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**REORIENTING BUREAUCRATIC
PERFORMANCE: A SOCIAL LEARNING
APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT ACTION**

by
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The statement is a synthesis of ideas from multiple contributors and a personal interpretation of those contributions based on my own earlier work. I have been interested in people-centered strategies for development since the late 60's and have proposed some devolutionary, perhaps "re-orienting," strategies for development agencies (Thomas, 1973; Thomas and Brinkerhoff, 1978).

This present analysis has been substantially informed by the field work and published reports of several development analysts, principally John Friedmann, George Honadle, David Korten and Jon Moris. In this analysis I have relied on some of their terminology, phrases and conceptual "hooks." But the intellectual debt goes much deeper. The theoretical underpinnings are extensive, only partially identified in the notes and references of the publications cited in the text.

The analysis itself has been shaped to some extent through the active engagement of a growing number of Social Development Management Network associates who contributed to the SID Workshop and to two previous workshops. Principal among these have been Derick Brinkerhoff, Coralie Bryant, Edwin Connerley, Marcus Ingle, Leonard Joy, Rudi Klauss, Frances Korten, Catherine Lovell, and Philip Morgan.

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The outline of a new implementation strategy in international development is emerging from field experience in development projects, encouraged by advances in social science concepts and methodology.

Traditionally development strategies have been based on economic criteria, centralized plans, and center-to-field (top-down) action orientations. The emerging concept is premised on human oriented concerns, transactive planning, and field-with-center collaborative action. Various labels have been used for the new concept, but for present purposes the phrase people-centered¹ may best serve to inform the discussion. Innovations in social science research methods in unique combination with a theory of social action provide the basic value orientation and the methodological approach. The underlying concept has been called social learning.

People-centered development is an action research methodology requiring collaborative planning between the agents of government and the beneficiaries of government action. The primary strategic intervention required for achieving collaborative action between communities and governments depends on reorienting central agency bureaucracies toward planning with rather than for development clients.

¹The human focus to development objectives has multiple sources, but my use of the term here builds on several earlier references including Thomas, 1973; Grant, 1973; and Carner & Korten, 1982. See also Apthorpe, 1970, for use of the term "people planning." Continuing use of the term is evident in forthcoming World Bank publications, including William Baum and Arturo Israel, "Reorienting Donor Bureaucracies for People-Centered Development: Experience of the World Bank," a paper delivered at the 1983 Conference of the American Society for Public Administration, New York; and the initial drafts of the 1983 World Development Report.

This paper summarizes the primary components of the social learning concept and its contribution to international development strategy. It also examines two implementing strategies called community empowerment and bureaucratic reorientation. Included is an examination of possible constraints to achieving people-centered development action and an agenda for research and implementation.

Background

People-centered development action designed to give primary attention to management and implementation issues is new to the development profession in several distinct ways. First, until recently development has been defined in economic growth terms and development strategy guided by centralized concepts of planning. Management and implementation concerns were pushed into secondary status at best. Particular attention to implementation issues is only now emerging.

Second, management oriented professionals have not in the past participated directly or influentially in policy formulation or in the implementation of economic development programs. New opportunities for management specialists are now appearing.

Third, management structures and practices, whenever explicitly included in development projects in the past, have been centrally designed and imposed on subordinate administrative agencies and ultimately on their clients. Even more commonly, management structures and practices based on centralized organizing concepts have been implicitly assumed in development project designs. Functional experts in health, agriculture, engineering or economics, for example, were assumed to be also experts in organizing and managing development projects. These explicit practices and implicit assumptions are now being challenged.

A people-centered planning and implementation strategy is substantially different from past practice in that implementation

issues and the essential role of management professionals as central to development action are explicitly recognized.

There are three sources for the new development strategy. They are the implementation gap, social learning theory, and a new concept of social development.

The Implementation Gap

Development objectives both in project terms and as national goals have been illusive targets. Many nations have failed to achieve even modest growth objectives, while others have achieved overall growth objectives only to suffer increasing inequality rather than balanced growth (Chenery, 1974; Mehmet, 1978; Ward, 1971). A few examples of success in economic growth combined with reduced inequality provide potential lessons (Hunter, Grant and Rich, 1972), but the overall picture remains as complex and as frustrating as ever.

Development planners are increasingly aware that development objectives are thwarted by serious and continuing failures in the implementation process (Esman and Montgomery, 1980). Ineffective implementation is to be seen in the absence of needed coordination among international, national and sub-national agencies; in a variety of well-known bureaupathologies; in the absence of trained personnel; and, in an inflexibility of organizational form resulting largely from central agency requirements for control, orderliness, and standard procedure.

Failure of development projects to meet their objectives is also caused by unstable and shifting political support, by the absence of sustained or cohesive leadership from development donors or national governments, and by the inability of service delivery agencies to provide effective (i.e., trained and committed) implementation teams.

Another source of implementation failure, sometimes overlooked, is the absence of sustainability in projects (Honadle, 1981). Irrigation and tube well systems, transportation systems, and technical support systems for schools and training insti-

tutes require sustained maintenance programs not often achieved. Similarly, indigenous teachers, trainers, agricultural advisors and health professionals trained for service in new development institutions do not return from training or soon leave their assigned posts. The institutions often disintegrate after external development experts complete and leave the projects.

Recognition of these among other sources of implementation failure is now common in international development agencies and is increasingly documented in project evaluations.

Social Learning Theory

People-centered development is strengthened by recent action research experiments combining social science knowledge with action. These experiments are labeled differently as "the learning process" (Korten, 1980), "engaged planning" (Moris, 1972), or "transactive planning" (Friedmann, 1973, 1981). As the implementation gap is better understood, development practitioners are applying new understandings in social science methodology to improve the linkages between the development agency and client. New learning based on case examples shows impressive potential for improving the implementation process and for more effectively sustaining development projects.

Social learning theory provides a significant change from current practice in social science research. Its basic tenets, in the present context at least, derive from the work of Edgar Dunn (1971) and are being interpreted by several others including David Korten and John Friedmann. Some would claim that a paradigm shift is implicit in social learning theory -- that a "scientific" revolution of no small consequence is in the making (Korten, 1981; Friedmann, 1973, 1981).

Social learning is based on an expanded understanding of knowledge which differs from objective knowledge used so successfully in understanding the physical environment.¹ Objective knowledge of our physical environment has been developed by

¹In addition to Edgar Dunn (1971) and other references indicated above, the reader is referred to Berger and Luckman (1966), Roszak (1969), and Cochran (1980).

primary reliance on tools of logic and empirical analysis, with the researcher or scientist separated from the subject of the research at a neutral and unbiased distance from the object of attention. Scientific knowledge acquired by a neutral observer (researcher) is utilized in expert-designed plans (often called "blueprint" planning) and is implemented by "experts" through modern organizational systems and procedures we now call bureaucracy. For many tasks in the modern world scientific knowledge and bureaucracies have proven to be effective instruments. For other tasks, however, they have not been effective.

Social reality is allegedly different from physical reality, requiring a different research strategy for the discovery of social knowledge. Social reality is deeply imbedded in customs, traditions and beliefs of human beings in social communities (Berger and Luckman, 1966), is not fixed or unchanging as allegedly are physical phenomena,¹ and is dependent on value and action commitments of individuals who make up societies. Social realities are created and can be changed, and are influenced by any and all research interventions (Cochran, 1981). The researcher therefore is not neutral in relation to the research object as in the standard scientific design.

Social knowledge is derived from social realities and from the value commitments of both the researcher and the researched through a learning process in which research and social action take place simultaneously. Action research is an interactive or transactive dialogue in which the researcher is engaged in a mutual learning experience with the subject(s) of the "experiment." The researcher contributes knowledge derived from professional training and personal value commitments, while research subjects contribute the "data" of personal and communal realities of which they are the sole and "expert" possessors.

Social learning alters the traditional roles of researcher/

¹There is evidence that "good" science does not in fact proceed from this assumption about physical phenomena. See, for example, the work of Fritjof Capra (1975 & 1982).

planner/manager and the traditional roles of the clients of change activity. The researcher is no longer a neutral observer of "distant" facts but is an active contributor to the formulation of new social knowledge. The planner no longer designs only with scientific data and professional expertise but collaborates actively with clients in the formulation of human-scale plans. The manager no longer acts neutrally to deliver "units of service" defined "from above" but actively negotiates human defined service units acceptable both to clients and to central representatives of the larger political unit.

The subject of research, the client of the planner/manager, is no longer a passive bureaucratic object required only to contribute neutral data but rather is recognized as an "expert" capable of and expected to participate actively in choices about future life styles.

When social learning theory is applied to international development work, the development agent, whether donor or IDC government agent, is no longer the "deliverer of development" to the poor recipient. The agent rather is the possessor of "professional" expert knowledge which requires joining in a collaborative planning process with "social" expert knowledge in the possession of the so-called clients of development. Both types of knowledge are valid. Both are required for effective social change.

Social learning theory and the renewed emphasis on management and implementation strategies pointed out earlier relate directly to a third stimulus supporting a new development strategy, a new concept of social development centered on human values and equity.

Social Development

Definitions of development have undergone significant change during the past decade (Chenery, 1974; The Brandt Report, 1980; and Mehmet, 1978). Original concepts of develop-

ment couched in primarily economic terms (GNP and per capita growth) became increasingly inadequate for the complexities of national aspirations. Economic growth often resulted in maldistribution of basic resources and industrial output. Intractable poverty afflicting significant numbers of nations and people remained.

More recently, economic development goals have been refined to focus attention on the poorest majorities, on unequal distribution within "successfully" growing nations, and on "basic needs" in specific functional areas such as health, housing, education, population, agriculture and rural development (Grant, 1973; Hunter, Grant and Rich, 1972).

During this period of change, attention was directed toward the participation of beneficiaries in development programs -- often with little accomplishment and a considerable sense of "lip-service" for what many considered a controversial and time consuming diversion from real needs.

From the point of view of social learning theory, this shift of concern toward the poorest peoples and basic needs, laudable as it was, still left the clients of development in the role of passive recipients. To alter that role, it is necessary to go one step farther by adding a human value component to the definition of basic needs. The added component is a sense of self-worth and a personal capacity for actively participating in life's important decisions. Basic needs as redefined must encompass a sense of political efficacy which, when realized, converts passive, reactive recipients into active, contributing participants in the development process.

Social development becomes the liberation of human beings and communities from passive recipients toward a developed, active citizenry capable of participating in choices about community issues.

The concept of social development enlarges earlier conceptions of economic development or development goals in other

ways as well. Social development is not to be interpreted as a prescriptive ideal to be imposed on the poor and poor nations of the world by the allegedly developed; rather it is an ideological commitment to the goals of social change for the rich, developed West/North as well as the previously defined underdeveloped South/East. The goal of social development is that of enhancing the capacity of peoples and communities to manage the environments in which they live regardless of which corner of the Earth might be the domicile.

Modern (i.e. present and future) life is now described as a continuing condition of rapid change within turbulent environments (Toffler, 1970). Seemingly intractable conditions of crime, pockets of poverty and inequality, unemployment, resource scarcities, and elements of social alienation and anomie plague the developed West. These social challenges are not dissimilar in severity from conditions of underdevelopment, poverty, political instability, and the absence of human rights among the unenfranchised of the world. Perhaps now the image of "spaceship earth" sharpens our understanding of the challenges we all face and of the opportunity presented for mutual learning while engaged in the search for resolution of these challenges. As the spectre of nuclear holocaust generated by Western technology impinges on present social reality, the dominant vision of the civilized, progressive West as better, and as the model for the poorer, ignorant, backward communities of the non-West, loses all its power.

Social learning as new social action theory and method and social development as an enlarged conception of social change offer new value premises for the international development strategist. For change agents concerned with development (as redefined) in the Third and Fourth World, new intervention strategies are necessary. Community empowerment and the re-orienting of development bureaucracies are two such strategies introduced below.

Community Empowerment

There is nothing new about the objective of seeking effective participation of poor communities in political and economic systems. Economic development objectives have long expected the rewards of growth to diffuse (some say "trickle down") through developing societies to engage the productive and participative capacities of all peoples. The results however have been satisfactory.

Limited success in achieving participation has been found through direct intervention in poor communities by using community organizing and community development strategies (Holdcroft, 1977; Hollnsteiner, 1979). Though organized communities have sometimes resulted, the integration of these communities into wider political and economic structures has been less evident. Despite some successes in economic growth objectives and in micro-level community development projects, these achievements have not yet been translated into effective general strategies for sustained development.

A social learning perspective offers the potential for improving development program implementation by empowering communities for active participation in development programs and simultaneously linking those communities to the political and administrative structures of the larger society. Thus the development effort is not solely that of organizing client communities as an end in itself, but rather is the empowering of persons and communities for effective participation in the broader political and economic community. The empowering of communities is an integral and essential part of development programs designed in the long term to achieve more general regional and national goals.

Empowering people and communities for self-sustaining activity is not a mysterious process. One development strategist often uses the fish proverb to illustrate the empowerment process (Honadle, 1981). "Give a man a fish and he eats today;

teach a man to fish and he can eat every day." But it is said the proverb begs the question of who owns the fish? Ownership offers a sharing of the rewards of life among the members of a community. Equitable ownership and accessibility to physical and economic resources continues to be a major challenge for many of the world's people.

But of equal importance in interpreting the proverb is the action statement "to fish," implying a capacity to act. The physical or technical capacity to fish is perhaps readily understood, based on well known technology. Less evident but perhaps more critical to effective social development is the psychic-social capacity "to fish." Combatting the alienation and anomie characteristic of powerlessness may well be the more difficult requirement in enabling or empowering the "poorest majorities" in the world to first believe it possible, then to seek actively, and only finally to acquire ownership of life-sustaining tangible resources.

This emphasis on the psychological concept of empowerment should not however divert attention from the continuing and serious question of access to tangible resources (who owns the fish).

Community empowerment then is that process of learning how to fish. The first step in learning is psychic ownership of the self and of personal potential (owning the capacity to act, rather than to be acted on). A second step is the acquisition of resources in the environment, including developing a capacity to be active, cohesive and effective as communities.

Assisting development clients to assume ownership of themselves and their resources is a first stage in people-centered development action. Self-managing communities have enhanced their capacity to receive and utilize new resources from the external world. Organized communities of farmers can assist in planning and building local irrigation systems and then assume responsibility for operating and maintaining them. Organized communities can assist in building and operating

community health centers and can respond to and maintain preventive medicine as well as positive health programs.

Community empowerment strategies need not be restricted to traditional village boundaries or established political entities. Empowerment of development clients can be effectively built on specific resource bases available to the clients -- agricultural produce farms, livestock farms, forestry resources, cottage industries -- or particular infrastructure requirements such as irrigation services, water systems, or farm-to-market transportation systems. Resource centered community organizations can provide effective linkages for development clients to their development service agencies (Carner and Korten, 1982).

Community empowerment has even broader potential as a strategy for improving the implementation of development projects. The term community is normally used in the context of rural village dwellers or urban neighborhoods, emphasizing the primary living group and geographic locality (Roberts, 1979, pp. 25-33). Another way to identify community is to emphasize the interrelatedness of groups of people, even though widely dispersed, who perceive common needs and problems, acquire a sense of identity and have a common set of objectives (Roberts 1979, 27). A profession may be a community. An administrative cadre or a bureaucratic sub-system devoted to health or to agriculture, for example, could be defined as communities. If professional groups, bureaucracies, or even would-be business entrepreneurs in any society exhibit characteristics similar to those of more traditionally defined development clients (e.g., passive acceptance of external action), then the "empowerment" of newly defined development communities such as these may be a required and appropriate strategy.

Reorienting Bureaucracies

Little attention and consequently little progress is evident in perfecting the linkages between empowered communities and existing governmental structure (Montgomery, 1979). Central

government agencies have been demonstrably unsuccessful in engaging clients in self-sustaining development programs. There is substantial evidence that centrally dominated governmental agencies, designed to deliver services from the top down, are ill-adapted to understand and serve the needs of empowered communities capable of managing their own resources.

It is not enough then merely to assist development communities in achieving self-management capacity of personal and community resources. The people-centered development strategist is challenged both to help empower development communities and simultaneously to work at reorienting governmental bureaucracies toward more effective linkages with client communities (Korten and Uphof, 1981). The former may indeed not be possible without the latter. Reorienting bureaucratic performance may well be the critical intervention in sustaining community empowerment.

It is possible to examine the question of bureaucratic reorientation in the development context by looking at both the nature of bureaucracy itself and the specific manifestations of bureaucratic performance in development agencies. Modern organizations are complex social instruments designed to coordinate the efforts of large numbers of people toward specific and commonly recognized, at least in highly generalized terms, objectives; i.e., to produce autos, deliver warfare, control crime, deliver electric power, make a profit, maintain the peace, wage war, etc.

Bureaucracy is the term most often used to describe an idealized form of modern organization (although, of course, we are also familiar with the term bureaucracy used as a rubric for dysfunctional performance, sometimes non-performance). Students of modern organizations regularly describe the bureaucratic organization as effective when operating in stable and relatively unchanging environments where required procedures can be routinized, control over personnel and service

delivery units can be maintained, and both activity and end product can be standardized. In contrast, routine, control and standardization are far less possible and organizational performance less effective in turbulent environments (Schon, 1971). Research and experimentation are underway in organization theory and practice to invent non-bureaucratic responses for irregular, rapidly changing, turbulent environments.

A different perspective for matching formal organizations to their environments suggests that bureaucracies perform effectively when their clients know how to "queue" -- i.e., understand the rationale and the procedure for claiming services (Schaffer, 1969). Not only must members of the bureaucratic organization be educated to the requirements for legal, routine, standardized performance, but the clients of those organizations must understand and then conform substantially to bureaucratic norms.

A third characteristic of effectively functioning bureaucracies is the imperative for centralized or top-down command and planning functions. This characteristic is supported in both public and private bureaucracies by the principle of separating policy formulation from implementation and delivery activities -- in public organizations, policies are to be adopted by political representatives of the people and implemented efficiently through the organization by professional personnel; in private organizations, the owner(s) have the right of policy choices with professionals once again the vehicle for efficient delivery of the product.

Bureaucratic norms for organizational performance are known to all who have Western-oriented educations and work experience in modern institutions. These include legal and political hierarchical control exercised in a pyramidal structure, specialization of functions, standardized rules and procedures, merit for job placement and promotion, and efficiency and economy as effectiveness criteria (Thomas and Brinkerhoff, 1978).

The characteristics noted above represent norms or idealized prescriptions for bureaucratic performance, i.e., how bureaucracies should operate. On the other hand, experience and empirical analysis yield an alternative set of performance characteristics. Donor agencies and LDC government bureaucracies, at least as often as other organizations, are described in terms quite at variance from the effective and efficient performance expected of the good bureaucracy. Included in these descriptions are traits such as slowness and inflexibility in performance; degrading treatment of clients, and to a certain degree, subordinates; disparity of service toward the rich and away from the poor; and professional staffs "cognitively distant" from their clients in attitude, culture and often language.

An additional troublesome characteristic of development agencies is the direction of response capability. Rewards for performance are in the hands of "higher" levels of authority, including judgments of effectiveness, decision power, pay and promotion. Decisions about what service is to be delivered and the effectiveness of delivered service are channeled from the top. It is to be expected, therefore, that responsiveness flows upward in the organization while decisions and policy choices flow downward.

The contrast between the requirements for bureaucratic performance including the actual performance characteristics of development agencies as compared to the needs among development clients and communities could not be more striking. Large segments of LDC societies and virtually entire populations do not know how to "queue"; that is, they do not know and do not understand the norms and the procedures for modern organizational performance. We on the so-called developed side tend to "blame the victim" by assuming that the deficiency is theirs; that instability, ignorance and resistance to change are faults of theirs, and that the change required for "progress" is solely theirs to make.

The conditions of "underdevelopment," however, might rather be described only as different rather than backward. Poverty, high birth rates, low life expectancy, illiteracy, alienation and anomie, as examples of these conditions, can be defined as characteristics of unstable or turbulent environments in which bureaucracies are not effective. Changing or reorienting bureaucracies may therefore be a more effective strategy for achieving development than attempting only to change the victim. A mutual learning process may ensue in which both parties achieve a desired growth and development. Reorienting bureaucracies toward a more flexible, responsive capacity to plan collaboratively with clients is therefore the second stage of a people-oriented development strategy.

The following characteristics are to be sought in reorienting bureaucratic performance to social development objectives:

- to plan collaboratively with clients requires planners and engineers and other professionals who can share their expertise with non-experts and who can listen effectively to client definitions of needs and facts;

- to link client communities with government agencies in collaborative action requires non-bureaucratic control (authority) mechanisms characterized by equalized, two-way communication channels;

- to assist bureaucrats in being responsive to clients as well as to their superiors requires incentive mechanisms which reward bureaucrats for being responsive to clients;

- to empower clients to share in the planning and implementation of projects requires evaluation criteria for organizational performance responsive to and shared in by those clients.

A new set of norms for reoriented bureaucracies suggests reciprocal rather than hierarchical controls; flexible, temporary (perhaps amoebic-like) structures rather than fixed pyramids; specializations tempered by extensive intra-

organizational communication, especially with client groups; flexibility and discretion in the application of rules and procedures as determined by task group negotiations and sub-organizational contract devices; and, equity as a primary evaluation criteria followed by efficiency measures (Thomas and Brinkerhoff, 1978; Korten and Uphof, 1981).

The change agent who promotes bureaucratic reorientation may be any of several actors in the development process -- a skilled community leader, a PVO professional, a government officer, a donor agency officer, or an external development consultant. The identification and training of the social development agent may well be a first step in introducing and encouraging collaborative action among diverse parties unaccustomed to relating to each other in other than formalized, legalized, "bureaucratic" patterns.

Task force teams of development agency personnel, donor agency personnel, specialists in community organizing, and "outside" action research oriented consultants (from universities or management institutes, for example) have been helpful in guiding the early experimentation in linking development communities more effectively with "reoriented" development agencies. A task force team along these lines was called a Working Group in one instance (Korten, 1982).

Field experience is accumulating to support a people-centered development strategy. An initial but as yet only promising beginning has been made. The theory of people-centered, participative action is now widely accepted, but documented cases of effective implementation are only now accumulating.

Constraints

The achievement of effective people-centered development action based on empowering communities and reoriented development agencies is constrained by several factors.

1) The generation of power by communities and citizens' groups is frightening to political and administrative leaders.

The idea of "empowering" communities, regardless of the intentions or the anticipated development consequences, is received with skepticism or fear. Many national governments are struggling to achieve and maintain political control amidst conditions of general social unrest. In the face of such conditions, political leaders are unlikely to welcome empowerment strategies.

2) Related to the spectre of power is a more complex constraint identifiable as an absence of political will in national government leadership. Ruling elites do not want, in effect, to encourage change or the empowerment of local communities. Established political and economic interests are adequately, at least in the short run, served by existing conditions. Even professionals in government service find their own self-interest working to deter a wider distribution of resources and political participation. General conditions of disorder, civil strife, or insurgency make political commitments to effective development actions in local communities difficult if not impossible.

3) A third factor constraining new approaches to reorienting bureaucracies is a deeply imbedded, self-perceived and socially reinforced need for certainty among planners and managers of government agencies. Many government agents are unable to tolerate the absence of direct control, of clear measures of efficiency, and of rationally planned outcomes. A well documented requirement for a new personal skill in organizational performance, for example, is a tolerance for ambiguity, a behavioral objective that is far more difficult to achieve in practice than to define. Virtually all of us -- university professors, development consultants, donor agency professionals, and Third World professionals -- are emotionally and intellectually compelled toward certainty, control, and anticipated outcomes.

The power of this drive toward certainty and away from serendipity is a dominating constraint against achieving people-centered as opposed to bureaucratic action.

4) Closely related to a continuing need for certainty is a fourth constraint to people-centered action -- an incapacity in schools, universities and training institutes to "teach" social learning and collaborative planning. The fundamental pedagogical style of the modern school is one of transmitting objective knowledge to the uninitiated learner. To educate a new kind of governmental development agent requires a reorientation of educational institutions and training approaches. The pervasiveness of the current pedagogical model constrains change toward collaborative, mutual learning styles.

5) A final constraint is rather more difficult to define. Its source is the extreme diversity in culturally mixed organizational systems around the world. When colloquia of development specialists gather to evaluate old and create new development strategies, we do so from a relatively homogeneous understanding of social and organizational norms and values. We can talk with each other with a moderate degree of understanding. We can even function together with relative ease in coordinated action toward common objectives.

Problems quickly become apparent when one attempts to communicate with diverse social and political communities. Many social communities in various parts of the world are unassimilated to currently dominant social and organizational forms. Further, significant numbers of communities have "mixed model" acculturation patterns -- Western oriented educations and modern organizational norms mixed with non-Western social norms and values. A stimulating organization development challenge, for example, is represented in Middle Eastern oil-producing countries where large staffs of expatriate professionals have been recruited from such diverse cultures as Korea, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, Britain, the United States and European countries. Interdepartmental coordination and task force management is a perplexing

challenge in such a multi-cultural organizational setting. Even though communication takes place within a single language, coordinating behavior toward common objectives in multi-cultural organizational teams is extremely difficult. A similar constraint faces attempts at people-centered development action in largely mixed model, multi-cultural environments.

Agenda

The constraints identified above outline an agenda for a new social development management.

1) It should be obvious that additional research and, even more importantly, new action experiments in empowering communities and reorienting bureaucracies must be undertaken. As promising as current experience is, the ultimate test of people-centered strategies will be their effectiveness in diverse situations.

2) A part of the research and experimentation agenda must reach the macro-level of organizational analysis and practice. It is not enough to deal only with the linkages at the bureaucracy-community nexus. The implications for national level and international organizations are yet to be examined in substantive detail.¹

3) The phrase mutual learning has been both explicit and implicit throughout this paper. One person calls it the "process of grafting personal on processed knowledge" (Friedmann 1973, 1981). Mutual learning obviously engages highly diverse people of differing abilities and cultural realities in cooperative endeavors. Do we know enough about this process? How close are we to being able to diffuse mutual learning skills and practice to ever enlarging numbers of development professionals and development clients?

4) Another agenda item is the challenge to avoid "artifactual" people-centered development action strategies. To

¹A beginning was made at a recent panel presentation at the New York Conference of the American Society for Public Administration, April 1983. Included was a paper referenced above by William Baum and Arturo Israel, both of the World Bank.

see "social learning" and the "reorienting of bureaucracies" as technological tools which development agents must give to their clients without changing their own behavior or reorienting the performance of their own organizations would miss the critical element of social learning theory. It would then be one more development technique or artifact stored on the warehouse shelf from which it might on occasion be retrieved to fill in time at a dreary and routine training session. How do we reorient values and behavioral responses while avoiding artifacting?

5) The most significant and longest range agenda for development agents is the ultimate relevance of social learning-based strategies and social development objectives for a more generalized societal transformation process (Korten, 1981). Social learning, it has been alleged, enlarges and improves the power of social science research methods, opening new possibilities for resolving seemingly intractable human problems. Social development as redefined reorients the criteria for progress toward more human oriented, equity-focused measures of achievement. Together these redefinitions suggest the necessity of significant adjustments in the values and structures of modern institutions.

Modern institutions and modern technology have molded our interdependent world community, holding out the promise of longer and enriched lives. They have also accentuated human poverty, inequality and the spectres of technological destruction and nuclear holocaust. Reorienting modern institutions to enhance the former while curtailing the latter is a worthwhile human goal.

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