka Moors 6.3 percent, Indian Moors 0.3 percent; Burghers and Eurasians 0.3 percent, Malays 0.3 percent.

²For details on ancient and medieval system of irrigation read: R. L. Brohier, "Ancient Tanks and Canals" in Journal of The Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch) XXXIV, 85.

³Budget estimates in 1977.

The Sarvodaya Movement is significant when viewed in the above perspective because it lays emphasis on the development of the village. The cooperative life of the village that was centered on rice cultivation during the medieval period inspired the movement to incorporate in its philosophy those significant features that had sustained village social and economic life in the past. It is Sarvodaya's belief that without the development of the village in all its spheres--the social, economic, religious, and cultural--the resurgence of the nation as a whole is impossible. In order to work for such an economic and social resurgence in rural life the Sarvodaya Movement delved deep into the sociocultural roots that once gave birth to a self-sufficient economy and sought to draw from these whatever seemed relevant, significant, and useful for modern times.

ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF THE MOVEMENT

The beginning of the Sarvodaya Movement in Sri Lanka can be traced back to 1958 when A. T. Ariyaratne, a young teacher in a Buddhist college in Colombo, and a band of his colleagues and students spent a holiday in a village in order "first, to learn from the village and then utilise the knowledge gained to improve rural life."¹ The selected village was inhabited by one of the lowest castes in the country known as the Rodiyas. These people, condemned to live as outcasts in their isolated hamlets, eked out their existence largely by begging. They were not even allowed to cover the upper part of their bodies, and even Buddhist priests refused to perform religious rituals on their behalf or to receive alms from them.²

The village selected by the Sarvodaya pioneers led by A. T. Ariyaratne was Kanatholuwa, near Kurunegala (58 miles from Colombo). They went to the village, lived with the villagers, shared their food, learned from them, and helped them construct houses, lavatories, and other needed physical facilities.

At that time the pioneers named their project after the selected village, the "Kanatholuwa Development Educational Extension and Community Service Camp." The experience of the first "village camp" encouraged the group to continue its work in other villages. As a result, by 1961, 26 villages were covered in which 36 work camps were held.

The young pioneers of Kanatholuwa were deeply influenced by the struggle for freedom and social change in the Indian subcontinent and drew their ideals and inspirations from the Sarvodaya (spiritual reawakening) movement led by Mahatma Gandhi and Vinobha Bhave. The young pioneers even began to call their own activities the Sarvodaya Movement of Sri Lanka. The movement came of age with the increase of its activities to various parts of the island; and as the leaders began to see the roots of their own culture, they began to develop an indigenous philosophy, widening the purpose of their efforts and looking for new

¹For details of the pioneer work in this village see: "Kanatholuwa Village File PK/65. Report of the holiday camp in a backward community."

²For information on Rodiyas (the backward community at Kanatholuwa) see M. D. Raghavan, Handsome Beggars, the Rodiyas of Ceylon, Colombo, 1957.

horizons. The rural life of Sri Lanka, having imbibed the Buddhist culture for 2500 years, is essentially a society based on Buddhist principles. It was these principles that in the past had helped the rural community to knit itself into a close cooperative unit, self-sufficient and creative. The widening of the philosophical base of the movement was sought by synthesizing the Buddhist cultural pattern in rural life with the Gandhian ideals that had inspired the pioneers.¹

The new philosophy fashioned largely from living and working with villagers (by 1968, the movement had attracted 250,000 volunteers to work in 125 villages) emphasized the involvement of the rural communities, especially in the most underprivileged areas, as direct participants in the struggle for social change. The adherents of Sarvodaya hoped to achieve national integration by inspiring people to think as 'one' and not as members of one individual community, religion, or race. They expected to foster a spirit of brotherhood among the people by bringing home to them the advantage of relying on their own strength and cooperative effort rather than on outside help. The shramadana (literally, gift of labor) camp was the device that united the Sarvodaya volunteers and the villagers in pursuit of a tangible common goal and also became the means for learning and "consciousness-raising" of both the volunteers and the villagers.

In these experiences involving villages in all parts of the island, where for a long time the folk had practised an agricultural way of life that was traditionally based on mutual cooperation and rooted in Buddhist principles, the Sarvodaya workers were able to understand the underlying motivating forces and simply philosophy of the rural people. Respect for life in all its forms, universal compassion, joy that emanates from service to one's self and others, and psychological and physical stability were the cornerstones of this simple but very practical philosophy.²

To this was added the Buddhist-inspired practices of sharing, pleasant speech, creative or constructive activity, and the idea of universal equality. This philosophy had as its immediate aim the liberation of man, then his community (village), and as its final aim the liberation of the country and then the world. The liberation idea had as its basis the freedom of the individual from fetters of both economic and social bondage and self-realization in the total development of his personality. The synthesis achieved between the Gandhian philosophy and the Buddhist philosophy provided a basis as well as a motivational force for the extension of the services rendered by Sarvodaya in the 1960s.

¹"Though the Movement was inspired by the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi and Vinobha Bhave in its formative step, it gradually developed a distinct philosophy of its own. Even though the word 'Sarvodaya....' was adopted from India, the interpretation of its deep meaning in the context of Sinhalese Buddhism and as relevant to our nationals is completely our own." A. T. Ariyaratne, "Sarvodaya Shramadana. A Growth of a People's Movement" (quoted in the Study Service) p. 26.

²See Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement--at a glance, Sri Lanka, 1976.

In 1971 a violent insurrection of youth throughout the island ushered in a period of instability and suffering. The revolt was engineered by Marxist-oriented educated youth and the participants were primarily rural, unemployed young people. The Marxist youths had helped the United Left coalition led by Mrs. Bandarnaike to win the election in 1970 but soon found that the government had little inclination to bring about the radical reforms they desired. They decided to take the path of insurrection. The participants in the revolt felt that the prevailing social, economic, and political condition denied them any opportunity for the fulfillment of their life purposes. They came from the lower middle class and working class background and many belonged to the low-caste groups. The insurrection was ruthlessly put down by the government and youth leaders in large numbers were put in prison. Although the insurrection was controlled by the government, the fundamental questions raised by the upheaval about the need for radical change in the socio-economic structure remained unresolved, and the suppression of youthful activism left the youth without leaders and outlets for venting their energies and grievances constructively.

The rise and expansion of Sarvodaya from 1971 onwards can be attributed to its ingenuity in filling the gap created by the suppression of the youth revolt and providing alternative leadership to the rural youth who were looking for nonviolent and pragmatic ways to challenge the old order. Sarvodaya, strengthened by its outlook and philosophy formulated through nearly two decades of work among rural people, managed to identify itself with the aspirations of the rural people.

In 1972 the villages associated with the Sarvodaya effort reached 1,000 from a mere 100 villages in 1968 and only one in 1958. By the end of 1977 the number was nearly 2,000, although the program and the organization existed on a relatively permanent basis in only about 300 villages.

GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO SPUR RURAL SELF-HELP

Beginning in the 1950s, but particularly in the early 1970s, some efforts were made by the Sri Lanka government to accelerate development activities in the rural areas, to extend the reach of government services and agencies more widely into the villages, and to facilitate meaningful participation of the rural people in the national development process.

A significant recent move was the introduction of a system of "decentralized budget" by which in each parliamentary district the so-called district political authority comprising the members of the Parliament and the district officials plans its own development program and receives an allocation from the central government to implement it. This arrangement does not necessarily mean that the right priorities are applied in program choices, that the interests of the common people are served, or that the programs are effectively implemented. But it does mean that the mechanism has been created for meaningful popular participation in local development and the people given the opportunity to take control of their own development programs and resources, if indeed they are prepared and willing to do so. An organization like the Sarvodaya movement can play a crucial role in educating and mobilizing the people at the local level for taking advantage of such opportunities created by governmental decisions and policies.

There are other instances of governmental effort being impeded by the inability of the rural people to reach out to take what rightfully belongs to them. The government health facilities and health workers, for example, cannot possibly cover all the remote villages in the country by offering curative care, preventive service, health education, inspiration, and advice for self-protection measures. However, this gap can be bridged if under the auspices of an organization like Sarvodaya the villagers are organized to help themselves and to appoint health auxiliaries from among themselves to serve as links between themselves and government personnel.

Following the nationalization of the banking service, the government opened a new chain of banks called the People's Banks to serve rural needs. Again the inability to prepare, plan, and organize for this new opportunity on the part of individual communities has meant that the vast majority of the rural people cannot benefit from this desirable service.

The Rural Development Societies, sponsored by the Rural Development Department of the government, are seen as another means by which the people can participate in village development activities. These voluntary societies, comprising villagers and local-level government officials, can in principle plan development programs of their own and receive government funds and technical assistance to supplement their own resources which, by the way, need not be confined to physical construction alone. The bureaucratic process of government fund disbursement, the recalcitrant attitudes and behavior of the local officials, and the inability of the community people to unite for self-help action have generally turned the Rural Development Societies into another government agency controlled by the local officials. Other rural participatory organizations formed under statutory provisions--the Cultivators' Committee and the Productivity Committee--for the purpose of encouraging all the farmers in a village to plan together for the improvement of agricultural productivity have also proved to be ineffective, partly because the farmers have not been able to organize themselves collectively.

The government has attempted to utilize institutions similar to shramadana to rehabilitate the old water storage and irrigation system in the dry zone through "tanks" (small water reservoirs). In this effort the government makes grains and other food items available to people who participate in the reconstruction or renovation of tanks. The officially-organized program, however, has produced many ill-constructed tanks and half finished waterways, many of which can be of little use for irrigation. The program has failed to evoke the involvement of the people and the spirit of dedication that normally should characterize shramadana projects. It has become a relief program for the distribution of donated grains.

Be that as it may, the government efforts to create rural institutions and to expand development services in the rural areas and the relative lack of effectiveness of these efforts give voluntary organizations like the Sarvodaya Movement the opportunity and responsibility to organize and educate the rural people to help themselves by combining their own resources with those of the government.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
AND MANAGEMENT

CENTRAL ORGANIZATION AND STAFF

The Sarvodaya Movement was sanctioned as an approved charity in 1965 and gained full official recognition in 1972 when the charter of incorporation was approved by an act of the Parliament. Over the years the expansion of the movement's work and the additions to the scope of its program have necessitated the growth of a complex organizational structure.

The general membership of the movement consists of various categories of dues paying members (Life, Honorary, Ordinary, Donor, Youth, and International), members of Sarvodaya groups (children 7-16; youth 16-35; mothers; farmers; general) in the villages, the members of Sarvodaya Bhikku (monks) Conference, members of the Sarvodaya branch societies; and members (or representatives) of organizations affiliated with Sarvodaya.¹

The Executive Council, the policymaking body of the movement, consists of the president, two vice-presidents, the general secretary, the organizing secretary, two assistant secretaries, the treasurer, the assistant treasurer, an elders' council comprising 15 individuals and 11 other Executive Council members; all of these are elected by the general body of members. In addition, there are 35 invitee members (all from Sri Lanka) of the Executive Council, who are asked by the Council to become members because of their special knowledge and experience in the development field. The appointment of 35 invitee members is a strategy introduced in order to secure the services of experts in various fields who would not ordinarily be elected to the Executive Council or who for personal reasons would not like to be officially elected in this manner.

The Executive Council is assisted by a number of advisory committees, such as those on general administration, finances, projects, development education, and village reawakening. Recently two more advisory committees on appropriate technology and national unity have been appointed.

The administration of the program is carried out by a team comprising a general administrative secretary, finance secretary, project secretary, development education secretary, and village reawakening secretary. There is also a team of coordinators for implementation of plans with a coordinator

¹See Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement at a Glance, Sri Lanka, 1976.

each for (1) general membership, Executive Council, and Movement affairs; (2) management of personnel; (3) finance management and accountability; (4) general services; (5) production and marketing; (6) projects; (7) development education; and (8) village reawakening.

The national and international headquarters of Sarvodaya is at Meth Medura in Moratuwa district near Colombo. In addition to administration and associated activities one also finds at Meth Medura (1) the Sarvodaya Development Education Institute, (2) the Sarvodaya Community Living Programme (for 300 youths), and (3) the Central Sarvodaya Services.

In addition to Meth Medura there are five other important centers of Sarvodaya work scattered throughout the country: the Sarvodaya Development Education Centres at Tanamalwila in Monaragala district, at Baddegama in Galle district, at Panwila in Kandy district, and at Karativu in Jaffra district; and the Sarvodaya Community Leadership Training Institute for Buddhist monks at Pathakada in the Ratnapura district.

The Development Education Centres, beside acting as the educational base for Sarvodaya regional services, have the following components: (1) a community leadership training program, (2) a training program in agricultural and technical skills, and (3) community living facilities for the trainees and the Sarvodaya workers. The center at Tanamalwila has an Appropriate Technology Development Unit. The center at Karativu is the only such center in the Tamil-speaking areas; it has started relatively recently with a community development training program.

The center for the monks is for the purpose of preparing monks for community leadership. The important role that the Buddhist monk plays in the rural areas as a community leader and the role of the temple as a pivotal point for social, cultural, and economic development have always been recognized by Sarvodaya but not sufficiently understood by those who plan and execute governmental programs.

There is also a Sarvodaya Research Centre situated in Colombo. Started as a "study service scheme," it has grown into a center where numbers of qualified young men and women are trained to do research on many aspects of Sarvodaya activities and rural development. Their findings are expected to provide the basis for evaluating Sarvodaya programs, formulating policy, and developing strategies and designs for future programs. A vishvodaya ('awakening of the world') center, to serve as the base for the international aspects of Sarvodaya, is planned to be opened in the near future.

The regional centers are linked with the villages through seventy-four extension centers known as Gramodaya Centers. An extension center may serve from two to thirty-five villages, the average being around ten. Through the extension centers, the headquarters and the regional centers provide services, advice, and material assistance, such as the provision of powdered milk for the community kitchens. It is the base, often the residence, of the Sarvodaya workers assigned to the villages. Some of the training programs are also held at the extension center instead of at the regional center.

Most of the Gramodaya extension centers are located at the temple or in church premises or in some other community building. The centers are manned by two or three Sarvodaya workers who have gone through Sarvodaya community leadership and community development courses and may also have had some training in agriculture. The volunteer workers, as they are called, are paid an allowance (average of Rs. 150 per month, equivalent to US \$18) by headquarters. The worker at the extension center is an all-purpose individual who remains in close touch with his villages, works

with the villagers in developing their own Sarvodaya programs, identifies specific forms of help that Sarvodaya can offer to the villages, and tries to be generally available and helpful in the villages. The success of the village program depends heavily on the personality, dedication, and competence of the worker at the extension center. Usually, one worker handles one village, but occasionally more than one volunteer may work in one village or a group of volunteers may be responsible for a cluster of villages. The volunteer workers are selected by the village Sarvodaya Group and sent for training at the Gramodaya center or at one of the regional education centers. The training may vary from two weeks (basic training) to three months and is followed up by refresher courses from time to time.

ORGANIZATION OF THE VILLAGE ACTIVITIES

The organization and institutions described above form a superstructure that exists to support Sarvodaya activities in the villages. Sarvodaya activities are introduced into individual villages in various ways. In many cases it is the village monk who takes the initiative by writing a letter explaining the desire of the village to join Sarvodaya or perhaps his own interest in getting the people interested in Sarvodaya. Sometimes a villager himself finds the Sarvodaya program appealing, stirs up interest among some of his peers, and communicates with Sarvodaya headquarters. Once such a communication is received, the village is advised to form a Sarvodaya organization, in most cases a youth group. A volunteer worker from headquarters is sent to advise the villagers and to enable them to take the initial steps in introducing Sarvodaya there. The initial steps often include one or more shramadana projects which become the occasion for Sarvodaya workers to work and live with the villagers and discuss the Sarvodaya principles as well as make plans for future activities in the village.

Another early step that usually follows the formation of a society in a village is to conduct a survey of the socioeconomic situation of the village. Sarvodaya workers and the leaders of the newly-formed village organization jointly carry out the survey, guidelines for which are provided by the Sarvodaya Research Centre in the form of a questionnaire that tries to assess the manpower situation, economic resources, social characteristics, basic health situation, and important cultural traits. If it is properly conducted and if the Sarvodaya workers and village leaders know what to do with the information, the socioeconomic survey provides the basis for future Sarvodaya programs in the village. Often, however, useful information is not adequately collected, and there is insufficient understanding of how to use the information for planning purposes. Therefore the program that is set up is apt to follow a stereotyped pattern as seen in many other Sarvodaya villages.

Ideally, the Sarvodaya organization in a village includes a youth group (16-25 years), mothers' group, farmers' group, children's group (7 - 10 years), and a preschool group connected with the mothers' group. The ideal model is completed with the inclusion of an elders' group and sometimes the Samudan group. The elders' group obviously enrolls the village elders, and the Samudan group taps the expertise, special talents, and experience of certain village residents who for one reason or another are not included in any of the other groups. In practice there are few villages where all these groups function in full capacity. In many villages one may find only one group functioning. In others two or three or, at the most, four are at work.

According to a 1976 Sarvodaya count, 961 villages were contacted by Sarvodaya under its proposed 1,000 village development program. Details of these 961 villages were not at that time available, but a December 1975 report provides information about 804 villages then included in the program. Of this number, 334 villages were at the first stage: i.e., they were about to enter the Sarvodaya program. The initial socioeconomic surveys had been conducted in these villages with the purpose of ascertaining the problems at hand. There were 380 villages at the second stage, or the shramadana stage. Usually after the socioeconomic survey has identified the problems of the village, steps are taken to organize Sarvodaya activities, the initial step being the holding of a shramadana, or work camp.

Shramadana is a work camp for physical construction for which labor and skills are donated by volunteers. Since time immemorial the donation of labor for individual or social purposes had been regarded as an action that accrued religious merit. In the village people donated their labor for the construction of houses, digging wells, ploughing the fields, harvesting and so on. Sarvodaya has resurrected this customary practice by motivating people to donate their collective labor for the construction of much needed roads, wells, tanks, and similar community projects. In such work camps villagers and Sarvodaya volunteers work together.

The third stage is the stage of gramodaya (the awakening of the village). By this time Sarvodaya organizations are formed, the village people begin to understand the principles and philosophy of Sarvodaya, and they begin to make their own plans and put them into action. The Gramodaya Mandala (council) is the apex organization in a Sarvodaya village. It consists of representatives from all Sarvodaya groups (children, youth, farmers, and so on) and is the local "supreme authority" for Sarvodaya development work. It is the coordinating body for the village for Sarvodaya activities (and sometimes for rural development activities of the government and other voluntary agencies as far as the village is concerned). There were 94 such gramodaya villages in 1975. By the end of 1977, it is estimated that about 2000 villages had some association with Sarvodaya, and that about 3000 villages had reached the gramodaya stage, having formed a gramodaya council and initiated some program activities on a continuing basis.

How the organizational structure described above has served the Sarvodaya objectives and to what extent it has facilitated the various program activities at the grassroots level can be assessed only by examining the field operation at the village level. A close-up view of some Sarvodaya villages presented later in this report will provide some clues to its overall effectiveness. An observer of the headquarter's operations, however, comes away with some impressions that may have a bearing on the general effectiveness of the organization and its program.

CENTRALITY OF CONTROL

In contradiction to its goal of creating self-reliant and autonomous rural communities, the Sarvodaya organization seems to function in too centralized a manner. Substantially all policy and program decisions are made at the central headquarters, and the sectional coordinators exercise control over all aspects of the program within their respective jurisdiction. The regional centers and the extension centers are essentially channels for transmitting and carrying out directives from the central level. Decisions needed to be taken at the field level, sometimes even decisions regarding individual

village programs, are referred to the central office. One reason for this in the past has been the irresponsible behavior of some of the field personnel who have mishandled funds and other resources.

Another reason for the "centralized" character of the organization is the towering personality of the movement's leader, Mr. Ariyaratne, and the central role he has played in building up the organization. The impulse to look up to the headquarters, particularly to the leader and the people who are in close contact with him, is pervasive in the whole organization. This tendency is probably a cultural trait in the hierarchical social structure of Sri Lanka that encourages unquestioning obeisance to anyone regarded as superior in some respect. The net result of this situation is an overburdened central management, a stunting of initiatives, and a less than ideal atmosphere for the growth of new leadership.

An outgrowth of the centralization in management is the tendency of the sectional coordinators to maintain a tight rein over their respective fields of activity to the detriment of essential interaction and cooperation among different activities within the organization itself. This is the impression the author of this report formed from personal observation and interviews conducted with the coordinators. It also appears that the coordinators have not made full use of the knowledge and experience of the invitee members of the Executive Council, although their special expertise is the reason for including them as members.

As one enters the Meth Medura complex of Sarvodaya headquarters and encounters the array of buildings, officials, trainees, camp organizers, group leaders, and other paid workers, one cannot help thinking of the simple early days of Sarvodaya when it was essentially a dedicated band of volunteers living and working with villagers in village shramadana camps. The extension of the movement to different parts of the island and the increase in personnel and scope of activities have invariably created a bureaucracy and a style of operation that may have to some extent enervated the original spirit of the movement.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES

As has been noted previously, a high degree of emphasis is placed on education and training in the Sarvodaya movement. Much of the bustle of activities noticed at the Sarvodaya headquarters at Meth Medura and at the regional centers is related to education and training courses of one sort or another. Education and training for the Sarvodaya volunteers, the monks, and selected villagers are seen as the means of awakening the latent capacities and strength of the people and inspiring them to proceed in the direction of self-reliance and collective self-help. The major organized educational activities carried out at the headquarters and the regional centers are: (1) community leadership training of various duration, (2) training for preschool instructors, (3) training in crafts and skills, (4) agricultural training, and (5) leadership training for Buddhist monks.

A close look at the education and training activities in one of the regional centers at Baddegama in the southern district of Galle will be helpful in appreciating the nature and effectiveness of these activities. The center served a territory comprising 87 villages with a population of 114,000. The center is located in a building leased on favorable terms from a Sarvodaya sympathizer. The center began operation in 1974 with a preschool center, a batik-making section, a carpentry section, and agricultural training. Training in arts and crafts began in 1975. Output from the training program until the end of 1976 was the following:

- 1974--30 agricultural trainees
- 1975--15 agricultural trainees, 10 from the batik unit,
5 in indikola weaving and other crafts, 15 in
carpentry, and 15 in other rural skills, including
blacksmithy
- 1976--21 in carpentry, 12 in metal work, 7 in batik,
14 preschool instructors, and 17 in indikola
weaving crafts. In addition there were trainees
in community development and leadership courses.

The selection of trainees is done by issuing application forms to the villages linked to Sarvodaya and asking the applicants to send in their applications. The village organizations sometimes select the applicants and send in the names of the nominees, or else the center itself will go through the application forms and select the best qualified to be trainees. There are no rigid criteria for such a selection, but the applicant's aptitude for development work and his association with the movement necessarily are factors that are considered in the process of selection.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP TRAINING COURSES

There are courses on community leadership at Baddegama for different durations of time: (1) two weeks; (2) three months; and (3) six months.

The two weeks' course is devoted largely to lectures and discussion sessions at the center, at the end of which the trainees are sent to take part in a shramadana camp. The lectures, besides expounding Sarvodaya philosophy, cover the organization of shramadana projects, such as community kitchens, and the dealings with community leaders. This type of short training was considered necessary at the early phase of Sarvodaya when it did not have the resources to offer a much longer period of training, and when trained volunteers were in demand for the expansion of the program. This short training cannot do much more than provide a "foretaste" of what Sarvodaya is all about.

The three months' training course begins with lectures on Sarvodaya for two days to initiate trainees into the movement and to provide a general orientation for the work to follow. Then the trainees are sent to a farm associated with Sarvodaya to acquaint them with strictly practical work. They are brought back and kept for two days at the center. After lectures and discussions again they are asked to go to their own villages for a week with a set of questions and guides for studying and analyzing the village situation. They then come back to the center for more instructional sessions.

The particular group of trainees observed by us in May 1977 consisted of sixty participants. After the lectures the trainees were divided into three groups and sent to three villages (Ginimellagaha, Talawa, and Akuressa). Here they were to take part in formulating a development plan and as a group to discuss its feasibility and implementation. After the stay in the villages they were again brought back to the center for a critical group assessment of the experiences encountered, the work already done, the problems faced, and the methods adopted. At the end of this session they were sent to their own villages and asked to continue Sarvodaya activities there. They were encouraged to start such organizations as youth groups, mothers' groups, and so forth. Each volunteer was also asked to bring to the center up to five individuals from their respective villages in order to take part in a seminar which lasted for three days. Towards the end of the seminar all of them (60 volunteers and 100 newcomers) were divided into small groups of five each and informal discussions on Sarvodaya and development were carried out.

The six months' course is an innovation begun for the first time at Baddegama. For this course only those who have already given some time to voluntary village work are selected. It starts with two weeks of lectures, and then the trainees are asked to draw up a program for "development" of their village which is to be put into action during the training period.

The "development program" usually concentrates on the creation of basic Sarvodaya units such as the youth group and mothers' group, or on improving the effectiveness of these groups where they already exist. The trainees are brought back to the center after an initial stay of

three weeks in the village. In the lectures and discussions that follow they learn more about how to put the Sarvodaya plan for the development of the village into action. At this time the trainees begin to alternate with two weeks at the village and two weeks at the center. When they come to the center every alternate fortnight the lectures and discussions about all aspects of Sarvodaya and development continue.

The effectiveness of a training program for community development workers depends not as much on the conduct of the training course itself as on the motivation of the trainees, what setting they return to after the training, and what kind of support the workers can get from the sponsoring organization.

Discussion with a group of twenty trainees in the three months' course who were on their village assignment provides some clue to the motivation and expectations of the trainees. Of the twenty trainees, ten were from villages with Sarvodaya organizations and all of them had completed the first series of lectures in the training course. Yet only three trainees were able to explain Sarvodaya's philosophy and objectives even in a general way, nine of them saw the course as a possible extra qualification for landing a government job, and eight expected to work in the Sarvodaya program as paid employees. More than half of the group thought the course was "unfruitful" to them personally. Most of the group members found the village assignment not adequately organized and not sufficiently instructive.

The trainees for the six-month course are expected to have better motivation and clearer personal goals because they would have already devoted considerable time to voluntary work and have had an opportunity to demonstrate their aptitudes and personal commitment.

TRAINING FOR PRESCHOOL INSTRUCTORS

The preschool center, the community kitchen, and the mothers' group constitute a complex of institutions in Sarvodaya villages that together cater to the needs of young children below the schoolgoing age of 7 and to some extent the needs of mothers. The worker in charge of these activities is a young woman from the village who is given a preparatory training by Sarvodaya. Two kinds of training courses are run--one for two weeks and the other for three months--at Sarvodaya headquarters and the regional centers, including the one at Baddegama.

The short course of two weeks was initiated to alleviate the financial and other constraints that a longer course would impose and to meet the rising demand for preschool instructors. The three-month course was later begun as the need for a more thorough preparation became apparent. Both courses, however, continue at present, and some trainees of the shorter course eventually join the longer course.

The trainees are, in principle, selected by the village Sarvodaya organization on the basis of their individual qualities and commitment to serve the community. They usually have comparatively low secondary level education (nine to ten years of schooling). Occasionally the trainee has joined the course on her own initiative or at the recommendation of some influential individual. The motivation of these trainees, as revealed from interviews with a number of them, is sometimes a desire to qualify for employment as a preschool instructor under the government or some other program.

The courses cover subject matter related to child development, principles of nutrition, organization of community kitchens, basic health care for children and mothers, preventive measures, and the principles and goals of the Sarvodaya organization.

A course for training village health auxiliaries was opened at one stage, but soon discontinued. Apparently it was decided that training and maintaining its own cadre of village level health workers was not the best possible use of the limited resources of Sarvodaya in the face of competing demands.

COURSES IN CRAFTS AND SKILLS

A number of courses in arts and crafts for village youth are being carried out at Baddegama. Applications are invited from those with the necessary aptitude from the villages associated with Sarvodaya. The following training courses are available at Baddegama and are representative of skill training in other regional centers and at headquarters.

Batik. There is a batik training unit attached to the Baddegama center where training, usually for girls, lasts for six months. After the six months, the girls are encouraged to set up a batik center in their own villages, train other girls there, and make batik products for sale. Capital in the form of cloth, dyes, and other necessities for the village centers are loaned by the Sarvodaya center, which also buys the finished product. There are two villages where batik centers have been opened by trainees from Baddegama.

The problem with batik-making is the uncertain market. The center at Moratuwa collects the products from the villages and tries to find overseas markets for them, but we were informed that no outlet had been found for the work completed at Baddegama. Consequently the girls at the village centers often have to sell their products locally, and this is a difficult task.

Painting. Painting as a profession is not very promising unless one is exceptionally talented. Sarvodaya has encouraged some village youth with talent to become designers for batik products, but this effort has not been very successful.

Indikola craft. Indikola is a type of reed out of which various items such as baskets are woven. The course on indikola weaving, like that on batik, lasts for six months. A qualified teacher from outside is engaged to teach the skills to a number of girls from the neighboring villages. As the raw material is found in certain villages, women in those villages produce various items such as table mats and baskets, thus supplementing their own meager family income. Because skills are transmitted to younger girls in the same villages, the need for a special training course at the center is not as great as for other skills. The difficulty again lies in marketing the product, and no systematic plan for this purpose has as yet been evolved.

Rural industrial skills. The purpose in teaching rural industrial skills is to train youngsters in a skill or skills that can be used to produce materials for local use in the village itself. The training covers basic skills in woodwork, ironwork, and building construction. The course lasts for six months and youths, qualified in S.S.C. (ten years of schooling) and nominated from the youth groups in the village, are enrolled in this course. Some of the youths have entered government service by virtue of the training received; still others have been sent to other Sarvodaya centers as instructors.

This training is useful to a village only if its youthful trainees elect to return to their village. There are, of course, several difficulties to be encountered here. In the first place the youths need a sizeable capital with which to start a business, even a small smithy. Even if the necessary capital were to be provided by a loan from Sarvodaya, the problem of marketing the products still remains. Demand is relatively slight and the income that such work provides is low. There is a small industries project run by the government that encourages youth in self-employment enterprises: raw materials are provided and some help is offered in marketing the products. If the Sarvodaya training could link up with the government project, it would have a better chance of success. In the government plan for the development of rural industries there is apparently no provision for linkage with a nongovernmental body, even if it is a rural voluntary organization. Possibly a dialogue on this subject between the Sarvodaya leaders and the government would help solve this problem.

There are also sociocultural barriers to the promotion of rural industrial skills. Blacksmiths, for example, are people belonging to a caste that is considered low in the caste hierarchy. High-caste persons in the rural areas would consider it demeaning to be associated with such an occupation, in which the skills, like those of carpenter and builder, are passed on in the family through an apprenticeship system. Even when Sarvodaya trains youths at Baddegama for various industrial skills, it takes high financial and other incentives before the trainees will break with caste tradition and start, for example, a blacksmithy in the village.

At the Panwila regional center an apprenticeship scheme in ironwork has been started recently. Under this scheme selected youths live in their own villages and work as apprentices with the village blacksmiths. The village "meister" receives improved equipment and the free labor of the apprentice for his services. This scheme has the advantage of keeping the trainee in his own setting, but the basic economic constraints to the growth of rural skills still remain.

Agricultural training. An agricultural training course was activated with the intention of providing a basic knowledge of agriculture to youth in order to engage such youth in land development projects in the villages. The course was discontinued after training 30 youths in 1974 and 15 in 1975. Some of those trained were able to find employment on government farms, but others found it difficult to use their skills as they had no access to land. These constraints prompted the closure of the course.

An interesting agricultural training program combining community development training and farming skills has been begun at the regional center at Tanamalawila, where a 500-acre stretch of land has been cleared to set up a farm for seasonal crops, plantation crops, and the raising of dairy cattle. The farm is expected to provide the training facilities for youth trainees, resident on the farm, and to serve as a demonstration project for neighboring village farmers who would contribute their labor along with that of the youth trainees and share in the profits. The project is seen as a means of learning from the traditional wisdom of rural farmers and of enabling the young trainees to become intimately familiar with the problems of farmers. The trainees would also learn farm management and optimal utilization of available land resources. Apparently some of the trainees are expected to work in the movement; others may become settlers in new areas or become change agents in their own communities as individual farmers. The program has not been in operation long enough to warrant any conclusion about its performance.

TRAINING FOR BUDDHIST MONKS

The program for Buddhist monks at Pathakada was begun with the idea of utilizing the services of monks, still the traditional leaders in villages, for village development. In medieval times the temple was the focal point of all religious, economic, social, and cultural activities. During the period when Sri Lanka came under foreign rule this vital function was almost destroyed. If the monks could be made aware of these cultural roots and the important role they could play in village development, with some knowledge of modern technology, they could very well become instruments for transforming village life. It was with this purpose in mind that a training program for monks was started at Pathakada. The duration of the program was six months. It was started in 1974 and was expected to train 120 monks a year.

Fifteen subjects, including Buddhist philosophy and Sarvodaya philosophy, are taught in the course. The content of the syllabus includes "the village and its structure"; social service; social relations; community development; health; village and government institutions; psychology; astrology; English; and program planning, management and implementation. The syllabus is impressive, but actual teaching is reported to have suffered from the lack of qualified teachers. Another problem is insufficient provision for effective follow-up of the trainees; there is no means of knowing whether the knowledge acquired from the training is put to effective use. A plan for systematic follow-up and support does not seem to exist. A complete review of the training course, including follow-up and ways of enhancing the impact of the training, is currently under consideration.

CHAPTER 5

RESOURCES AND COSTS

THE ANNUAL BUDGET

The finances for the movement in its early days came from small donations of well-wishers in the country. As the movement increased its sphere of activities, it attracted support from both local and foreign well-wishers and philanthropic organizations. At the moment various foundations from abroad are financing the bulk of the costs for different projects. Among them are NOVIB of Holland, OXFAM of the United Kingdom and United States, and Friedrich Neumann Stiftung of the Federal Republic of Germany.

According to the budget prepared for the financial year 1977-78, total expenditures for the year come to Rs. 34 million. [US\$1 was approximately equal to Rs. 8 under official exchange rate in late 1977.] This is divided into different items in the following manner:

1. Shramadana Camp Organization	Rs. 2,862,972.
2. Preschool Program, Community Kitchen-cum-Health Care	6,787,225.
3. Gramodaya Revolving Fund	6,458,500.
4. Development Education Activities	149,290.
5. Development Education Center (Meth Medura)	607,819.
6. Development Education Center (Tanamalwila)	7,367,670.
7. Development Education Center (Baddegama)	460,150.
8. Development Education Center (Kandy)	979,937.
9. Development Education Center (Pathakada)	610,340.
10. Development Education Center (Karativu)	349,797.
11. Sarvodaya Library Service	218,450.
12. Gramodaya Centers	1,721,030.
13. Finance and Accountability	334,960.
14. General Support Service	1,503,110.
15. Production and Marketing Unit	1,597,335.
16. Sarvodaya Research Centre	534,015.
17. Visvodaya Building--Capital Expenditure	1,500,000.
TOTAL . . . RS	34,042,600.

¹See Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement, Revised Budget Proposal for the Financial Year 1977-78.

The single largest item of expenditure in the budget is the regional Tanamalwila Development Education Centre, because it includes the capital expenditures for a 500-acre mixed agricultural and dairy farm. Second to this item is the budgeted amount for the preschool centers and the community kitchens which are so central to the Sarvodaya village effort. The movement provides an allowance for the instructors, arranges preparatory and refresher training for them, and bears the transportation cost for the distribution of donated milk powder in the community kitchens.

Another large item is the Gramodaya Revolving Fund, from which loans are made to projects submitted by villages through their gramodaya councils. This is not strictly an expenditure item, as the loaned amounts are expected to be repaid and the fund replenished for further use. The loan fund began operation in 1975 with 13 small loans for projects prepared by individuals and groups. This was made possible by a grant of two million rupees by NOVIB for this purpose. The fund is expected to help develop a rural credit system to provide capital for small-scale rural enterprises. The fund will grow in size as Sarvodaya develops its own capacity for helping villages identify economic opportunities, draw up schemes, and assess the feasibility of such schemes. Sarvodaya also has to ensure a reasonable rate of recovery of the loans so that the fund remains solvent.

If the revolving fund is excluded from the annual budget, the total for 1977-78, including both capital and current expenditures, comes to about Rs. 27.5 million. More than half, or about Rs. 14 million, of this amount is allocated to the two items mentioned above: the Tanamalwila center with its agricultural farm and the preschool center-community kitchen program. Understandably, another sizeable item is for the organization of shramadana camps, the main vehicle for introducing the Sarvodaya program in villages and involving villagers directly in the program. The amount devoted to this item for 1977-78 was Rs. 2.9 million, or over 10 percent of the total budget, excluding the revolving loan fund.

Cutting across the major line items, two major categories of expenditures are maintenance of building, equipment, and vehicles (including the staff salaries related to maintenance) and training activities of different kinds. The total maintenance budget for 1977-78 was about Rs. 12 million. The amount allocated to all forms of organized training in 1977-78 was approximately Rs. 3 million.

It should be noted that the budget discussed above was only the indicative target based on the year's plan of activities. We are informed that the actual amount of funds raised and spent would probably be no more than one-half of the target and would probably affect relative allocations under different heads. Actual revenue and spending figures were not available at the time of this writing.

NONBUDGETED RESOURCES

Among nonbudgeted resources are the land and buildings donated free of cost and the volunteer labor. Sarvodaya has received free gifts of land and buildings in most villages. The centers at Baddegama, Kandy (Panwila), and even the headquarters at Meth Medura are situated on donated land. The main buildings at the headquarters now reconstructed and renovated are also donated. The volunteer labor falls under different categories: (1) the Shramadana, or gift of physical labor: volunteers are involved in such activities as the construction of roads, buildings, farms, lavatories, and wells; (2) Buddhidana, or the gift of knowledge: volunteers sometimes contribute their knowledge by teaching skills to others; (3) Saukya-dana, or the gift of health: volunteers devote their time and energy by providing first aid and meeting other needs pertaining to health and sanitation; and finally, (4) Dhamma-dana, or gift of knowledge pertaining to spiritual welfare: volunteers organize, according to each one's religion, religious activities that contribute to spiritual welfare. By 1978, the number of volunteers who had donated their labor or time for various periods of time had reached 300,000.

There is also in-kind contribution. The most prevalent and typical form of such contribution is the donation of food items for the community kitchens; for example, the fistful of rice brought in by each child. Kitchen equipment, furniture, and equipment for community facilities and construction materials are other common items of contribution.

COST COMPARISON

How do Sarvodaya program costs compare with similar government programs? Strict comparisons are not possible, since the programs are not quite similar and details about costs of both kinds of programs are not available. Yet, generally speaking, one may venture to say that similar government programs incur greater expenditure with lesser results. Government programs rarely take into consideration the use that can be made of the cultural and social foundations that exist in a village. A case in point is a government reforestation campaign carried out some years ago in which plants or seeds were distributed and government officials initiated shramadana programs to plant them. Unfortunately, many of the plants died for lack of attention: the people simply had lost interest. In contrast seeds were distributed in Sarvodaya villages and the normal involvement of community elders awakened in the workers a sense of common responsibility, self-interest, and pride. Expenditures involved in the project had been minimal, and the plants were well cared for.

The most important feature of Sarvodaya projects is that the community's own resources of different kinds invariably supplement the resources provided by the Sarvodaya organization and raise the total "productivity" of the resources used in these projects. This rarely happens in government projects.

DEPENDENCE ON EXTERNAL AID

The dependence of Sarvodaya on external assistance has often been criticized both by Sarvodaya people themselves and by outsiders. Sarvodaya leadership is conscious of the dilemma of an organization preaching self-reliance for rural communities, but itself palpably dependent on external assistance. On the other hand, Sarvodaya's ideal of universal brotherhood and cooperation supports the notion that the more fortunate ones should extend a helping hand to their less fortunate brethren, wherever they are. But help is most fruitful where the recipients of help are determined to help themselves.

Sarvodaya has taken some steps to become increasingly self-reliant, and other steps are under consideration. In principle, the skill training activities of Sarvodaya should not only be self-sufficient but should also generate some income for the movement, inasmuch as all training activities are conducted with commercial production in mind. In practice, as we have seen, the expectation has not always been fulfilled. More careful selection of skills to be taught, greater management efficiency in the programs, and more imaginative marketing efforts might make the learning-cum-production feature of skill training a paying proposition. The agricultural farm at Tanamalwila, for example, is viewed as an economic enterprise that could make the regional center self-sufficient.

Decentralization of the entire organization with regional centers and individual villages in charge of planning and implementing programs is also seen by some as a move towards self-sufficiency. It would eliminate many of the heavy costs of the central superstructure, both administrative and supervisory; it would obviate the necessity of a continuous two-way movement of the fleet of vehicles and personnel. Some of the central activities, particularly certain training courses, seem to have a momentum of their own and can go on indefinitely without being subjected to a critical assessment of their utility and justification. Decentralization would ideally invite a reassessment of program activities, each one requiring justification in terms of genuine local needs, and it would impose a discipline by requiring the regional centers and villages to undertake only those activities that resources in their control can support.

In the meantime, Sarvodaya appears to be able to attract assistance and support from diverse sources both in and out of the country.

CHAPTER 6

A CLOSE-UP VIEW OF SEVEN SARVODAYA VILLAGES

The seven villages associated with the Sarvodaya movement described in this section represent a spectrum of the 300 or so villages in which the Sarvodaya program has reached the gramodaya stage. Organizations of different interest groups have been established in these villages along typical Sarvodaya lines and an overall directing body of the village Sarvodaya council has been formed; or, at the very least, the villages are in close contact with a nearby Sarvodaya Extension Centre or a regional Sarvodaya Development Centre and usually one or more Sarvodaya volunteer workers deputed from headquarters are posted in each of the villages. By contrast, there are about 1,700 other villages in which Sarvodaya has merely established a rudimentary presence, by undertaking a shramadana project, by holding a meeting with some villagers about Sarvodaya objectives and ideals, or by selecting some village resident for one of the Sarvodaya training courses. No real progress has been made in these villages in setting up permanent village organizations or in launching program activities on a continuing basis.

Whether seven, somewhat arbitrarily selected, villages can serve as an adequate sampling of three hundred villages is a valid question. Geographically and culturally they reflect at least a pattern of the total program. Four of the villages are located in the coastal and southern wet zone, two in the dry zone, and one in the central hill country. Four of the villages are primarily farmers' villages, two are mainly fishermen's, and one is inhabited by people with a caste occupation of mat weaving. People of the Sinhalese-Buddhist origin live in six of the villages, one village is occupied by Sinhalese-Roman Catholic residents. No Tamil, Hindu, or other minority groups are included in the village sampling.

However, the fact that personnel of the Sarvodaya Research Centre were instrumental in the selection of villages and the gathering of information about them makes it likely that the selected villages are fairly typical of other Sarvodaya villages. The general similarity in the pattern of program activities, the organizational approach, the degree of participation of the villagers in the activities, and the evolutionary process of the program in each village also suggest that the selected villages provide a reasonable picture of the accomplishments and shortcomings at the village level of the movement as a whole.

TUNNANA

Special Characteristics

Tunnana is a wet zone Sinhalese-Buddhist village situated 28 kilometres away from Colombo on the Avissawela Road. The village had a population of 3,202 at the end of 1977 with 520 households. Three-quarters of the 800 acres of farm land in the village are used for rice. Other main crops are rubber and coconut. One-half of the adult males in the village are farmers either owning small plots of land or working as farm laborers. The rest of the work force is engaged in diverse activities, including such skills as carpentry and masonry, petty trading, casual day-labor, and work in the nearby rubber estates. Three percent of the workers are regular wage-earners as government, semi-government and modern industrial or trade employees.

The villagers form a homogeneous cultural entity: all belong to the same ethnic and religious group and the same Padu caste considered to be one of the inferior castes. Poor self-image born of inferior caste status and social and economic discrimination by neighboring high-caste villages that surround Tunnana have greatly contributed to the relative backwardness of the village. The educational level of the village compares unfavorably with the national average. About one-half of the adult population is literate, 28 percent of the 6-15 age group do not go to school, and the school dropout rate is high mainly for economic reasons. Only four people in the village have completed the General Certificate in Education (9 years of schooling).

Although farming is the main occupation, cultivable land is scarce. Very few families, probably two or three, own over four acres of land and about 20 percent own less than one-fourth of an acre. The small plots of land are usually owned jointly by families without clear individual title of ownership, because establishing individual inheritance would so fragment the land as to make it virtually useless. The average monthly income of a family is estimated to be Rs. 150 (US\$18.00).

The Influence of the Temple

Tunnana is the seat of a respected Buddhist temple established some forty years ago. The temple and the two resident monks have become a powerful influence in the life of the village and have been instrumental in fostering a sense of community and in taking many social and community development initiatives. It was one of the monks, the Reverend Tunnana Sumanatissa, who introduced the shramadana concept of the Sarvodaya movement to the youngsters of the village. The monks actively associated themselves with the movement and permitted the temple to be the center of village Sarvodaya activities as well as the seat of a Sarvodaya extension center that serves 21 villages in the vicinity.

At the initiative of the temple authorities, the government rural services, voluntary activities other than Sarvodaya, and the Sarvodaya program function in close collaboration with each other. Various government-sponsored rural organizations, such as the Rural Development Society, the Death-Aid Society (a traditional mutual-help body), the Sumana Praja Mandalaya (a farmers' association), and the Children's Welfare, are based at the temple; and a monk is the chief patron of all of the societies. The Grama Sevaka, the chief government agent in the village, maintains close liaison with the monk and is an enthusiastic supporter of the Sarvodaya movement. This framework of mutual linkage and cooperation established under the auspices of the temple has proved to be beneficial to all of the organizations and to the people of Tunnana. Often this has meant that government funds and resources--such as concrete slabs for latrines, money for the preschool program, seeds and saplings for reforestation, and anti-rabies vaccine for dogs--have been channeled through the Sarvodaya organization. This has resulted in an effective use of these resources when they have been mobilized with those in the villages.

The apex of the Sarvodaya organizational structure in Tunnana is the Gramodaya Mandalaya (the village reawakening council) consisting of village elders and representatives from other groups such as the mothers' guild, the youth group, and the farmers' club. The Gramodaya Mandalaya, embracing both the traditional and formal leaderships as well as the emerging informal leadership among different interest groups, provides a "social legitimacy" to the Sarvodaya activities and helps to promote a cooperative and integrated approach.

The Preschool Centers and Community Kitchens

Two preschool centers and the attached community kitchens, the most visible parts of the Sarvodaya program in the village, have satisfied an obvious need in Tunnana. About two-thirds of the 100-odd preschool age children attend the two centers and a third is being contemplated to include the others. The "teachers" of the centers are village girls trained in a brief course at the Sarvodaya Training Centre at Meth Medura. The teachers are assisted by two other girls from the village. The teachers are paid a small monthly allowance (Rs. 40) by the central Sarvodaya office.

While the preschool centers look after the socialization process of the children and keep them usefully occupied, the attached community kitchens serve their nutritional needs. The children get a drink prepared with powdered milk donated to Sarvodaya from abroad and a snack made from fistfuls of rice, vegetables and legumes that the children themselves or their mothers bring to the kitchen. The "teachers" also try to promote healthful habits among the children and their mothers and arrange for preventive vaccinations and health inspection on the part of government health personnel.

The mothers' group, scarcely less important than the preschool program and the community kitchen, functions essentially as a support organization for both of them. Prenatal and postnatal care and a more healthy upbringing of children are also its concerns. The preschool teachers and their assistants are the guiding spirits behind the mothers group. One recent development is a plan to set up a mothers' clinic for prenatal check-ups that would be serviced by the government midwife on fixed days of the week. This would save long walks to the government clinic, which have discouraged many mothers from visiting the clinic.

Activities of Youth

The youth group is an informal forum for organizing needed services for the group itself and for the community as a whole. The prime concern of the young people in Tunnana is to find gainful employment and generally to improve their life prospects. Sarvodaya's efforts in this regard have consisted of a training project in batik making and training courses for a small number of village youths in its Meth Medura center in such skills as carpentry and masonry.

About 20 young people have been involved in batik making, but the economic prospect for this skill is somewhat cloudy. The output of the center is now sent to Sarvodaya headquarters for sale, but this does not necessarily hold promise of much income to individual trainees. It is not known what use the trainees at the Meth Medura center are making of their skills; apparently, there was no well thought out plan for gainful utilization of the skills. A government weaving center in the village has not fared much better in solving the livelihood problem of the youth. Training programs in cottage crafts and other common trades generally do not seem to be of much help to the village youth. Some members in most families in the village are adept in one or more crafts or skills and are able to satisfy their own meager needs. What is needed is not so much training but help in opening up new markets for the villagers' products. One step in this direction contemplated by Sarvodaya, but yet to be implemented at the end of 1977, is setting up a shop on the main road to display and sell the village products.

Cooperative Effort

Scarce farm land, highly fragmented landholdings, and dependence on seasonal rainfall leave very limited opportunities for raising the villagers' income through agricultural development. One of Sarvodaya's efforts in this area has been an attempt to revive the now forgotten "kaiya" system by which all the villagers help each other by working together in all of the major steps such as ploughing, planting, and weeding. This process utilizes labor more efficiently, gives a lift to families with fewer working hands, conserves water, and facilitates crop protection. The single wealthy family (the Mudalali) of the village took leadership for this initiative, but, unfortunately, it made others somewhat suspicious of this effort. Furthermore, the advantages of the approach were not sufficiently self-evident to the families with only small plots of land.

Labor intensive commercial crops such as cloves, coffee, and spices are cultivated in small amounts by some of the families. In a land scarce situation, probably more attention could be given to these crops, and appropriate forms of assistance from the government's Department of Agriculture could be sought. Animal raising on a household basis is another possibility. It should be noted in passing that cattle-rustling has been a serious problem in the village, and this naturally discourages the villagers from raising cattle. Sarvodaya, at one stage, with the cooperation of the local authorities, organized a village watch operation and successfully stopped cattle-lifting and robbery, but the arrangement somehow broke down and the project was discontinued with a change in the local police personnel.

The Gramodaya Mandalaya and other subsidiary bodies created by Sarvodaya and the enlightened leadership of the monk have provided mechanisms for orchestrating the different government and voluntary community development actions and for deriving maximum benefit from them. As a consequence whatever meager resources and assistance have been available from various government sources have gone further in eliciting popular response, and in supplementing local resources. The benign influence of the temple and the wide acceptance of the monk's leadership have been crucial factors in the development of the Sarvodaya program in the village and have gone far in making the coordination of effort possible.

Economic Constraints

On the economic front there is perhaps less concrete achievement to show for all the efforts of Sarvodaya. Young people have been attracted to Sarvodaya in the hope of finding an escape from a life of grinding poverty, but most of them have soon become discouraged because Sarvodaya cannot seem to show them the way out. In spite of the movement's effort to work with the most deprived elements of society, its uncertainties on the economic front have kept these elements out of the fold. Almost all the families in Tunnana are desperately poor by any standard of measurement, but it is the relatively better off families among the poor who seem to be the principal participants and beneficiaries of the Sarvodaya activities. It comes as no surprise that the cattle-rustlers, the makers of illicit liquor, the gamblers, and the petty thieves, who comprise a sizeable number of Tunnana inhabitants and more of them "bred" naturally in an environment of social and economic deprivation, find the moralistic stance and high ideals of the Sarvodaya organization incomprehensible.

Yet it must be recorded that Sarvodaya in Tunnana has helped to change the self-image of a group of people burdened by a fatal sense of inferiority; it has shown that substantial progress can be made in the right direction through collective efforts; and it has built an institutional base that may prove to be very significant, particularly if the recent national decision to hand over control of development plans and funds to the local people is put effectively into practice.

KIVULEKELE

Special Characteristics

Kivulekele is located in the northeastern dry zone near the town of Puttalam, 82 miles to the north of Colombo. The 454 people of Sinhalese origin belong to 84 families, mostly Buddhist, and a few Christian.

The village in its present form came into being about ten years ago when the government decided to open new settlements in the area by offering plots of land to young people with a secondary school certificate (ten years of schooling). Later, others from the nearby towns and villages also came to settle there, attracted by logging and timbering opportunities in the surrounding forests.

Land in the village is not as scarce as in many of the other rural areas, and each family owns five or more acres. The land, however, is unsuitable for rice and the usual crops are coconut, tapioca, spices, and certain vegetables. Yields of these crops also depend on a rainfall that can be very erratic; drought has seriously affected the area during the past four years, although a normal rainfall in 1977 was marked by a feverish pace of farming activities.

A distinctive characteristic of the village is the absence of caste consciousness because the families have come from different caste backgrounds and different localities, a phenomenon that has prevented the formation of a well defined caste hierarchy.

Early Beginnings

The village monk invited Sarvodaya to come to the village in 1974, partly as a reaction to the activities of another Colombo-based social service organization. The conduct of the city-bred young men and women of that organization had met with the disapproval of the villagers and the monk. A Sarvodaya worker from headquarters arrived in the village and several shramadana projects were organized as a means of introducing Sarvodaya ideals to the villagers. These projects were the construction of two buildings and an approach road into the village, the repair of a "tank" for conserving water for irrigation, and the preparation of land for a farm that the Sarvodaya organization had acquired.

The initial enthusiasm and high spirit in the village about Sarvodaya did not last very long, however, mainly because the monk who brought Sarvodaya into the village moved to another temple and the new monk and the Sarvodaya representative did not get along very well. The situation did not improve much, even after headquarters replaced the Sarvodaya worker with another.

At the present time (late 1977) the preschool center and the farm are the only visible symbols of Sarvodaya's existence in the village. The preschool center and attached community kitchen were originally set up at the temple, an appropriate location because the temple is in the center of the village and is regarded as a natural place for community activities. In any case it is visited almost daily by members of the mothers' group, who are supposed to be closely involved in the running of the preschool center and the community kitchen. The Sarvodaya worker, for some reason, perhaps because of a mutual antipathy between himself and the new monk-- decided to move himself and the preschool center from the temple to the Sarvodaya farm at the outskirts of the village. This action severed the close connection between the mothers' group and the preschool center--community kitchen. Now the preschool center functions as another kindergarten without much direct involvement on the part of the mothers. It is to the credit of the preschool teacher, a village girl trained at the Sarvodaya Training Centre as a preschool instructor, that the center and the kitchen still continue to serve about 30 children of the village, though the previous close relationship with the mothers has not continued.

The Farm and Its Management

The farm, started on a plot borrowed from government reserve land, is run by two Sarvodaya volunteer workers sent from headquarters along with five youths (three girls and two boys) from the village. Although 35 acres of land were acquired for the farm, only 17 acres are used now. The rest is in the illegal possession of some of the villagers and is a source of conflict and ill-feeling between Sarvodaya and the villagers.

The purpose of the farm and its management by Sarvodaya is not abundantly clear. Although two full-time Sarvodaya workers, a tractor, and other equipment have been made available to the farm, there appears to be no well thought out management plan. The farm is badly kept, its yields are low, and some of the young workers from the village who came to the farm to learn new skills and earn a reasonable income have left it in frustration. It is neither a demonstration and experimental farm for dry zone agriculture nor a means of income generation for the local Sarvodaya or its young workers. Ostensibly, the farm is the seat of a Sarvodaya Extension Centre for the neighboring villages, but the way the farm functions and serves the youths of Kivulekele make it an ineffective extension base.

In contrast, however, one might mention that in another nearby settlement village, Wanatawilluwa, it is reported that under Sarvodaya auspices a cooperative land utilization plan involving dairy farming, mixed cropping, and tapping of underground water resources has been successfully worked out.

Other Projects

Among other projects of Sarvodaya in Kivulekele are a village market, set up in collaboration with the Rural Development Society. This market enables villagers to exchange products and commodities within the village instead of travelling several miles to the town. At Sarvodaya's initiative, a weekly clinic has been arranged in the village in which the government doctor and the public health inspector take care of primary health needs of the villagers, including vaccinations and inoculations. An effort to bring in the extension agent of the agricultural department to instruct villagers about improved techniques did not work out very well when the farmers found out that some of his advice was clearly wrong. Under Sarvodaya auspices the youth group prepared a volley ball court and acquired the necessary equipment.

Although the economic situation in Kivulekele is relatively homogeneous, with most families owning between five and ten acres of land, there are three patriarchs of joint families who are very powerful, each one of whom owns over 25 acres of land besides having other earnings from trade and government contracting. The positions of presidents, or patrons, of such village organizations as the Rural Development Society, the Death-Aid Society, and the Buddhist Association, rotate among these three people. They were initially supportive of Sarvodaya and encouraged the early shramadana projects. But later they apparently detected some threat to their own positions of leadership when a new and younger generation of leaders emerged through Sarvodaya activities. The traditional leaders also viewed with suspicion the fact that the base of Sarvodaya activities was moved from the temple, the domain of the traditional leaders, to the farm, presumably outside their full control.

Loss of Momentum

It appears that the Sarvodaya organization has lost its early momentum in Kivulekele and faces an uncertain future. The lack of sympathy of the new monk and the powerful village leaders has contributed to the lack of effectiveness of Sarvodaya. This suggests that the lack of enthusiasm, actually the resistance, of the traditional leadership is something Sarvodaya should be prepared to encounter if it wants to serve the disadvantaged and bring about social change. In any event, uninspired and incompetent leadership on the part of Sarvodaya village workers, vividly symbolized by the haphazard management of the Kivulekele agricultural farm, cannot long be sustained. An observer comes away with the impression that many opportunities to work with the villagers, to gain their trust, and to lead them in the path of self-reliant development have been missed by Sarvodaya. It is reported, for instance, that there are sources of underground water in the village. An organization like Sarvodaya could attempt to tap these sources, probably with the assistance of the government or other voluntary agencies, and compensate in some part for the aridity of the land. There is, in fact, the living example of a villager who improved his own fortunes dramatically in the course of a few years by pumping his own underground water for farming. Sarvodaya has failed to utilize the mothers' group and the shramadana institution to remedy the deplorable sanitary and hygienic condition of the village: six latrines for 84 families and unprotected dug wells as the source of drinking water. Sarvodaya's organized self-help approach would make a dramatic difference in the marketing of such Kivulekele products as cassava and coconut. As most of the villagers find it difficult and even unprofitable to carry their individual small quantities of marketable produce to the town seven miles away, they are at the mercy of itinerant merchants who buy the produce at a high discount. A cooperative marketing project in this situation might ensure a fairer deal for the small village farmers.

GINIMELLAGAHA

General Features

Ginimellagaha is a small farming village in the wet southern zone of the island, about 80 miles from Colombo. Baddegama Educational Development Centre of Sarvodaya, one of five such regional centers, is about four miles away from the village.

Ginimellagaha had a population of 2,662 of Sinhalese-Buddhist origin at the end of 1976; it has a land area of about 640 acres, one-third of which is used for growing rice. Rubber is the other principal crop. Only four or six of the 509 families own more than four acres of land. The river Ginganga passes by the village and overflows two or three times a year disrupting communication and damaging crops and property. From a social point of view, the village is divided between the original residents and the settlers who at one time were allotted land by the government (during the late 1950s and the early 1960s) to

settle in the area and came from the neighborhood as well as from some distance. The settlers do not have the kinship and caste affinity among themselves as do the old residents of the village.

About 70 percent of the village people can read and write. A quarter of the youth population has completed the General Certificate of Education (ten years of schooling). The village has a primary school that offers instruction up to the eighth standard. A secondary school exists in a neighboring village. The village also has a religious school run by the monk that meets once a week, where nearly 60 children learn about religion. A few of the villagers work as clerks, teachers, traders, and similar occupations. All others are farmers. Most of the farming families attempt to supplement their earnings by some nonfarm activities--such as weaving, brick making, and collecting latex. The products of these labors are sold to local merchants for a very small return.

The Influence of a Family

A shramadana project for the purpose of building an approach road was organized in Ginimellagaha in 1966 by a service organization called the Perakum Shramadana Society. A local leader of that project, Mr. Amara Pennappurema, became interested in Sarvodaya and joined forces with the monk of Baddegama to bring Sarvodaya to the village. Soon after a Sarvodaya youth group was organized, other collective activities such as a mothers' group, gramodaya, preschool, and the community kitchen came in its wake.

Mr. Pennappurema and his family have played a dominant role in organizing the Sarvodaya activities in the village. Their home is the meeting place for the youth group, the mothers, and the gramodaya council; even training sessions for youths have been held there. The Pennappurema family, by virtue of its leadership and common memberships, is also the link between the Sarvodaya and other traditional community organizations such as the Death-Aid Society, recreational and cultural groups, religious organizations, and such government-sponsored bodies as the Rural Development Society, and the Agricultural Productivity Committee.

Major Activities

The major Sarvodaya activities in the village, in addition to shramadana, are the preschool group and community kitchen, the mothers' group, skill training, the industrial unit, shanti seva (community service), the youth organization, and the gramodaya village council.

In keeping with the classic organizational approach of Sarvodaya, shramadana has been used to introduce the movement into the village and to build up the institutions and the programs. Through shramadana projects, the villagers have built a one-and-a-half mile long road, buildings for the gramodaya council and the industry and carpentry centers, a dwelling for the monk, a classroom for a Methodist school in a neighboring village, and the community kitchen; they have prepared the land for construction of a rubber processing plant; and they have farmed the land attached to the community kitchen to provide supplies for the kitchen.

The preschool program and the community kitchen began with 54 children but that number was reduced to 25 children in 1977, mainly because a government preschool facility was opened in the neighborhood. The preschool teacher, a young woman from the village, was trained in a three-month course at the Sarvodaya headquarters. She is assisted by two other girls from the village. The activities for the children are conducted for three hours in the morning, five days a week. The mothers' group is actively involved in the program, and

once a month the mothers formally meet the teachers to discuss the management of the program. The attached kitchen serves over 1500 meals a year prepared with general provisions donated by the villagers and powdered milk supplied by Sarvodaya. Physical and social development, nutrition, and elementary health care for the children are the primary concern of the preschool program.

The carpentry workshop and the industrial unit are training-cum-production facilities where skilled workers as well as learners participate. The skilled workers from the village use the facilities and the equipment for supplementing their own incomes, while at the same time they teach the skills to other youths in the village. As timber is available at little or no cost from nearby forests, the carpentry project has done relatively well in both carpentry production and training of carpenters.

Youth Groups

About 18 members of the youth group have also been engaged in other production activities such as basket and mat weaving, and making tooth-powder (substitute for toothpaste). In all of these manufacturing activities there are two unsolved problems. The marketing of products is uncertain at best, and it is difficult for the young learners to advance from apprenticeship to ownership of an economically viable enterprise. An effort to run a cloth weaving center and a latex processing plant failed because the program could not supply the raw materials and could not ensure a ready market for the products.

Shanti seva (literally, service to promote happiness and peace), another aspect of the local Sarvodaya program, involves the youth and other villagers in organizing religious, cultural, and recreational activities in the village. A small lending library is also included in the service program of shanti seva.

The youth organization consisting of over 80 members is the motivating force behind all of the activities described above. The youths are the participants and direct beneficiaries of many of the activities, and they provide both the manpower and the leadership. About one-fourth of the total membership is considered to be highly active in Sarvodaya affairs, while others participate less actively and more intermittently.

The Gramodaya Council, representing the village elders, is somewhat informal in character and provides social legitimacy, sponsorship, and protection to the Sarvodaya activities by offering its general approval of youthful initiatives.

Tangible Achievements

Some of the achievements of the Sarvodaya movement in Guimellagaha are tangible and readily evident. Physical infrastructures such as roads, community buildings, and leveled land for community use have certainly been facilitated and expedited by Sarvodaya-inspired shramadana. The preschool program and the community kitchen serve the obvious needs of a large number

of young children. The shanti seva activities enrich the social and cultural life of the village. Less tangible results of the Sarvodaya efforts are no less significant. The movement has helped to mobilize the resources of the village for common purposes and has given villagers a sense of collective strength and confidence. The Sarvodaya activities have provided an outlet for the idealism and energy of the young people in the village. The collective activities of mothers, youth, and elders have created a mechanism for the potential integration of traditional, governmental, and communal initiatives and for the participation of the villagers in the programs inspired by them.

Clouds of Uncertainty

These results, important by themselves, should probably be seen from a broader perspective of the overall development needs and prospects of the village. Sarvodaya has not really alleviated the economic situation of the village. The skill development and manufacturing activities have involved small numbers of youth and do not appear to offer an economically viable solution to the employment problem.

In Ginimellagaha the role of the monk at the village temple as organizer and guide of Sarvodaya activities has been taken over by Mr. Pennapperuma and his family. However well-intentioned and responsible the members of this family are, it is they who dominate the movement and probably most other affairs in the village. The small number of low caste washermen and fishermen families (about 25 out of over 500 families) appear to be neither participants in nor beneficiaries of Sarvodaya activities. Activities on the whole are restricted to the relatively prosperous original settlers of the village. The "colonists," economically worse off, educationally backward, and without the homogeneity of kinship ties, have generally remained aloof from the movement. Sarvodaya at one time made an effort to run a preschool center in the "colonist" section of the village, but it closed down when for some reason the Sarvodaya headquarters failed to supply the powdered milk for the center and the parents very likely in consequence lost interest in it.

At this time of flux it is difficult to visualize if or what changes in strategy and policies of the Sarvodaya activities in the village will make Sarvodaya more effective in serving the needs of the more disadvantaged sections of the village population.

TALAWILA

A Seacoast Village

Situated on the seacoast 98 miles north of Colombo, Talawila is a dry zone Sinhalese-Roman Catholic village of about 1500 people. About 160 of the 280-odd families depend on fishing for a living; about 100 are farmers; and the remainder are engaged in diverse occupations.

The village has a total land area of 1500 acres. In addition to rain-fed rice the farmers of Talawila grow tobacco, onions, and chillies. Fishing is done mostly in wooden rowboats and by hauling nets during the months from September to April when the sea is not too rough. A few of the fishermen's families own motorized boats. Though the rewards are not always adequate, fishing and farming provide ample employment opportunities to all the able-

bodied workers in the village. This is in contrast to many rural areas in the country.

Church Influence

Talawila is the seat of an old Catholic church and the site of twice-a-year religious festivals to which come devout Catholics from all over the island. The priest at St. Anne's church was instrumental in bringing Sarvodaya to the village. He is also the patron of the government-sponsored Rural Development Society, the local branch of the church-organized Socio-economic Development Committee (SEDEC), and the Sarvodaya. All of these organizations have been brought together in the village in an apex organization called the Talawila Committee for Rural Development (comparable to the village reawakening councils in other Sarvodaya villages). At the initiative of the priest, the first Sarvodaya shramadana project to build a road in the village was undertaken in 1974. (Other later shramadana projects included public and family latrines and wells for drinking water.) At the same time, the preschool center of the village run by the church was handed over to the local Sarvodaya committee, a mothers' group was formed, and a village girl was sent to a Sarvodaya training center for preschool training. A full-time worker from Sarvodaya headquarters was also sent to the village.

Preschool Center and Kitchen

About one-half of the village children (an average of 60) between three and six years of age attend the preschool center. The preschool teacher, a very energetic and personable young lady, has managed to establish a very close and personal relationship with the children and their families. The mothers gladly receive her advice on their children's nutrition and health problems and even consult her on other family matters. The teacher is paid an allowance of Rs. 75 per month by Sarvodaya headquarters; this is half the amount a government preschool teacher is paid. However, the teacher's own identification with the village children and the supporting role of the mothers' group make the Talawila preschool center much more effective than the usual government kindergarten.

The community kitchen attached to the preschool center serves five days a week a nutritious meal prepared with donated powdered milk supplied by central Sarvodaya, fistfuls of rice brought in by the children, other vegetables, coconuts and dried fish contributed by the mothers' group, and food items put aside by the priest from offerings made to the church. The preparation of the community kitchen meals and the involvement of the mothers' group in the community kitchen project have become a means for the introduction of basic nutrition concepts and practices in the village.

Other Enterprises

The most important economic project of the village is the young farmers' club and its three small farms that are run on a cooperative basis by the youths themselves on about 15 acres of leased land. High priced commercial crops such as tobacco, chilli, and onions are grown on these

farms. The priest serves as a management adviser to the farms and has arranged for production loans from SEDEC that are repaid from the profits after the produce is marketed. About ten young men are participants in this project.

Other economic enterprises engaged in by the village youth include making handicraft items, drying and packaging cashew nuts, and packaging shrimp powder from shrimps too small to be sold in the market. These items find a ready market during the semi-annual religious festivals when many visitors come to the village. The possibility of exporting powdered shrimp is being explored by a Dutch voluntary organization. A training project in basket weaving has also been initiated in the village and ten young people have joined it. However, the marketability of the baskets is uncertain.

The economy of the village can be greatly improved if technological innovations can be brought to the fish-catching enterprise: mechanization of the catching process; improvements in packaging, transporting and marketing, and the introduction of better storage, preservation, and processing facilities. Greater promise lies in having the fishermen themselves control their business through cooperative ownership. All these, of course, take capital investment and special knowledge far beyond the means of Sarvodaya or the local church. A small effort in this direction was made by the priest by arranging for small loans to young fishermen for the purpose of purchasing their own boats, nets, and other equipment. Even this rudimentary effort provoked the antagonism of merchants in the village and outside who owned the fishing gear, in general monopolize the marketing process, and in effect allow a mere subsistence wage to the fishermen themselves.

Implications of Priestly Leadership

Community development activities in Talawila owe their existence to the dynamic leadership and devotion of the priest, the Reverend Emmanuel Fernando. Father Fernando and his church in Talawila, it might be said, are counterparts of the monk and the temple in the Sarvodaya villages with a Buddhist population. In any event he has committed the resources and influence of the church to the cause of welfare and development of the entire village. He has induced the Grama Sevaka, the government representative in the village, to become an active member of the Village Development Committee--a significant fact because in most other Sarvodaya villages the Grama Sevaka has not become identified with the Gramodaya Council or its equivalent. The priest has tried to overcome the conservatism of the local Roman Catholic families by sponsoring youth group activities under church auspices for boys and girls. When the fishermen's irregular working hours during the fishing season prevent them from coming to the village gathering, the priest keeps in touch with each family through personal visits.

It is noteworthy that the priest's breadth of mind and outlook had made it possible for the Roman Catholic village to be associated with Sarvodaya, a movement generally identified with the Buddhist faith and tradition. The Roman Catholic hierarchy has apparently not been entirely happy about the association--particularly because some village activities regarded as inspired by Sarvodaya have received small financial support from the SEDEC church fund. Sensing this sentiment, the Sarvodaya headquarters has lately withdrawn its own representative from the village. Sarvodaya, in a formal sense, therefore, does not exist in the village. Nevertheless, the Sarvodaya activities and spirit live on under the able guidance of Father Fernando.

The dominant role of a single towering personality in Talawila raises a question that might just as well be raised here: what would happen to all the community development and self-help initiatives if the priest were to be moved to another parish? This is not an uncommon problem in several Sarvodaya villages. Another common Sarvodaya feature found in Talawila is that the movement has remained confined to a few regular activities such as the preschool group, community kitchen, and some skill training and crafts projects. Its achievements in the economic field have been limited as in other villages, although the cooperative farm project for the youths is a notable exception. One problem in the village that neither Sarvodaya nor any other agency has tried to do anything about is the very high school dropout rate of children. The main reason appears to be the seasonal character of the fishing operation, in which all male members of the family including adolescents are involved on a 24-hour basis during certain parts of the year. A school program designed to accommodate this special feature of the local fishing occupation could probably cut the dropout rate substantially.

ATULUGAMKANDA

The First Sarvodaya Village

Atulugamkanda is a wet zone Sinhalese-Buddhist village situated on the Avissawella-Kegalle road, about six miles from the town of Dehiowita and 44 miles from Colombo. The village has 98 families (78 homesteads) with a total population of 427 (late 1977). It is a village of craftsmen and laborers; most adult males work as masons, carpenters, and laborers in the nearby rubber plantation. The entire village (except for four high caste families) belongs to the same Padu caste, regarded as inferior in the caste structure.

The village has been associated with the Sarvodaya movement for several years, being the first of the planned 1000 village development scheme. The village came into the Sarvodaya fold through the initiative of Mr. P. A. Kiriwandeniya, one of the current leaders of the movement. When Mr. Kiriwandeniya was a teacher in a nearby monastic school, the village was hit by a severe flood and threatened by epidemic diseases in the wake of the flood. Mr. Kiriwandeniya persuaded the local authorities, the monks, and the local people to engage in a shramadana project to clean up the debris left by the flood and to take preventive measures against diseases. This self-help effort impressed the villagers with their own potentialities and other small shramadana projects followed, leading to a more formal association of the village with the movement.

As in other Sarvodaya villages, the movement's programs have been put into action through various groups, such as youth groups, the workers' groups, and elders' groups. The specific activities follow the pattern of Sarvodaya programs elsewhere and include a preschool center, a community kitchen, skill training in batik and printing and masonry, and a shop for selling both village products and the essential consumer items of the villagers.

Eclipse of a Promise

The Sarvodaya program in Atulugamkanda has to be described for the most part in the past tense because the program has been on the wane and many of the activities have lapsed since the original initiator of the program in the village, Mr. Kiriwadeniya, left the area to join the headquarters staff of Sarvodaya. The two volunteers selected from the village also moved to the headquarters and others who replaced them failed to rejuvenate the program. The absence of a temple and a resident monk in the village has also meant that there has been no rallying point or leadership in the village itself for community development activities. A temple has recently been built in the village, but a monk has yet to be found to take residence in the temple.

During the more active days of Sarvodaya in Atulugamkanda, about 50 youths belonged to the youth group and about 60 children attended the preschool center. At the end of 1977, only 10 or 15 young people were reported to be active in the program; only 30 or so children benefited from the preschool center and the community kitchen. About 20 mothers belonged to the mothers' group, and this meant essentially that they helped in keeping the community kitchen running. Up to 20 heads of families were reported to gather irregularly for the elders' meetings.

The skill training effort did not prove to be successful. Training in batik printing did not evince enthusiastic response from the village youths because they saw little economic gain in it in the absence of a proven market for the products. A group of 15 youths from the village were sent to the Sarvodaya training center at Moratuwa for training in masonry, but again, it appears, without much thought for the market this skill would command after completion of their training. None of the trainees has found it possible to take up masonry as a means of livelihood. Another group of youngsters from the village were sent to a Sarvodaya-sponsored settlement about 140 miles away to learn to become farmers and eventually to settle there as farmers. This venture was disappointing, even frustrating, to the youngsters. The land lacking sufficient water was not particularly productive. There was very little help or encouragement available to the youngsters when they arrived, and there was apparently very little advance planning on the part of the Sarvodaya workers. Another project to help villagers raise commercial crops was launched, and a supply of pepper and clove saplings were received from the Department of Agriculture. Again the project failed for lack of systematic follow-up and support efforts.

The shop established by Sarvodaya turned into a little grocery store for the villagers--a convenience but hardly a vehicle for promoting the sale of village products.

Atulugamkanda seems to be one story of the partial extinction of the flame of hope kindled by Sarvodaya some years ago. It is apparent that the project here faltered because unimaginative and run-of-the-mill workers from Sarvodaya failed to follow up the pioneering work of the first leader. In any case able leadership somehow did not emerge from the village itself.

HENAWALA

A Mat-Weaving Community

Henawala is a Sinhalese-Buddhist village in the central hill country about ten miles from the town of Kandy. Fifty-three families consisting of about 250 people live in the village. They belong to the Kinnara caste, regarded as one of the lowest in the Sinhalese social structure. The families own little or no farm land, which amounts to a total of 9 acres of rice land and 15 acres of land in which cocoa, cloves, and coffee are grown for the whole village. Weaving mats from a burlap-like plant fibre that grows wild in the area is the main occupation of the people.

Mat weaving is a caste occupation in which the entire family participates. In ancient times, the mats were prepared and used for ceremonial purposes in the king's court, and the villagers in return were looked after by the court. Today these mats are just another product without much commercial value, and the families engaged in this occupation can hardly make more than Rs. 100 (about US\$12.50 in 1977 exchange rate) per month.

Sarvodaya Beginnings and Problems

The monk, the Reverend Premavansa, living in the neighboring village of Hurikaduwa where a Sarvodaya extension center is located, conceived the idea of bringing Sarvodaya to the extremely poor and "lowly" Kinnara people of Henawala. The monk took residence in the village in 1973 and initiated a shramadana project to build a road into the village. The expectations generated by the monk's initiatives, however, were short lived, because he ultimately decided to go to a Bhikhu Training Institute, and the volunteer workers sent from Sarvodaya to carry on the initiative the monk had begun proved to be ineffective.

The usual Sarvodaya institutions such as the preschool center, community kitchen, mothers' group, and the youth group were not attempted here. Apparently, the village was economically and socially too deprived to mount the minimum effort needed to launch such activities. It was, for instance, difficult to find a village girl with the minimum educational background to be trained as the preschool instructor or to persuade the villagers to contribute to the community kitchen from their meager family food supply.

Under Sarvodaya auspices, a plan to grow the plant that provides the fibre for the mats (instead of relying on the unreliable wild growth) and to establish a training center to improve the skills of the mat weavers was initiated. The plan was not thought out thoroughly and ran into various snags. In essence the village had no land to spare for growing the fibre plant. Probably a solution could have been found by working out an arrangement with the government authorities to use nearby reserve land, but this was not pursued. The skill center idea was also not very well conceived, because the villagers had perfected the traditional weaving skill through generations of practice, and every family had one or more skilled craftsman who passed on the skill to the younger generation. In fact, the problem was that the mats were too highly artistic and their time-consuming

production by craftsmen of exceptional skill made them too costly for the local market. What the villagers needed most were strategies of marketing their art-quality products outside the locality and of making economically priced items for local consumption. Possibly a close liaison with the small industries department, the tourist board, or other agencies of the government would have been helpful in formulating a plan to vitalize this village's economy.

Alleviation of Caste Prejudice

The Sarvodaya movement, to its great credit, has attempted to erase the stigma of caste inferiority and the attitude of subservience and fatalism it has engendered among the Kinnara people. By paying attention to the plight of these people, by associating with them, and by living and eating with them, the Sarvodaya volunteers in the village and in the Sarvodaya extension center in the nearby high caste village have helped to soften the harsh prejudices against the people in Henawala. Only recently it was considered inappropriate for a monk to visit the village or to receive the traditional alms. Now the situation has changed, but still there is a long way to go before the villagers find themselves free from the burden of caste prejudice and other forms of social and economic deprivation. In spite of obvious gains, Sarvodaya's present lack of effectiveness in Henawala does not portend a very prominent role for Sarvodaya in any struggle for social and economic emancipation for the villagers.

YAKDEHIMULLA

Fishing for a Livelihood

Yakdehimulla is a tiny fishing village at the southern tip of the island, five miles from the town of Galle. The Sinhalese-Buddhist population of about 300 belong to 52 families huddled together on a 2.5 acre strip of land along the coast. Possessing no farm land and having no other occupational opportunity available, all of the families depend on fishing for their livelihood. Fishing, however, is carried out in a primitive way with small rowboats and simple nets. It can be undertaken without risk of life for only about six months in a year when the sea is relatively calm. Fishing, therefore, offers far from an adequate living for the Yakdehimulla villagers. The socioeconomic situation of the village is reflected in the fact that the village has no primary school or any other community facility except a temple. There are only three latrines for all 52 families and a single dug-out well for drinking water.

Preschool Center and Community Kitchen

The complex of the preschool center, the community kitchen, and the mothers' group is designed to serve the health and nutrition needs of children and mothers in the village. The preschool teacher, a local girl trained at Sarvodaya headquarters, takes an active interest in the physical development and health habits of the children in her charge. She also acts as an "intermediary" in getting the public health inspector to distribute vitamin tablets. She encourages the mothers to have their children take the triple antigen injections from the nearby health center. The community kitchen provides portions of rice and other food items brought to the preschool center by the

children or donated by the villagers. This contribution is supplemented by powdered milk supplied by Sarvodaya. All the children, whether enrolled in the preschool center or not, pregnant mothers, and invalid and needy adults share the meals of the community kitchen.

In Yakdehimulla Sarvodaya is identified most prominently with the preschool center-cum-community kitchen, which fulfills an extremely important need and has generated much goodwill for the movement. This goodwill, however, does little to improve the precarious economic situation of the villagers, which is the main concern of the village households. Sarvodaya does not appear to have any definite plan to address this main economic problem of the village; it is by no means clear what Sarvodaya can really do about it.

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CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS

ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF SARVODAYA

It is difficult to judge the impact of the Sarvodaya program because its objectives relate to spiritual reawakening, inculcating moral values, promoting certain personal habits and conduct, and--secondarily--undertaking certain social services and economic activities for collective and individual benefit. The problem of development is seen by the leaders of Sarvodaya, not so much in terms of the production and distribution of goods and services and building the institutional structures for that purpose as in terms of awakening the innate goodness in the heart of man and returning to traditional values and codes of conduct which essentially can provide solutions to the problems of society. Social services and economic projects, as it were, are occasions for practising loving kindness, sympathetic joy, equanimity, and pleasant speech, and, only incidentally, the means for meeting obvious needs. It is important that observers of Sarvodaya understand these objectives in the order of their importance.

It has to be assumed that the immediate results of the effort to adopt and practise the philosophical ideals and moral principles find tangible expression in the social and economic program activities in the villages, and one has to assess the impact of the Sarvodaya movement on the basis of these activities, however inadequate such assessment may be.

As we have noted, the shramadana projects of Sarvodaya have attracted 300,000 volunteers from all walks of life and from all parts of the island for various durations. This widespread participation in development projects and exposure to the Sarvodaya values cannot be taken lightly. They have presumably made the participants better human beings and have given them a better understanding of rural life and its problems. Shramadana projects have also constructed badly needed roads, canals, and community facilities; they have built houses for poor and disabled families, lavatories, wells, and buildings for farms and factories. In short, they have addressed themselves to human needs.

Some 2,000 villages, out of a total of 24,000 in the country, have come in contact with Sarvodaya. About 300 of these villages have reached what is called the gramodaya stage. In the gramodaya village, an organizational structure for community development action has been established, and one or more projects--a preschool center-cum-community kitchen, a skill training project, a cultural and religious group, or a farm--continue to function. The Sarvodaya councils representing the village elders and other interest groups provide not only the forum for collective planning and decisionmaking on matters of common interest, but also--at least in some instances--they have become the machinery for helping the effective implementation of government development services in the locality, pressuring and

keeping a watch on government agencies where this is necessary, and mobilizing local resources to supplement government inputs.

The Most Distinctive Sarvodaya Effort

The preschool group-community kitchen-mothers' group complex-- the most widespread community service in Sarvodaya villages--caters to the health, nutrition, and social development needs of thousands of children throughout the island. To a lesser degree, this complex also provides health education and some health care to mothers at prenatal and postnatal stages. This program has served as liaison with the government health service in bringing immunization and basic health care within the reach of children and mothers in many Sarvodaya villages.

Participation of Youth

Thousands of youth in the rural areas have found a constructive outlet for their idealism and energy through the youth organizations in Sarvodaya villages. These organizations have been the vehicle for introducing Sarvodaya values to the youth and to engage them in community activities of a cultural, recreational, and religious nature. Sarvodaya villages with youth organizations have proved to be of great value in facing emergencies or even natural calamities, such as floods and cyclones. At times of social tension--for instance, during the 1971 youth insurrection and 1977 ethnic conflicts--villages with well-established Sarvodaya organizations have retained their poise and remained peaceful in a time of destructive turbulence.

The youth have been prominently involved in shramadana projects and other economic projects for their own benefit. Various skill training programs found in all Sarvodaya centers and in many villages and other economic projects that combine production and learning are primarily aimed at the youth. On the whole, these activities have fared less well largely because they have paid attention mainly to the teaching of skills and have ignored or failed to solve problems of marketing and allied barriers to the growth of rural production. As a result, many young men who have been attracted to Sarvodaya with the hope of improving their economic lot have become disappointed and even frustrated.

Agriculture

Similarly, in the field of agriculture, the main approach followed by Sarvodaya has been to engage youths in farm work to teach them the necessary skills. In most cases, however, insufficient attention has been given to the problems of access to land for the youths, of fragmented landholdings that prevent farming on an economical scale, of questions of overall utilization and management of land either of a family or a community, and of workable provisions for inputs and markets. Management of the farms under the control of Sarvodaya organization has been generally poor, and economic satisfaction both for Sarvodaya and for participant workers has been low.

The Backdrop of Caste and the Persistence of Poverty

Sarvodaya has deliberately concentrated its program efforts among the lowliest of the low caste villages beginning from the very first village of Kanatholuwa in 1958, thus taking on the most difficult development tasks of

all. In many of these villages the community infrastructure such as roads, wells, latrines, and community buildings has improved; the cultural and recreational life has brightened; and useful services such as preschool centers and community kitchens have been established. In spite of Sarvodaya's concentration on the depths of poverty, the economic situation of the families and the life prospects of the young people in these villages have remained essentially unchanged as the close-up view of selected villages indicates. At Atulugamkanda, for instance, the first of the 1000 village program, which is considered to have reached the gramodaya stage, the tangible evidence of Sarvodaya efforts are the preschool center, the batik center that cannot readily sell its product, and a grocery stall. The village remains steeped in poverty and there is no effective program to lift it from this state.

Another example, regarded as representing a more successful Sarvodaya effort, is the village of Tunnana; but even here Sarvodaya has made little difference in the standard of living of most of the village families. It is true that some families here attend the gatherings of family elders, take part in shramadana, and send the children to the preschool center with more enthusiasm than is generally found; but then there are many families who do not participate in Sarvodaya activities at all and are oblivious to the Sarvodaya presence in the village. It is likely that for the lowliest groups, such as the mat weavers in Henawala, the Sarvodaya presence has helped to soften the harshness of the most invidious caste prejudices (now at least the monk receives the offerings of the people of Henawala), to highlight the seriousness of the caste problem, and to give the suffering people some inducement not to accept injustice with unquestioning submission.

Theory and Practice

The preaching of universalist values and the harking back to the ideals of the past by Sarvodaya do not appear to have transformed individual villages into cooperative communities pooling their resources and labor to help all the residents of the community. The old conflicts of divided interests, factionalism, the socioeconomic relationships, and the relative level of deprivation persist. In most villages the Sarvodaya organization and its activities are sustained by the interest and influence of the monk, whose transfer to another temple (as we have seen) brings the organization to a near collapse. The focus on spiritual development and the reliance on the monk, generally a symbol of conservatism, are viewed by many as a deliberate rejection on the part of Sarvodaya of the realities of the structure of economic exploitation. These critics of Sarvodaya are found among both the educated elites and the politically conscious elements in the rural areas aligned with certain national parties. These critics see the solution to the problems of deprivation and exploitation in vigorous political and economic action and not in preaching messages of brotherhood and love. They find Sarvodaya's spiritual leanings and reformist stance essentially retrograde, and therefore they identify the Sarvodaya movement with the rightist and conservative political forces in the country. Whether they are justified or not in their assessment and characterization of Sarvodaya, this attitude has the result of dividing and polarizing public opinion even in remote villages with a highly politicized

citizenry and of impeding participation of all the people of a village in Sarvodaya activities.

GENERAL LESSONS

Some general lessons from the Sarvodaya experience for community development programs are presented below.

1. As we have seen, planning and management of the total Sarvodaya program controlled from the Meth Medura headquarters, has created a monolithic structure that does not serve well the purpose of the movement. In the largest part because of the lack of qualified men in the field where local planning could be carried out, planning and management has become the prerogative and the burden of the Meth Medura headquarters. Plans now take shape at central headquarters; they are supervised by headquarters, and they are controlled by headquarters--and with a tight grasp on the budget. The enforcement of central control also requires personnel and time, as well as money.

Planning at the grass roots level can take place only if villagers are enabled to develop a capacity for their own planning. Villagers need outside help in developing this capacity. It is in this much needed enterprise that workers of voluntary organizations like Sarvodaya can play a crucial role. But these workers themselves have to understand and learn about the realities of planning projects and programs at the local level. The kind of training Sarvodaya volunteers receive in farming or community development is evidently inadequate and not attuned to actual circumstances. When a volunteer returns to his or another village he is not equipped to plan a farm, much less to manage it. Perhaps rural people themselves, those who manage small farms and other enterprises, can be a more fruitful source of knowledge for the volunteers. Some of the rural practitioners could be brought together to analyze the planning and management processes they themselves have been applying in managing their own enterprises. In any case making planning and management decisions in a central headquarters far away from the village is a poor substitute for learning from the local situation and generating competence at the local level.

2. Without an integrated approach the implementation of any aspect of rural development becomes difficult. As economic factors are closely bound up with social, religious, and cultural factors, the preparation of one program and its effective development presupposes the presence and development of other related programs. For example, a health program cannot be developed, say, by the building of village latrines; because, without an economic program there may be no land to build even a latrine as at Yakdehimulla, without an educational program the people may not be motivated and trained to use the latrines, and without a cultural or social program the cultural or social patterns of behavior may be incongruous with the use of such latrines. Although different interrelated needs require diverse programs especially tailored to suit the exigencies at hand, the needs are inextricably interwoven with one another and the solution of one depends on the solution of others.

Integration of programs in the village is helped by some commonality of leadership in the different organizations and programs. At Ginimellagaha, for instance, whatever success Sarvodaya has achieved is due to the fact that the same group of ardent youths are represented in different village organizations. This does not mean that the same clique must control the entire set of organizations. It simply means that the same group of people in the community have different needs and problems that in turn are handled by different organizations.

Utilization of the sociocultural pattern in organizing different activities contributes to integration. The central place of the temple or the church in village life and the respect and trust enjoyed by the monk or the priest can be used to great advantage when the temple or church becomes the base for different activities and the monk or priest is assured of a prominent role in these activities.

3. It is universally accepted that an effective community development strategy requires an intimate understanding of the community. Sarvodaya experience shows that this understanding has to be achieved by truly being "immersed" in the community. The Sarvodaya pioneers, motivated by the simple purpose of doing something "useful" for the backward communities, lived in these communities and identified themselves with the people. This experience over a number of years has gone far in helping Sarvodaya to develop an authentic and indigenous strategy for community development. The people understand and accept Sarvodaya principles and philosophies when they are seen to be consonant with their own customs, traditions, and values. Sarvodaya, of course, has to disavow the obscurantist and antiquated social customs and appeal to the more universal and progressive values in the religious and cultural tradition of the people.

4. Another Sarvodaya lesson is that a community development program must cater to different sexes, age groups, occupations, and interests in the village. Among these groups the youth need and deserve special attention, both because young people bring vigor, enthusiasm, and idealism to community development activities and because, standing at the threshold of their own adult roles and responsibilities, they need special help in shaping their own future.

5. Sharing experiences in different program activities is a vital informal process of education encouraged by Sarvodaya. In fact, shramadana is an informal sharing of experiences. Similarly, all other activities involve a sharing of experiences and learning for all concerned. This learning is not just the acquisition of new skills and information, but is the formation of new attitudes, the acquisition of new vision and insight, the achievement of a consensus about common objectives. The informal learning process through which the organization's principles and values are internalized and common goals are accepted is eventually more important for the success of the organization than the more direct and formal educational activities, such as skill training and preschool centers.

6. The poorest segments of the rural society can be reached only by initiating programs that have a direct relevance and immediate meaning to them. The poorest families in Sri Lanka villages are usually unaware of the existence of many organizations such as the rural development society, Praja Mandalaya, and religious societies, although the majority of

them participate in the Death-Aid Society and Debt Reconciliation Society--two societies dealing with two vital concerns of the poor.

Many activities that are intended for the poor, such as various government services, can reach them only if they are organized as collective entities ready to demand what belongs to them. Once the people are made aware of their rights and privileges, it is no longer possible for a government official, or even the worker of a voluntary agency, to act according to his whims and fancies. Raising the level of consciousness about one's worth as a human being, the roots of injustice, and the possibilities for change, is particularly important for groups of people oppressed for generations in a caste system sanctioned by tradition and cultural values.