

Rural Development Areas in Swaziland:
The Politics of Integrated
Rural Development

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To succeed with rural development you must know the Swazi way of work. It has to be through the chiefs, stay with them and solve problems. Land resettlement is a major issue. Chiefs settle people in the wrong places. These things are a barrier to development.

Oral Interview, Swaziland District Commissioner,
October 1, 1981,

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The major thing to understand in terms of rural development is the Swazis have a different way of doing things. We are not very fast in doing things. It's just a question of time. Some do become impatient with us. The transitions in rural development must be seen to be smooth by the local people. We must in order to get change done properly understand this. Change is coming but it is slow and steady but not fast enough for some people.

Oral Interview, Senior Induna (traditional authority and Senior Administrator), July 13, 1982.

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The major development needs are in the Rural Development Areas. Mostly we need resettlement schemes which are being encouraged to move us away from communal land and residential units to villages and to townships with facilities and schools. Above all we need to move the rural people into the modern way of life.

Oral Interview, July 19, 1980, Senior Administrator, Manzini.

During the late 1950's and early 1960's the number of independent nations in the world system nearly doubled. The vast majority of these newly-established nations evolved from colonies or protectorates formerly controlled by one of the major powers. Some nations declared independence only after violent revolutions against colonial powers, while others were able to pursue a more managed, gradual transition. Regardless of the means used to achieve their new status, those who came to power in these new nations found themselves facing a development crisis of an unforeseen magnitude. Having charged the colonial rulers with maintaining policies that were detrimental to the development of their nation, the new leaders needed not only to replace the functions previously performed by the colonial administration, but to go far beyond that by instituting programs that would stimulate development and growth in their countries.

With a meager or nonexistent resource base from which to

work, many of the newly-emergent governments were forced to turn to international agencies for development assistance. Agencies such as the World Bank recruited specialists from all fields to develop a strategy for accelerated growth in these new nations. Although many schemes were proposed, the most common approach utilized a macroeconomic focus on industrialization and urban development. The underlying premise for this strategy was a belief that as urban centers were developed, they would "pull" the rest of the nation's economic sectors along the developmental path. The backward and forward linkages that existed in the developed economies were to provide a great deal of the impetus in spreading the benefits of industrialization throughout the developing economies as well.

What emerged from these strategies, however, was a far cry from the accelerated, industrially-led growth that was intended. The industrial centers became modern enclaves, drawing masses of the unemployed, rural poor to their fringes. Linkages did develop, but they were with core industrialized nations rather than with local producers and economic sectors. Income distribution was highly skewed in favor of urban workers, and small classes of urban elites began to emerge.¹ This dual economic structure began to solidify, creating another source of tension between the rural masses and the urban elite.

As the failure of such policies became increasingly more evident, the emphasis in development policy began to shift during the 1960's. With the advent of the Green Revolution, development specialists began to focus on the agricultural sector as a possible key to inducing urban and rural development. A strategy was needed that would answer the multifaceted demands that were issuing from key sectors of the population: the rural majorities, whose recognition and distaste for the dual economic structure contained the potential for insurgency; the national leadership, who quickly recognized the instability that was resulting from relying strictly on a small urban elite sector for support; and the urban elite themselves, who were primarily concerned with maintaining their position and withstanding any challenges that might be forthcoming from the traditional elite sector. A further consideration came in the form of pressure from the international funding agencies, whose demands for agrarian reform reflected a growing commitment to meeting the needs of a massive, underdeveloped rural population.

A comprehensive strategy for rural development emerged as the most likely means to achieve the new objectives of balanced economic growth, more equitable income distribution, and a commitment to meet the basic needs of all sectors of society. This new strategy came to be known as Integrated Rural Development (IRD). IRD generally refers to a package of goods and services that are provided to a targeted population in a designated region.

This paper examines integrated rural development as it came to be applied in Swaziland. We argue here that in order to understand the social and technical constraints which limit the effectiveness of IRD programs, one must also examine the fundamental political contradictions between the IRD approach and the nature of rural elites who are effected by integrated rural

development activities. In the next few pages we will examine integrated rural development as a concept and attempt to identify some of the political contradictions contained within it. Following this we will look at some of the problems encountered in the Swaziland IRD scheme (styled Rural Development Areas) and attempt to determine to what extent these problems are linked to conflicts between segments of Swaziland's dominant political elite.

IRD: The Concept

Integrated Rural Development Schemes differ from traditional governmentally sponsored rural development activities by tying diverse functions and programs together administratively, thereby attempting to achieve a synergistic increase in the efficiency of both the individual programs and the overall effort. Although the specific services and programs of various IRD programs vary widely by country, the primary goals and objectives tend to include the following²:

1. An increase in agricultural output and productivity, thereby transforming rural regions from subsistence to commercial agricultural economies in an attempt to meet the basic food needs and raise the income levels of the rural poor.
2. Related to this rise in productivity is an effort to introduce or expand agro-processing, agribusiness, and related rural industries in order to diversify rural economies, increase employment opportunities, and stimulate internal demand for domestically produced goods.
3. Improve the standard of living in rural areas by increasing access to social services, facilities, technologies and infrastructure needed to improve health, nutrition, education, and family planning.

During the last 15 years there have been close to 100 major IRD projects conceived and implemented in various developing nations.³ The projects we will be primarily concerned with are those with high factor intensity (Moris defines this as a presence of substantial international technical assistance, a national development scheme, or a combination of the two) rather than smaller-scale projects that are district- or village-based.⁴ Associated with the implementation of these various kinds of projects are problems that also differ, not only in degree but also in kind. The criticisms and/or recommendations made are therefore not to be considered universally applicable to all IRD projects and programs, although a number of the problems described will be encountered in most IRD activities, regardless of scale or level of implementation.

There are a number of constraints that are common to most high intensity projects. These projects have taken place in

countries with highly disparate levels of economic development, vastly different systems of government, and under any number of funding and management arrangements. Yet even with such diversity in input variables affecting the projects, there has been a dismally low rate of success in achieving principal project goals. Most projects have been able to accomplish at least a portion of the intended objectives, usually through short-term increases in agricultural productivity or improved rural living standards, but few programs have achieved the long-term transformations envisioned by project planners.

Even those projects or programs that are generally listed as "exemplary" models of successful program implementation have had, at best, dubious long-term success. In evaluating the Lilongwe Project in Malawi and the WADU and CADU projects in Ethiopia, Lele points out the lack of success of these generally well-regarded projects in generating an indigenous capability to maintain the programs after external funding ended. Lilongwe, after six years of operation, produced only one local candidate capable of filling a high-level management position - while WADU witnessed the exit of twelve graduate-level Ethiopians, leaving all of the top posts to be filled by expatriates. CADU, considered one of the most successful projects of this sort, "had not yet had a significant success in augmenting the indigenous administrative capacity...or in developing viable grassroots institutions."⁵

Reams of paper have been dedicated to deciphering the key to the persistent failure of individual IRD projects. Monographs and country studies abound, detailing the individual factors that led or contributed to the demise of the particular project or program. Failure is usually attributed to "implementation difficulties" (even though most of the factors that retarded the implementation were present and identifiable during the "planning and design" process) rather than to flaws in the project design or, to speak the unspeakable, to flaws in the concept of the development strategy itself.⁶

There has been a growing realization among both policy-makers and practitioners that the difficulties encountered thus far stem not from procedural or administrative constraints on implementation (although such constraints undoubtedly exist), but rather from a series of contradictions or paradoxes that appear to be inherent in the political realities of the LDC environment. Moris, Rondinelli, Montgomery, and Scott⁷ (to cite a small sampling of the emerging literature) have made exceptional contributions to the identification and analysis of various aspects of this phenomenon. Among the systemic constraints that will be examined in this paper are: the need for strong political commitment from the very people whose positions may be threatened by reform; the need for strong central coordination vs. the requirement for flexibility and autonomy at the field agency level; the frequent incompatibility of rational planning procedures with the political, social and economic realities of the society involved; and the difficulties involved in displacing the strong patron-client network that frequently exists in such rural societies.

The Paradox of Power

Central to many of the other conflicts inherent in rural development strategy is a concept that Rondinelli calls the "paradox of power." • This paradox stems from his observation that while it is necessary to have strong central political commitment to initiate rural reforms such as those entailed in IRD, the schemes cannot be effectively implemented or sustained unless there is also diffused political support for the project and widespread participation by intended beneficiaries in the policy-making process. However, as Rondinelli points out, "those whose political commitment is necessary to initiate the reforms often consider such a diffusion of participation and power as a serious threat."⁹

This perception of threat may be present under any number of circumstances. In LDCs where traditional ruling mechanisms were dissipated under colonial influence, the conflict may only involve the bureaucratic elite. As an entrenched ruling class, often with a vested interest in maintaining the economic status quo because of their control of land or other power-base resources (i.e. cattle, mining interests, etc.), those who wield administrative power may resist the implementation of rural reform programs.¹⁰ Out of political necessity they may publicly support such reforms and even participate in securing external assistance, but the resources and policies that are forthcoming are easily skewed to benefit the bureaucratic elite. According to Montgomery, of the 25 major land reform efforts that have taken place in the twentieth century, "in 15 cases the bureaucracy itself was a principal beneficiary of land reform."¹¹

The situation becomes even more complex when, usually because of a colonial policy of "indirect rule", traditional ruling elites have maintained their power and authority. The dual existence of a traditional system of rule and an administrative bureaucracy often results in an intra-elite competition for power and control of resources. The traditional sector regards the bureaucratic apparatus as a threat to their political dominance, which often stems from socio-economic ties based in part on control over access to communal lands. This network of ties has been extensively identified and described in the literature as a patron-client system,¹² and will be dealt with in depth in a later section of this paper.

From the viewpoint of the "modern" bureaucratic sector, traditional leaders and traditional values are perceived to be a serious constraint to development in the rural areas.¹³ The members of the civil service are generally more educated, receive higher salaries, and identify with a different set of class interests than those in the rural sectors, and thus frequently find themselves at odds with the traditional hierarchy. The civil service or administrative bureaucracy in most Asian and African LDCs is a vestige of the former colonial ruling apparatus, which also contributes to the sense of antagonism between the traditional and bureaucratic elites. The mistrust and competition that exists between the two elements creates a number of other difficulties, as well. One problem of primary importance resulting from this power competition is a reluctance

by the central administration to devolve power to local levels. The impact of this reluctance on rural development will be analyzed in the next section.

The Decentralization Issue

By its very definition, integrated rural development implies a multi-sectoral approach coordinated by a central authority of some kind. During the project design stage, negotiating a workable allocation of authority between a large cast of characters (which may include the central administration, separate agencies within the administration, traditional elites, local elites, donor agencies, project managers and staff, and the clientele themselves) often proves to be an overwhelmingly formidable task. Consequently, the designers may either leave the problem to be sorted out during implementation or resort to the "autonomous project" strategy.

The issue of decentralization is critical to the analysis of IRD, however, as several studies have indicated that the success of the project may be heavily influenced by the amount of local control and participation in the project planning. In Montgomery's land reform study, for example, the allocation of administrative authority over land reform programs was a key determinant of who ultimately benefitted from the programs, as well as the degree of reform achieved. Land reforms carried out under a centralized administrative structure benefitted the peasants only 11% of the time, whereas programs carried out under a devolved administrative process provided substantial peasant benefits in 80% of the cases.¹⁴ The amount of control that central administrators are willing to devolve to local units, however, depends in large part on the "threat perception" described earlier. If the political elite at the national level fear that traditional or local elites will use the new access to resources to fortify their own political machinery, it is highly unlikely that a decentralization or devolution of authority will occur.

Local-level or field autonomy is especially critical in an integrated rural development program because of the volatile nature of its operating environment. Political commitments or priorities may change mid-stream, necessitating project flexibility to insure survival. The very logistics of carrying out a multi-sectoral improvement project require a day-to-day decision-making capability, for if small yet essential matters such as the procurement of spare parts or standard supplies must continuously be routed through a long chain of bureaucratic command, the project will hang itself with red tape. The project manager must cope with any number of uncertain and unpredictable factors (i.e. drought, floods, dock strikes, contractor delays, equipment failure), and therefore must be given the autonomy to handle these crises as they arise.

The failure of most individual projects, as previously pointed out, is generally blamed on implementation difficulties of one sort or another. However, a closer examination of many projects reveals built-in "fail sure" design faults that originated in the planning process. The facts are indisputable:

project after project has failed, and they often exhibit a similar range of fatal problems or symptoms.¹⁵ Rather than revising the prescriptions, however, the "specialists" blame the patient for dying and hope the next one will be a little more cooperative. The following section attempts to shift the focus from the patient to the doctor by looking at the design process itself.

Rationality Vs. Reality

A leading problem with the development field in general and with the project design process in particular is basically a conceptual one. The notion of "planning" as an integral element in development projects has become akin to an article of faith. To the development specialist working in an LDC, the existence of a bureaucratic apparatus, national development schemes, and five-year plans only serves to reconfirm his belief in the universal doctrine of logic and rationality. The argument we make is not that planning and rationality have no place in project design, but rather that the assumptions upon which many of the current planning procedures are based are inaccurate and damaging to the ultimate success of projects.

Under a typical donor-funded project, the planning and design phase is generally carried out by "experts" who will have nothing to do with the actual implementation of the project itself. As Moris points out, this approach to project design results in a disconnected, segmental process that vastly simplifies the planning procedures for the economists, but which also results in projects based on presuppositions that are highly inaccurate.¹⁶ Planners assume that they have full and accurate information about national goals, sectoral plans and local conditions (what Moris refers to as "access to the big picture")¹⁷, as well as assuming that a document such as a five-year plan is a solid indication of commitment to the particular project.

They tend to forget, or are simply unaware of the fact that many of the organizational or infrastructural requirements for the project exist only in a very limited capacity or not at all. The finished "blueprint" for a project very seldom contains provisions for getting from the drawing board to the irrigation well, because it is assumed that roads exist to get service vehicles through, that there is adequate manpower to deliver the seed and fertilizer at the appropriate time, that the linkages between the participating agencies are already in place and working, or that the clientele at whom the program is directed has been adequately identified and participation assured.

What it basically comes down to is that planning is a rational decision-making process that leaves little or no room for factoring in uncertain variables (such as those that predominate an LDC environment), nor does it allow for the influence of political bargaining and competition. This is the primary criticism leveled against the present pattern of rural development, and has been cited as one of the leading factors contributing to the dismal performance of rural development projects.

As mentioned earlier, there is often political competition

in LDCs because of the existence of a traditional ruling elite. The rationality of conventional, Western-style planning provides no scope or flexibility to allow for the impact that such a political competition has on program implementation. Caiden and Widavsky dealt extensively with several aspects of this particular problem, and concluded that the nature of socio-economic change is of necessity incremental, involving marginal changes that are accomplished only after extensive political bargaining.¹⁹ Public policy planning, on the other hand, implies a comprehensive approach to complex social issues and necessitates complete information, a stable environment, and adequate organizational capacity. In other words, the planners must have control over what they plan. One aspect of the environment that Western planners are often unaware of, much less in control of, is the network of ties that exists in a traditional community. As this network (earlier identified as a patron-client system) can have a great impact on the fate of a rural development project, it will now be examined in greater detail.

Patrons vs. Planners

As traditional societies developed and grew, kinship ties became inadequate guarantors of essential commodities - access to enough land to sustain a family, medical care, food in times of scarcity, etc. A new type of relationship began to develop between persons of unequal status in the community. This relationship has been identified in a majority of traditional societies, and recent research has indicated that it still exists in a number of industrialized societies as well.²⁰ The patron-client relationship is distinguished from other relationships between persons of unequal status by three factors. First, the patron-client bond develops between two parties unequal in status, wealth, and influence. Second and more critically, the maintenance of the bond depends on a reciprocal exchange of goods and services. The patron generally provides material goods or services essential to the existence of the client, while the client provides less tangible commodities such as personal services, gestures of personal esteem or deference, or political services such as voting. Third, the maintenance of the tie depends heavily on face-to-face contact between the two parties.²⁰

In African, Asian or Latin American systems, this network originated in and may still be perpetuated by a system of hereditary control of communal lands. The relationship, however, entails far more than control over access to land. The bond between the patron and client is often enduring and based on a level of affection as well as need. Fictive kinship arrangements, such as naming the patron a godparent of the client's child, often symbolize the nature of this bond. The nature of services provided by the patron is also quite pervasive, ranging from loans and credit, to assisting in paying for weddings or funerals, to intervening with the law on the client's behalf.

The conflict between rural development and this

entrenched socio-economic network lies in the power struggle between bureaucratic and traditional elites. If there is a perception that the government is attempting to displace those functions provided by the patron, thus reducing his power base, there will be some form of direct or indirect resistance to the change. In addition, unless the peasant can be assured that he will be provided with "demonstrably better, more reliable services...those government programs that threaten to...destroy the patron-client relationship will receive no sympathy from the elite and little support from the peasants."²¹

Thus, the rationality and rigidity of conventional planning procedures may have no ability to comprehend or overcome the kind of conflict that emerges from such a cultural variable. The extension agent may be completely unaware of the dilemma faced by traditional leaders who find themselves less wealthy than one of the tribal farmers who, with "progressive" technology and cash-cropping programs, has escaped the need for patronly obligations.

An examination of the Integrated Rural Development program in Swaziland will reveal a number of the themes identified here. The program has been fraught with implementation problems from the beginning. The most common explanation that is given for the limited success of Rural Development Areas focuses on bureaucratic or implementation problems. We will argue that, however that RDAs face a number of serious political obstacles that have nothing to do with technical/implementation difficulties.

Integrated Rural Development in Swaziland

Early Development Policy

From the beginning of colonial rule in Swaziland, the use and allocation of land has been the fundamental political issue in this Connecticut size country. It has been and is an issue fraught with emotion and national pride. King Sobhuza came to power in 1921 committed to restoring Swazi control over the some 60% of the land that had been alienated to European settlers for commercial agriculture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During the interwar period the King campaigned actively to get Britain to transfer alienated land back to the Swazi nation.

In 1940, under the sponsorship of the Colonial Development Corporation (CDC), the colonial government undertook a limited program to help purchase back European owned land for the Swazi nation (referred to as Swazi National Land). After 1944, this program was supplemented by the Lifa Fund, a program inaugurated by King Sobhuza. The Lifa Fund was initially based upon a tax on Swazi owned cattle.²² In addition, the King actively encouraged Swazis to work for Europeans in Swaziland or South Africa in order to provide a tax base to repurchase land.

Though the CDC project initially was received favorably, resistance to the program soon developed and many rural Swazi traditional leaders became deeply suspicious of the scheme. Resistance was related to the fundamental assumptions that the

British colonial administration made about the land repurchase. Colonial officials balked at the idea that land would merely be restored to Swazi traditional land allocation and use. Thus early plans assumed that there would be a change to individual tenure in the Swazi National Areas.

The 1946 Land Resettlement Scheme established some of the parameters of what would later become the Rural Development Area (RDA) program. Under the scheme, funds from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund would be used to both support the repurchase of alienated land and also regulate the uses to which this land was put. Under the scheme, £140,000 would be used to buy 135,000 acres of crown land as set aside. Government funds would be used to promote increased agricultural cash crop production and an attempt would be made to reduce land erosion due to overstocking in the newly transferred areas.²³

From the Swazi traditional point of view there was a fundamental problem in this assumption in that this land would be placed outside of the traditional system of land allocation. Chiefs throughout the country balked at the scheme. Many rural dwellers refused to sell their cattle and/or tried to avoid the Lifa Fund tax. According to Potholm, "the local chiefs felt that the entire scheme was a government plot to undermine their authority over land allocation."²⁴

The major themes of what later came to be the RDA program were set out in the 1960 Morse Report. These included: 1) the idea that rural development should be based upon area planning, 2) that there should be resettlement into "rational" patterns of residency and land use (resettlement should be on the basis of arable areas, grazing areas and housing zones with fencing and water supply points demarcating the different zones), 3) there should be a detailed agro-economic survey of Swaziland, 4) management of rural development efforts should be by a district team headed by the District Commissioner (a pattern which was never developed).²⁵

Rural Development Areas (RDAs).

At the core of Swaziland's rural development strategy today are eleven integrated rural development areas (RDA's). Rural Development Areas in their modern form were inaugurated in 1970, and were designed to provide Swazi peasant farmers with an integrated package of agricultural in-puts, credit and marketing services and social and infrastructural services such as roads, health clinics and water points.²⁶ The RDA strategy is based upon a combination of physical infrastructure development, the rationalization of land use and the provision of improved inputs and services to agriculturalists. It was assumed that this investment would translate into increased agricultural production.²⁷ The primary goal of the RDA program was to allow the Swazi farmer to make the transition from the subsistence to the commercial or semi-commercial farmer in order to bridge the urban-rural gap.

One issue which has plagued the RDA program from the beginning was the diffuseness of the government's rural development goals. Planners were concerned not only with

agricultural development on the Swazi National Land but also with general infrastructure development and environmental preservation. The overall goal articulated by political leaders in promoting the program was the enhancement of the living standards of the rural population and the increase of rural incomes.²⁰

The present Rural Development Areas program has its origins in the 1969 Hobbs Commission Report.²¹ This was a confidential document which argued for the purchase of European deed land contiguous with heavily populated Swazi National Land areas but argued that the repurchase should be made on the basis of title deed (individual tenure). As a result of the Hobbs Commission Report the British Government agreed to finance the repurchase of additional lands. However, this was made contingent upon the development of the new areas which "were not merely to revert to traditional communal agricultural practices."²⁰ As Funnell points out, "This restriction in the use of land was part of British pressure to undermine the traditional authorities."²¹ In spite of these efforts, however, RDA policy as it evolved in the 1970s did not provide for any changes in the system of land tenure in the Swazi national areas.²²

Since its inception 11 RDAs with a combined population of about 150,000 people have been demarcated. At present, 4 RDAs containing 11% of the rural population are in operation. All of the RDAs are situated in high-potential land. There are several components to the RDA scheme. These include: 1) the improvement of physical and social infrastructure, 2) the promotion of agricultural betterment schemes, 3) the reorganization of arable, grazing and residential areas with fencing to demarcate functional boundaries, 4) the establishment of supply and marketing cooperatives and the provision of service centers 5) the establishment and support of extension services, and credit availability and 6) the creation of intensive settlement zones and group cooperative ranches and the establishment of commercial fattening schemes.²³ The basic assumption under the RDA program remains that eventually there will have to be some security of tenure for peasant farmers.

RDAs are divided into two types, maximum in-put areas where the population is resettled and arable land is consolidated and there is a major physical infrastructure component, and minimum in-put areas where there are no infrastructure or resettlement components. All RDAs enjoy credit and marketing services as well as access to improved seed, fertilizers, tractors and certain basic social services.²⁴

The goal of the RDA scheme is commercialization of agriculture on the Swazi National Land. From the beginning the emphasis in the RDA scheme has been on cash crops and on the commercialization of agriculture in the traditional land areas. A 1975/76 survey emphasized the importance of hybrid maize, cotton and tobacco and argued that the profitability margin was good for these crops. The survey also emphasized the importance of developing cash cropping within the context of a labor intensive rather than a high tech process.²⁵ However, at present only 5% of the population cultivates for cash sale. Most rural Swazis grow maize and supplemental food crops for their own

consumption.³⁶

Shortcomings of the RDA Scheme.

The RDA program has been relatively successful in raising the income of the Swazi small farmer and without it there would have been a real decline in rural incomes since independence. However, the impact of the RDA scheme has been largely negligible in terms of increased productivity since its inception in the mid-1960's.³⁷ Even the impact upon rural income is less than might be expected. First, the program is having little if any effect upon the disparities between the rural and the urban sectors and secondly,

analysts of the Swazi economy have demonstrated that, far from being self sufficient entities able to meet their needs by the use or sale of their agricultural produce, most Swazi homesteads are dependent upon wage employment for a considerable portion of their income.³⁸

The RDAs have been plagued by a number of problems since their inception. Critics have charged that the agricultural policy of the Ministry of Agriculture in the RDAs has been weak and based upon unwarranted assumptions. Booth argues that the RDAs remain the subject of great controversy in Swaziland and that agricultural productivity has fallen significantly short of the government's aim throughout the entire period. Critics suggest that there are structural problems with the RDA strategy and that agricultural decisions taken since independence may have caused the situation to deteriorate. As one Ministry of Agriculture official put it in 1982, "The problem is we pump money into the rural areas and living standards do improve to some extent but production remains stagnant."³⁹ At the end of 1981, the RDA program was described as "disappointing" within government circles.⁴⁰ According to one critic of Swaziland's rural development program, "Swaziland's rural-urban income disparity has widened..." since independence.⁴¹

Much of the controversy surrounds the impact of hybrid maize on production. Since the 1960s there has been an increase in cash crops but also an increase in food imports. The decline in food production is linked to the fact that "the area and production of of maize in the Swazi National Land have shown a disappointing tendency to decline despite a population growth rate of 2.7% per annum."⁴²

Swazi Government research suggests that the shift to hybrid maize has been the result of unanticipated circumstances and, from the Ministry of Agriculture's point of view, for the wrong reasons. In particular, there is some evidence to suggest that the uptake has been influenced by considerations other than the desire to generate surplus for sale. Farmers have not shifted to hybrids because of the need to compensate for land shortages nor from the desire to release labor from food production to cash cropping. Instead, agricultural time saved is linked to off farm employment activities rather than to take advantage of commercial

agricultural opportunities. Thus the uptake of hybrid maize and the proportion of surplus selling homesteads in an area is directly linked to the proportion of adults in off-farm employment. The greater the access to off-farm employment, the greater the tendency to adopt hybrid maize. The conclusion is that off-farm employment is more attractive than commercial farming and the result will be increasing food shortages and dependence upon food imports. Adoption of hybrids will not necessarily lead to commercial production since it is used (with varying degrees of success) in order to maintain homestead food production requirements in the face of departure of adult labor to South Africa or the Swazi urban areas.⁴³

A second area of controversy relates to the efforts in the RDAs to increase rural incomes and promote cattle production. At issue is the extent to which Swazi peasants can raise and sell cattle commercially. Doggett, for example argues that there is a communal grazing ethic within Swaziland that encourages overstocking.⁴⁴ This school of thought suggests that there is a negative relationship between cattle price and offtake because cattle are sold to meet immediate cash needs rather than as a regular source of income. Thus, "The implication is that increasing rural income will not only result in fewer cattle being sold but may also reduce the proportion of these reduced sales that are for slaughter."⁴⁵

A third issue that has developed in the RDAs is the question of credit. The issue here is how the peasant farmer will secure his loan. There are three possible types of collateral: land, cattle or equipment. Given the nature of Swazi National Land tenure patterns, it is not possible to use land as collateral for raising bank loans. Nor is there equipment available for security. In Swaziland the Development Bank has opted for the use of cattle. There is some indication that there are problems with the credit system in the RDAs and that this is having a negative impact upon production. Available evidence suggests that Swazi farmers are decreasing input levels to keep the loan amount constant during times of rising input costs while others increase the amount borrowed in order to compensate for input price increases. In other cases loans are simply used as cash substitutes while their own cash is being diverted into non-crop activities.⁴⁶ Beyond this, the Swazi government recognizes that in general the system of credit is biased towards those who own cattle in that "The mere fact that credit is only available to cattle owners, indicates that SDSB small farmer funds are being directed towards the 'wealthier' farmers in the area."⁴⁷

The problems that the Swazi government has had with RDAs have not gone unnoticed among foreign technical assistance missions. Since the late 1970s there has been a significant withdrawal of donor funding.⁴⁸ Part of the donor concern is linked to a general Expenditure problem. Swaziland is chronically underspent in its development/aid budget. Donors traditionally find it very difficult to get the Swazi government to spend money. This has been particularly true in the RDA scheme which is heavily dependent upon donor support.⁴⁹

There can be little doubt that technical problems account for part of the difficulties that the Swaziland government has faced

in establishing and expanding its Rural Development Area program. However, as has been suggested in the first section of this paper, there may be fundamental contradictions between the assumptions of integrated rural development theories and the realities of political competition and resource allocation. It is to this question that we now turn.

Paradox of Power in Swaziland

In order to understand why problems have developed with Swaziland's Rural Development Area program, it is necessary to understand the nature of the intra-class competition which has evolved in that country since independence. The dualism which has evolved between the Swazi nation on the one hand and the institutions of the post-colonial state on the other illustrates the dilemmas inherent in any rural development strategy in Swaziland.

Over the last twenty years, a deadlock has developed between Swazi traditional elites who have dominated Swazi politics and a non-traditional middle class which has its base in the Swaziland civil service. The nature of the deadlock is such that Swazi political leaders have felt compelled to centralize control of the RDAs in a manner which is non-threatening to traditional interests.

In the next few pages we will examine several of the threads of the deadlock between the developmental goals embedded in the RDA program and the political threat which that program represents to its ruling elite. In the next section we will look at the nature of centralized control over rural development and what that tells us about elite concerns. Following this we will discuss some of the inherent conflicts between the planning assumptions of the RDA program and the political concerns of the Swazi aristocracy. Finally, we will examine the nature of the conflict between traditional and non-traditional elites within the context of the patron-client system which characterizes elite/non-elite relationships in Swaziland.

Centralization and the Defense of Tradition

There is a direct contradiction between the developmental needs of an integrated rural development scheme which requires devolved decision-making authority and the political needs of ruling elites which requires centralized political control. Evidence from a number of successful rural development projects suggests that they are often most successful when there are high levels of peasant participation.²⁰ An examination of RDAs illustrates the contradictions inherent in center-periphery relationships in a developing country.

The need for centralized control is partly related to the influence that donors have had on the development of RDA policy in the 1960s. Technical assistance has been a major factor in supporting the RDAs financially. British aid was critical here since the colonial government had been a major supporter of integrated rural development efforts prior to independence. In addition, the U.S. provided some mechanized components, and in

particular tractors.

The British position was that the repurchase areas should not simply revert to traditional tenure. Centralized control could be used to break the influence of local level traditional authorities. The British interventionist position, both before and after independence was one of the major reasons for traditional/royal suspicion of donor motives. The Swazi leadership thus had severe misgivings about RDA program from the beginning.

The problem was both one of misperception and miscommunication on both sides. Neither King Sobhuza nor members of the Swazi inner council, the Likoqo, attended the negotiations on land repurchase and the establishment of the RDAs. As a result, "It soon became clear that these proposals did not have the agreement of the Ngwenyama or the Swazi National Council, who despite their decisive role in the power structure, were never formally represented at aid talks." ⁵¹

The fundamental misperceptions embedded in the early thinking on RDAs have remained with the scheme ever since. For Swazi elites the concern in the formation of the scheme was for land acquisition, not fundamental changes in land use or land allocation. For many expatriate advisors and Swazi civil servants, (as was the case for British colonial authorities,) the land transfer process is seen as part of a larger process of transformation which should change Swaziland from a traditional monarchy to a parliamentary system. The present RDA program was born out of long standing grievances and policy differences over land tenure and political authority that account at least in part for the slow pace of the implementation of the program.

Swazi traditionalists had to accept the RDA program in order to receive British assistance in the land repurchase scheme. At the same time, Swazi traditional elites fought to ensure that the socially and politically disruptive elements of the program would be limited. From the beginning, this fight occurred at the national level in an attempt to define a governing authority for the RDAs.

The U.K. government wanted a "technocratic executive body" to administer the purchase areas under the RDA scheme. This was resisted by traditional elites. Instead they demanded that the traditionally dominated Central Rural Development Board (CRDB) supervise RDA activities. Ultimately it was the CRDB which was given authority over the RDAs.

The role of the Central Rural Development Board (CRDB) is critical to an understanding of how the RDA scheme works. The CRDB is part of the structure of dyarchy between the state and the traditional national structures and is the Swazi national counter-part to Ministry of Agriculture. The body was created in 1954 by the King's Order-in-Council and reports directly to the monarch. ⁵²

The major problem is that although though the chairman of the CRDB is a Ministry of Agriculture civil servant, there is a clear indication that the two bodies lack an effective means of communication and unfortunately, the CRDB has had neither the capacity nor the will to action in support of RDA efforts. As a result, RDAs have made little progress, largely because members

of the traditional hierarchy fear (not entirely without reason) that RDAs will disrupt the traditional structure of Swazi society. Swaziland traditionalists have been willing to forgo economic development in order to maintain the traditional structure of authority. The monarch wanted to avoid "enclaves in which traditional authorities would cease to exercise control."⁵³

The Swaziland government desires to preserve traditional authority and leadership in the rural areas. There is a conviction that any rural development efforts that occur outside of the framework of traditional authority would have a destabilizing effect. Planned change must be infused through traditional authorities "and it is only through these institutions that any modification in the rural setting can be devised."⁵⁴

The role of the CRDB is to ensure that developments in the Swazi National land areas "do not undermine traditional institutions, and reflect the wishes of the people."⁵⁵ Magagula suggests that some members of the CRDB are "committed to the maintenance of the economic status quo...and that they (perceive) any accelerated economic development in the SNL as a threat to traditional institutions and values."⁵⁶

As a result of the bureaucratic interconnections between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Central Rural Development Board there is tension between the two bodies. In particular, the CRDB "has tended to adopt an unnecessarily belligerent posture toward the plans of MOA technicians."⁵⁷ Civil servants are likewise often critical of traditional authorities. Because of the fact that policy decision-making and implementation are centralized they fail to take into account socio-economic processes at the grassroots level.

Those who have to implement RDA policy at the local level feel that RDA officials in Mbabane are rigid and do not take into consideration people's perceptions and views. Central government officials are suffering from an "institutional malaise which has been very wasteful of economic and human resources."⁵⁸

Political leaders in Swaziland blame civil servants and the planning process for much of the failure of the RDA program and many politicians feel there should be a traditional basis to the planning process which they see as insensitive to the social and cultural context of Swazi society. Planning must be linked to the political realities of Swaziland. After the 1973 suspension of the constitution it became official government policy that the views of the traditional leadership be taken into account. Swazi government actions since 1973 suggest that policy makers wish to preserve Swazi traditional institutions in the rural areas. It follows that any rural developments that occur outside the traditional framework of leadership would be seen to have a destabilizing effect.

The intertwining of bureaucratic and traditional structures continues at the operational level. The CRDB operates through Rural Development Officers (RDOs) who are appointed by the CRDB but are paid by the Ministry of Agriculture. The responsibility of the RDOs is to coordinate all field-level activities in the RDAs and act as a link between the Ministry of Agriculture and local traditional authorities. They also ensure a check over the

nature of socio-economic change in the rural areas. At the local level, government support for farmers in the RDAs is delivered by agricultural extension agents. However, the role of extension agents is only advisory. Planning is done at the center but with some "consultation" with the population after the plans have been completed.⁵⁹

The administration of the RDA program has relied exclusively on the use of existing traditional institutions in the rural areas and has worked within the framework of the the existing physical infrastructure. Nsibanze provides justification for using heredity as a basis of representation and administration within RDAs. Both donors and Swazi civil servants, he argues, neglect traditional elites. If the RDA scheme is going to work, he argues, it is critical to take cognizance of heredity and traditional customs.⁶⁰

Swazi elites, Planning and Politics

Though IRD programs require significant decentralization (at least deconcentration) of authority in order to be successful, the Swaziland political system and bureaucracy is highly centralized. Programs in Swaziland's rural areas are planned by central government officials in Mbabane and are cast in an institutional framework that is conceived in the center rather than in the rural areas. The planning process is not related to the political priorities of Swaziland's ruling elites. Many of Swaziland's political leaders see the planning process, as represented in the RDA program, as in direct contradiction with the political values of Swaziland's ruling elites.

The kind of planned change which the Rural Development Areas represents runs up against the existing socio-economic network based upon traditionalist patron-clientism. At the national level, Swazi traditional elites have been flexible and adaptable throughout the colonial period into the the post-colonial era.⁶¹ Rural development policy, however, has been perceived as being potentially threatening to political stability and the status of the Swazi aristocracy. In large part this is because the Swazi ruling elite has not been able to develop control mechanisms over the competing class interests of the public bureaucracy, a group which the traditional aristocracy sees as inimical to its own position. The RDAs for the first time threaten to bring civil servants in large numbers into direct contact with rural Swazi peasants.

Both during the colonial period, but particularly since independence, the evolution of a localized civil service and an expanding cadre of cash crop entrepreneurial farmers has created a Swazi middle class, an "organizational bourgeoisie," to use Markovitz's phrase, not based within the traditional aristocracy.⁶² By independence in 1968, the Swaziland aristocracy faced competition not only from a large foreign, mainly European, economic elite but also from this urbanizing or semi-urbanizing middle and working class. Economic development in the late 1960's brought both a significant degree of local prosperity and the considerable socio-economic problems that went along with it in the urban and para-urban areas of the country. Much of the

resulting tensions exhibited themselves in splits between Weberian and traditional institutions, tensions which continue to plague Swazi politics in the post-Sobhuza period.⁶³

The history of Swaziland in the colonial and post-colonial period has been one of socio-economic rivalry between these emerging middle classes and the Swazi aristocracy. The period since World War II saw the creation in Swaziland of an elite which is

educated, ambitious, affluent, and aware of its status and political power. It has permeated all levels of the government bureaucracy and the civil service, but to date it has not succeeded in passing through mid-level in the management of the multi-national corporations⁶⁴

The Swazi middle class is the product of the government sponsored educational system, the initial graduates of which became teachers, clerks and minor civil servants. After independence, and the rapid economic development which followed it, localization swelled the ranks of the civil service as well as the parastatal and private sectors. Salary scales continued to be based upon colonial scales and thus civil service incomes remained very high.⁶⁵

Later additions to the middle class included traders, agricultural smallholders and artisans though by far the largest number of middle class Swazis are employed in the bureaucracy.⁶⁶ Their number totals around 25,000 people. By the 1960s they had become conscious of their separate interests from those of traditional elites, though the Swazi middle class has been more assertive economically than politically. It has been frustrated by the lack of access a) to high level private sector management positions and b) to the highest levels of political decision-making which are reserved for the aristocracy.

Not surprisingly these "new men" were reluctant to support the present "feudal" aristocratic structure which the current political regime represents. To the extent that the economic interests of this group are separate from those of the aristocracy, future competition over the control of state political structures would seem likely.

According to Kuper, "Sobhuza saw a great difference between the position of a traditional Swazi Official and an official in the Western bureaucracy..."⁶⁷ The issue was simple, she went on:

Sobhuza was concerned about the tensions set up through the greater rewards -- financial and social -- accorded civil servants employed by the British compared with permanent officials of the Swazi National Council.⁶⁸

Hostility to the civil service became exacerbated by the events of the 1960's and early 1970's. Many members of the civil service (though limited in number prior to post-independence localization efforts) had been members of the non-traditionalist nationalist parties. This overt challenge crystalized the civil

service as a potential challenge to political elites.

The primary purpose of the creation of the traditionalist Imbokodvo nationalist movement which solidified Sobhuza's political power in the 1960's was preservation of the economic status of the monarchy through the preservation of traditional land tenure and the acquisition of control over mineral revenues. It was the middle class nationalist movements, particularly the Ngwane National Liberatory Congress, which most threatened traditionalist hegemony.⁶⁹

It was the ability of King Sobhuza and the traditional aristocracy to mobilize the rural peasantry which allowed the Imbokodvo movement to take over the reigns of governmental power in Mbabane. Thus, "while the Swazi rulers had successfully established a mass base among the peasantry in the countryside, the petty bourgeoisie had not managed to do likewise... Without a mass base it was clear that the petty bourgeoisie would not succeed in its struggles with the Swazi rulers... [Thus] the latter would consolidate its position politically..."⁷⁰ Fransman goes on:

The 1964 election results thus proved the ability of the Swazi rulers to consolidate sufficient political support particularly as a result of bringing in the peasantry as a supportive class. It was now clear that the rule of the bourgeoisie would be constituted by the Swazi rulers who were to become the 'class in charge of the state.'⁷¹

The stresses between the old and the new elites were contained during the Sobhuza period. The suspension of Constitution in 1973 was a key short-term factor here. After the 1973 royal coup, the new System in Swaziland amounted "to an imposition over the entire society of the long-standing traditional government structures."⁷² Real power rested with the King in Council, "whereas plans and objectives are expressed by the modern civil service structure..."⁷³ However, "The modern and traditional elements within government fit together uneasily, but have consistently followed a very cautious policy toward anything that may affect traditional structures and values."⁷⁴

The conflict is not over, however,

For although the forces of conservatism won out in the early 1970's, the issues that produced the social activism of these years remain. The banning of the Ngwane National Liberatory Congress (NNLC) suppressed the middle class aspirations that provided much of its support, but it did not dissolve them."⁷⁵

Opposition to traditional leadership continues to center on "Dissatisfied educated men, and the small class of Swazi smallholders who had achieved some measure of independence of the traditional chiefs..."⁷⁶

The creation of local level institutions extends this

conflict to the grassroots throughout rural Swaziland. In the rural areas the focal point of this local level conflict is the allocation of land in the Swazi National Areas (SNAs). The Swazi aristocracy has been able to maintain its economic base in the rural areas because of its continued control over access to land. This control over land allocation has remained a critical source of traditional influence throughout the colonial and into the post-colonial period.⁷⁷

Elite formation is particularly visible in the Swazi rural areas. Rural farmers, with a "progressive" technology and a commitment to grow cash crops are much more visible and more threatening to traditional authorities than are urban elites and elite workers, isolated as they are in urban commercial enclaves. The conflict between traditional leaders and "progressive" farmers, often chafing under the constraints of traditionalism, represents the end point of intra-class political conflict in Swaziland. In order to understand the nature of this conflict it is necessary to understand the economic basis of traditional elites.

The economic basis of traditional political elites in Swaziland lies in the resurrection of the Swazi national fund after independence. When in 1968 control over Swaziland's mineral concessions was granted to the monarch in trust for the nation, the Tibiyo Taka Ngwane fund was established. Subsequently all mineral royalties were deposited in the fund and Tibiyo monies were used to acquire interests in a variety of enterprises, agribusiness, tourist and light industry. Since the late 1960's,

The Tibiyo Fund (and a second fund, Tisuka Taka Ngwane which now manages the original mineral revenues) has become the vehicle for the item most conspicuously lacking to the royal house at the time of independence, a secure capital base for the reproduction of the monarchy...Tibiyo has emerged as the major vehicle for domestic capital accumulation in Swaziland,"⁷⁸

The Tibiyo Fund has allowed the Swazi traditionalists to acquire a material base in the capitalist sector, acquiring in this way, a degree of influence over the economy of Swaziland that is unusual in LDCs.⁷⁹

The revenues from the two funds have allowed traditional elites to increase the amount of land under their control, and also provides the monarchy with links to foreign capital. The use of investment policy, both through government funding and the two traditional funds has provided political elites with an alternative economic base to that controlled by bureaucratic and commercial elites. By the mid-1980s, the Tibiyo Taka Ngwane Fund had become the most powerful Swazi owned corporation in the country. More than this, Tibiyo "pays no taxes, its activities are not publically accountable, and its affairs are conducted by a Board appointed originally by Sobhuza."⁸⁰

By the beginning of the 1980's many of the "new elite" middle class Swazis had become concerned over the rapid accumulation of wealth and power by the Tibiyo Taka Ngwane Fund (over which there

is no public accountability). Investments by Tibiyo in agricultural projects were designed (at least formally) to advance Swaziland toward self-sufficiency.²¹ However, for many middle class Swazis in the civil service and commerce, the existence of the fund as a kind of state within the state represented traditional expansion into an economic arena which had been dominated by commoners. The presence of the fund precipitated a clash between the civil service and the Tibiyo bureaucracy which led to the country's first major political crisis during the post-Sobhuza period.²²

The results of this clash at the national level have not yet been resolved. Its effect upon the rural development efforts of the Swazi government is unquestionable however. The nature of the clash between the two sets of elites can be illuminated by examining the different ways the two groups approach development issues. It is to this question that we now turn.

Bureaucratic Attitudes

The lack of local level political institutions in Swaziland precludes even a modicum of rural development activity in Swaziland. Interviews with over thirty administrators and traditional leaders in Swaziland in 1981 and 1982 suggest a number of explanations for this deadlock in local government reform. Many sources pointed to the political uncertainties attributable at that time to the King's age and ill health. Others pointed to manpower shortages at the national level and the implications that this might have for any meaningful penetration of rural Swaziland.²³ Without question proposed changes in Swaziland's boundaries with South Africa and the possible inclusion of two or more districts in the country have also contributed to the uncertainty.²⁴

Beyond this interviews with administrators and political leaders suggest that differing views toward the process of rural development, particularly as related to the RDAs, contributes to the problem. Traditional elites see RDAs as a threat to the traditional patron-client system and the political control mechanisms which are dependent upon it. They see the RDA program, and rural development efforts more generally, as biased towards the modern sector.

[Table 1 about here]

Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the perceptions of field level civil servants to developmental needs. In Table one, district level administrators, technical officials and traditional authorities were asked what they felt were the primary needs of the country in the area of economic development. There were clear differences between "modern" sector civil servants and "traditionalists" over the issue of productivity. While over half of the former felt that the promotion of productivity was critical to the economic development of the country almost none

Table 1

What Do You Think Are the Primary
Needs of the Country

(Actual Numbers)

	Administrative	Technical	Other*
Don't Know	--	--	1
Maintenance/ Control Needs	--	1	--
Social Service Needs	4	4	4
Productivity Needs	5	7	1

n = 27

* Political or Traditional Leadership

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of the traditionalists interviewed mentioned this need.

Table 2 shows a similar pattern. Here local level officials were asked the type of public statements and goals they felt should be presented to rural dwellers. Again there was a clear division between administrators who felt that productivity was critical and traditional leaders who for the most part had no views on the issue. One might conclude from the two tables that there is some evidence of a schism between the two groups on developmental issues. [Table 2 about here]

In depth interviews with local level actors flesh out the patterns reflected above. A number of the civil servants interviewed mentioned social change as a necessary prerequisite to development and stressed the resettlement components of the RDA program in the Swazi National Land area. Many of those who mentioned productivity emphasized the importance of commercial agriculture. Of the seventeen civil servants interviewed, almost half indicated that they felt the success of the rural development schemes was critical to the future economic development of the country. As one district officer put it in 1981:

We need to use the RDA centres to educate people in the modern ways of agriculture. They must know where in government to go to get the correct information on development. So often the rural people don't know their rights. They need to be taught and given clear guidance on this. Non-participation is the rural development problem in Swaziland.⁶⁵

Tension between civil servants and traditional authorities also came out in the interviewing. According to one District Officer:

The problem with rural development is the chiefs. They don't work hand in hand with us. The local chiefs are lazy. We do the job and they don't help us solve the problems. They just flock to the District Commissioner and complain.⁶⁶

Technical specialists had a similar view. As a senior agricultural extension officer put it:

One of the major problems with rural development in the RDAs is that the chiefs oppose us. People in the rural areas are not ripe for change. We need to educate both the people and the chiefs on this. The chiefs are just not educated to understand rural development.⁶⁷

Not surprisingly, traditional authorities had a very different view of the problems of rural development. Chiefs

Table 2

What Public Goals Should be Presented
by Local Level Administrators

(Actual Numbers)

	Administrative	Technical	Other*
Don't Know	--	1	6
Maintenance/ Control Goals	2	--	3
Social Service Goals	1	2	--
Productivity Goals	6	6	1

n = 28

*Political or Traditional Leadership

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stressed the lack of sympathy that civil servants had for the social and cultural context within which the rural Swazi operates. As one senior traditionalist within the central administration put it, "the role of the chiefs is most important in Swaziland. It is the chiefs that give the people guidance from the grassroots. What the chiefs must do is manage the morals of the people."☐☐

A traditional leader from the central part of the country was even more frank. According to him:

The major problem of rural development is the lack of understanding between the District Commissioner and the Chiefs. The chiefs have to live with poverty but the D.C. does little to help us. The chiefs get frustrated. The relations with government officials is very bad. The government should try to help the chiefs but the chiefs aren't paid anything. The chief needs to be given some more land to do some farming in his own area and be given some finance by government so that they can employ some of the people. Also the chiefs need some vehicles.☐☐

Ultimately the conflicting definitions of rural development and the conflicting ways that "modern" and "traditional" elites define it, relate to the social network which has been forged between rural peasants and traditional authorities. At the grassroots level, integrated rural development assumptions ultimately run up against a patron-client system which serves as a mechanism of containment at a time when dramatic changes are occurring at the national level.

Threats to Patron-Client Relationships

Traditional elite-peasant relationships in rural Swaziland can be characterized in terms of patron-client relationships. This pattern of patron-client relationships is based upon the system of traditional allocation of land in the Swazi National Areas. It is the threat to this system of patron-client interaction that is at the heart of the political competition between traditionalist and "modern" political elites.

There are about 380 traditional chiefs in Swaziland, each of which has both an inner and an outer council. If one includes chief's advisors and sub-chiefs and village heads one would come up with a total of between 6000 and 8000 people. These are at the grassroots edge of the patron-client system. Throughout the colonial period and well into independence, "In the Swazi nation reserve areas, direct economic participation was restricted to chiefs through the limited holdings of the King 'on behalf of the Swazi nation' in foreign companies."☐☐

Traditional authorities, with their control of land allocation (in a country where land represents access to livelihood) still enjoy tremendous power over their subjects. The key to an understanding of the power of the monarchy lies in

the failure of the British to Bring King Sobhuza completely under their suzerainty. Traditional government never became a "tame" native authority in Swaziland.

Traditional hegemony is potentially threatened by an entrepreneurial peasantry. Traditionally land has been distributed in usufruct by local traditional authorities, many of whom see improvements in agriculture as threatening their authority. Cash crops developed in Swaziland during the late colonial period, especially in the southern part of the country. Traditional elites were often enraged by these new economic activities and there were many angry cries against non-food crops at the national level. Enterprising farmers are inevitably commoners, and are often conspicuously wealthier than either their immediate chiefs or neighboring aristocrats. According to Isobel Winter, "The spread of... (market agricultural production) created the conditions of the emergence of new elements within the rural social structure with an interest in challenging the hegemony of the 'traditional' rulers."¹.

Traditional elites are challenged by these new elements,

...conspicuous improvement of the land, or innovation in its use, is frowned upon by the more conservative chiefs, and the man who fences his fields, uses modern fertilizing or irrigation methods, or even grows cash crops without the prior approval of the chief, is taking a risk. In rare instances, people have been removed from such lands.²

Cattle grazing is therefore seen as the primary source of traditional power while arable agriculture is seen as a threat to that power. As a result the agricultural non-productivity of the national (communal) land contrasts dramatically with that of alienated land.

The nature of the threat to patron-clientalism is illustrated by traditionalist reaction to the Vuvulane Irrigated Farms. Smallholders here were granted title deed or 20 year leases over land. These were the only farms in 1972 in which Swazi farmers held land on a freehold basis. Not surprisingly, The Vuvulane Irrigated Farms area was a major source of opposition to traditionalists in the 1972 elections. It is probably no accident that the opposition area in 1972 elections, Mphumalanga, "included numbers of smallholder farmers...whose contractual rights with the Vuvulane (agricultural) scheme relieved them of their traditional dependence on the king and chiefs for access to land"³ Interestingly, by 1973, the Tibiyo fund had purchased a half interest in Vuvulane bringing into question the status of the twenty year leases as they come up for renewal.

There continues to be a great deal of resentment among traditional leaders of commercial agricultural elites. The criticism of commercial farmers is couched in terms of the danger that farmers who produce cash crops will over use the land in pursuit of personal gain. As a result, "if an individual becomes 'too rich' from his efforts he may incite the envy of his chief and be banished."⁴ The core of the debate centers around the

issue of "Right of Avail." The right of avail allows the peasant to satisfy his own subsistence needs. However, from the point of view of traditional leadership the peasant farmer should not abuse this "right" to the point that his agricultural activity is seen to impede upon others' rights. Doggett argues that this constitutes a form of negative feedback which psychologically undermines the individual's desire to make a success of commercial farming.⁹⁵

The RDAs are seen as disruptive of traditional authority for a number of reasons. First, mechanisms have not been developed in the RDAs to ensure traditionalist control over the field bureaucracy. Secondly, the RDAs at least implicitly represent a threat to traditional patterns of land acquisition. Finally, RDAs with their emphasis on arable agriculture and particularly cash crops are seen as encouraging the kind of independent peasantry which has opposed traditionalists in the past. A 1962 survey, concluded that civil servants saw traditional elites as hostile to them and were preoccupied by a concern for "the potential loss of all political power exercised by the Ngwenyama and other traditional authorities, 'with a consequent collapse of the existing system of social control.'"⁹⁶

A number of specialists on rural development in Swaziland have argued that land tenure is a fundamental constraint to the successful management of Rural Development Areas. Fransman,⁹⁷ notes that Swazi plots are very small and that inadequate security of tenure is an impediment to rural development efforts. Vieceli argues that a necessary prerequisite for the improvement of smallholder agricultural productivity is

a more equitable distribution of land accompanied either by policies promoting the redistribution of cattle or by measures which will make credit available to households which do not own cattle. The question of altering the traditional system of communal land tenure is fraught with far-reaching political implications, for control over Swazi nation land is the key to the political power and support which has enabled the traditional Swazi rulers to gain and retain control of the state.⁹⁸

Doggett lists insecurity of land tenure first in his discussion of constraints on RDAs in Swaziland. Traditional land tenure is linked to a production ethic which emphasizes subsistence of the group over advancement of the individual.

Traditional land tenure provides for a system of alternating land use rights that limits the potential annual income from crop production and discourages private investment in land. Government is not able to determine relative land values and most importantly, communal land tenure means that the peasant farmer is unable to use land as collateral for raising bank loans.⁹⁹ Rural development specialists thus agree that a fundamental issue is the way that land use in the SNA is closely bound up with the distribution of political power within African traditional societies.¹⁰⁰

The controversy over land allocation as it relates to RDAs in Swaziland reflects the tensions between "modern" and traditional elites and illustrates the nature of the threat to patron-client relationships inherent in integrated rural development schemes. The Second National Development Plan notes that the chiefs' right to allocate land "may give rise to a sense of insecurity particularly among progressive farmers..."¹⁰¹ The problem is "although various infrastructure works were completed, (in the RDAs) little progress was made in the more fundamental areas of land consolidation, stock control and increased productivity."¹⁰² Not surprisingly, traditional leaders "have great misgivings about a process of land consolidation that appears to reduce the right of local chiefs to allocate land, or carries the implication that land cultivators should in future expect security of tenure."¹⁰³

RDAs are designed to encourage surplus production of both food and cash crops, rationalize land use through resettlement and provide essential services to the populace, including credit, potable water and education. However, while "rural living standards have improved...(agricultural) production (has) remained almost static"¹⁰⁴ RDAs thus far have provided farmers with few direct incentives to productivity. Most importantly, critics suggest, the RDA program provided no change in the system of land tenure. Government officials recognize the importance of the land issue. However,

In spite of government recognition that Swazi land tenure inhibits further development of Swazi agriculture, the government of Swaziland does not envision land reform.¹⁰⁵

Not surprisingly, there continues to be strong opposition in Swaziland to changes in the traditional system of land tenure. According to Fransmann,

The traditional African political structure, and particularly the position of the chief within this structure, has often been manipulated by white authorities attempting to influence the African population. The chief derives his power largely from his right to allocate land.¹⁰⁶

The land issue was one of the contributing issues that led to the 1972 royal coup. Opposition nationalist parties and elements within the civil service both came out strongly for reform of this system of land allocation. These differences are illustrated by a comparison of the second and third national plans on the issue. The second national development program was written before the royal coup in 1972 while the third national plan was written in 1977. While the 1972 plan stressed that infrastructural changes are considered of greater immediate importance than patterns of land tenure, the plan also noted that the traditional system created some difficulty and prevented the use of land as security for further credit. Thus the Second

National Plan argued

It is... recognized that physical reorganisation and the development of semi-commercial farming will in themselves create the need for further changes [presumably in land tenure though the plan is vague on this] and at the same time make them easier to carry out and more readily acceptable."¹⁰⁷

The Third National Plan makes no such argument but rather emphasizes the importance of the role of traditional authority in the allocation of land and in non-land related socio-economic and infrastructural changes.¹⁰⁸ The difference in emphasis between the two plans reflects the changed constitutional situation after the abrogation of the Westminster style of government.

There is little doubt that political elites see the idea of individual land tenure as threatening. The idea of permanent land tenure and the growing of cash crops are perceived as disturbing the right of avail on which Swazi society is based. Traditional elites see RDAs, and the implicit assumption that changes in land tenure must accompany them as threatening to the political fabric of society. In order to defend the patron-client system upon which political control in Swaziland is based, traditional elites have tried to manage the RDAs by ensuring centralized control over them and by trying to mitigate the social impact of the scheme at the grassroots level. As a result the developmental goals of an integrated rural development program came into direct conflict with the political concerns of Swaziland's ruling elite.

Conclusion

Multi-sectoral approaches to rural development, such as those represented in the integrated rural development concept, are currently out of fashion in a number of international development agencies including the World Bank and the Agency for International Development. There is a much greater track record of success with single sector, single goal projects than with the kind of social transformation efforts that were in vogue a decade ago.

Yet, the fact remains that rural development is a complex process and single sector efforts often have little effect upon the whole network of socio-economic factors that make up the rural economy. Single sector efforts often thus have a "the operation was successful but the patient died" ambience. The argument that we have made here is that the failure of multi-sectoral programs is not just related to the complexity of the integrated approach or to technical or implementation problems that are related to it. Rather, there may be fundamental political contradictions inherent in the integrated approach to development.

The Swazi example of Rural Development Areas suggests that successful rural transformation is dependent upon a strong political commitment from elites whose positions might be threatened by reform. The political threats embedded in the IRD approach often lead political elites to try to limit this threat

by maintaining tight political control over rural development efforts at the expense of the kind of field level autonomy which is essential to rural transformation.

The integrated rural development approach recognizes the complexity of rural transformation and represents a sophisticated rational planning approach to it. However, this kind of rational planning is often incompatible with the political, social and economic realities of the society involved. In Swaziland, the IRD approach threatens to displace the strong patron-client network which is critical to the maintenance of the political system there.

Traditional elites in turn often block the advancement of non-traditional elements of a society's burgeoning middle class. It is this middle class, which finds rational planning both intellectually attractive and in its group interest and sees integrated rural development strategies as appropriate responses to the problems of rural poverty. Multi-sectoral approaches to rural transformation will not go away both because they try to respond to the complexity of the rural socio-economic environment but also because they are a component in the wider struggle between two sub-sectors of a dominant socio-economic elite. The form that rural development efforts take thus may reflect less the intellectual commitment of international technical assistance agencies than it does the results of that intra-elite struggle.

Footnotes

1. D.A. Rondinelli, "Administration of Integrated Rural Development Policy: The Politics of Agrarian Reform in Developing Countries" World Politics, Vol 31, No. 3 (April 1979), p. 390
2. Ibid., p.393
3. Jon Moris, Managing Induced Rural Development (Bloomington: International Development Institute, 1981) p. 48
4. Exact numbers are difficult to obtain due to a lack of standardized criteria by which to categorize projects; i.e. as "integrated" rural development, agrarian reform, etc. There is also a problem in categorizing projects by scale and level of involvement, i.e. nationally-implemented, district-level or village based programs.
5. Uma Lele, The Design of Rural Development (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1975) p.137
6. Moris, Managing Induced Rural Development, p. 8.
7. See Ibid.; Rondinelli, "Administration of Integrated Rural Development"; John D. Montgomery, "Administering to the Poor (or, if We Can't Help Rich Dictators, What Can We Do for the Poor?)," Public Administration Review, vol. 40, no. 5 (1980), pp. 421-425.
8. Rondinelli, "Administration of Integrated Rural Development," p. 402
9. Ibid., p.403
10. Louis A. Picard, "Bureaucrats, Cattle and Public Policy: Land Tenure Changes in Botswana" in Comparative Political Studies, vol. 13, no. 3 October 1980, p.318-319
11. John Montgomery, Making and Implementing Development Decisions (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1974) p. 72
12. See John D. Powell, "Peasant Society and Clientelist Politics," American Political Science Review, vol. 64, no. 2 (June, 1970), pp. 411-424 and James C. Scott, "Patron-Client Politics and Political Change," American Political Science Review, vol.66, no. 1 (March, 1972), pp. 91-113. See also Eric Wolf, "Kinship, Friendship and Patron-Client Relations," in The Social Anthropology of Complex Societies, M. Banton, ed. (New York: Praeger, 1966) and J. Cambell, Honor, Family and Patronage (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964).
13. Clinton L. Doggett, "Land Tenure and Agricultural Development in Lesotho and Swaziland: A Comparative Analysis," (Washington: U.S. Agency for International Development, Office of Development Resources, June, 1980).

14. John Montgomery, "The Allocation of Authority In Land Reform Programs: A Comparative Study of Administrative Processes and Outputs" in Norman Uphoff and Warren Ilchman, ed. The Political Economy of Development, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972) p. 453.
15. Moris cites the thirteen most common reasons listed by Fisher as contributing to project failure, and points out that roughly half of those reasons are design faults, not implementation problems, even though they do not materialize until the implementation process begins. He also compiles a list of 20 problems, drawn from his own East African experience. A good number of those problems also appear to originate in the design process rather than in the implementation procedures. Managing Integrated Rural Development, p. 24.
16. Ibid., p. 20
17. Ibid.
18. Naomi Caiden and Aaron Wildavsky, Planning and Budgeting in Poor Countries (New York: John Wiley, 1974, reissued New Brunswick, N.J.:Transaction Books, 1980)
19. Powell, "Peasant Society and Clientelist Politics", p.424.
20. Ibid., p.412
21. Rondinelli, "Administration of Rural Development," p. 402
22. Funnell provides details on the origins of the 1944 and the post-colonial RDA programs. See D.C. Funnell, "Changes in Farm Incomes and the Rural Development Program in Swaziland," Journal of Developing Areas, vol. 16, no. 2 (January, 1982), pp. 271-290.
23. Lord Hailey, Native Administration in the British African Territories: Basutoland, the Bechuanaland Protectorate and Swaziland (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1953), pp. 417-418.
24. Christian Potholm, Swaziland: The Dynamics of Political Modernization (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), p.37.
25. C.Morse, et. al., Basutoland, Bechuanaland Protectorate and Swaziland: Report of an Economic Survey Mission (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1960), pp. 510-511.
26. Glenn Magagula, "Rural Development Area Programs: The Case of Swaziland," Journal of Southern African Affairs, vol. 3, no. 4 (October, 1976), p. 440.
27. For a summary of the technical activity involved with the RDA program see Government of Swaziland, Annual Report: Rural

Development Areas (Mbabane: Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, 1981).

28. Ephraim V. Dlamini, "Agricultural and Rural Planning Practice in Swaziland," (Mbabane, Swaziland, mimeo, July, 1982).

29. Government of Swaziland (Hobbs Commission), The Report of the Land Mission: The Findings of the Joint Mission Appointed by the Governments of Swaziland and the United Kingdom to Investigate Aspects of Present and Future Land Use in Swaziland (Mbabane: Government Printer, March, 1969).

30. Funnell, "Changes in Farm Incomes," p. 275.

31. Ibid.

32. Ben M. Nsibandze, "Integrated Rural Development: The Swazi Experience, African Environment, vol. 2, no. 4 and vol. 3, no. 1 (November, 1977), p. 53.

33. See Gavin Maasdorp, "Swaziland's Development Program: Problems and Policies," Paper Presented at the 18th Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association in San Francisco, October 29-November 1, 1975, p.8.

34. Jacqueline Vieceli, "Agricultural Education and Rural Manpower Development; The Case of Swaziland," Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, Boston, MA., December 10, 1983), p.5.

35. Government of Swaziland, Southern R.D.A.- Survey Results and Analysis (1975/6): Farm Management Survey No. 2 (Mbabane, Swaziland: Ministry of Agriculture, March, 1977).

36. See Funnell, "Changes in Farm Incomes," p. 272.

37. Jan Sterkenburg, "Agricultural Commercialization in Africa South of the Sahara: The Cases of Lesotho and Swaziland," Development and Change, vol. 11, no. 4 (October, 1980), pp.573-606. See also Vieceli, "Agricultural Education," pp. 6-7 and Funnell, "Changes in Farm Incomes," pp. 287-288.

38. Vieceli, "Agricultural Education," p. 7.

39. Alan R. Booth, Swaziland: Tradition and Change in a Southern African Kingdom (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1983), p. 70-71.

40. Oral Interview, Mbabane, July 14, 1982. All interviews by Picard.

41. "Swaziland," Africa Contemporary Record, 1981-1982, Colin Legum ed. (New York: Africana Publishing Co., 1981), pp. B821-B834.)

42. Government of Swaziland. Rural Development Areas Maize

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Production and Marketing Survey, 1979 (Mbabane: Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, Rural Development Area Program, May, 1980).

43. Ibid. p. 7 and p. 18.

44. Clinton L. Doggett, "Land Tenure and Agricultural Development in Lesotho and Swaziland: A Comparative Analysis," (Washington D.C.:Agricultural/ Rural Development Division, Office of Development Resources, Bureau for Africa, U.S. Agency for International Development, June, 1980), p. 36.

45. Government of Swaziland, "An Analysis of the Relationship between Cattle Offtake and Cash Needs," RDAF Monitoring and Evaluation Studies- No. 1 (Mbabane: Monitoring and Evaluation Unit, January, 1979).

46. Government of Swaziland, Mahlangatsha Credit Survey (1979) Monitoring and Evaluation Study No. 6 (Mbabane: Monitoring and Evaluation Unit Rural Development Program, 1980), p. 3.

47. Ibid., pp. 16-18 and p. 22.

48. R. Martin, "A Background Paper on In-Service Training in Agricultural and Rural Development Project Preparation," (Mbabane: Food and Agricultural Organization, June, 1982), p. 10.

49. David Jones, Aid and Development in Southern Africa, (London: Croom Helm, 1977), p. 270.

50. See Moris, Managing Induced Rural Development, pp. 59-60. According to John Montgomery, the effectiveness of land reform schemes is directly dependent on local level participation in the planning and implementation of the program). See Montgomery, "Allocation of Authority," pp. 62-75.

51. Funnell, "Changes in Farm Incomes," p. 282.

52. R. Martin, "Swaziland: A Background Paper on In-Service Training in Agricultural and Rural Development Project Preparation" (Rome: Food and Agricultural Organization, June, 1982), p.9.

53. Jones, Aid and Development, p. 286.

54. Magagula, "Rural Development Area Programs," pp. 438-439.

55. Ibid., p. 448.

56. Ibid., p. 449.

57. Ibid., p. 457.

58. Ibid., p. 456.

59. According to Dlamini, "Agricultural and Rural Planning," pp.

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8-9, one of the problems with rural development in Swaziland is that the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives can only plan for the Swazi National Land, not the large commercial enclaves.

60. Nsibandze, "Integrated Rural Development," pp. 51-53.

61. See Louis A. Picard, "Traditionalism, the Bureaucracy and Local Administration: Continuity and Change in Swaziland," Paper Presented at the 1983 African Studies Association Convention, Boston: December -December 10, 1983.

62. I.L. Markovitz, Power and Class in Africa (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1977).

63. Kuper, for example, notes the tension which developed after independence between the Swaziland police and their traditional counterparts, the local age-grade regiments or mabutfo. See Hilda Kuper, Sobhuza II: Ngwenyama and King of Swaziland (London: Duckworth, 1978), p. 234.

64. Booth, Swaziland, p. 60.

65. David Jones, Aid and Development in Southern Africa: British Aid to Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (London: Croom Helm, 1977). Jones notes that the public sector in Swaziland is by far the largest employer with 16% of the domestically employed total in 1972. p. 224.

66. Maasdorp, "Swaziland's Development Program," p. 7. See also Donald K. Kowet, Land, Labour Migration and Politics in Southern Africa: Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1978), p. 177.

67. Hilda Kuper, Sobhuza II: Ngwenyama and King of Swaziland, (London: Duckworth, 1978), p. 186.

68. Ibid. pp. 282-283.

69. See Picard, "Traditionalism," pp. 8-10.

70. Martin Fransman, "Labour, Capital and the State in Swaziland, 1962-1977," South African Labour Bulletin, vol. 7, no. 6 (April, 1982), p. 63.

71. Ibid., p. 74.

72. John Daniel, "The Political Economy of Colonial and Post-Colonial Swaziland," in South African Labour Bulletin, vol. 7, no. 6, (April, 1982), p. 106.

73. Jones, Aid and Development, p. 253.

74. Ibid., p. 257.

75. Booth, Swaziland, p. 60.

76. Ibid., p. 250.

77. Jackie Viecele, "Swaziland After Sobhuza: Stability or Crisis," Issue, vol. 12m nos. 3/4 (Fall/Winter, 1982), p. 57. Viecele raises the issue of Regulation of labor and argues that the link between land and labor regulation provides the basis of class relationships and political power in Swaziland. Ibid., p. 69.

78. Alan R. Booth, Swaziland: Tradition and Change in a Southern African Kingdom (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1983), p. 107.

79. Daniel "Political Economy," p. 106).

80. "Swaziland," Africa Contemporary Record, 1982-1983, Colin Legum, ed. (New York: Africana, 1983), p. B842.

81. Daniel, " Political Economy," p. 104.

82. As a result of attempts to investigate alleged financial irregularities in the Tibiyo fund, Prince Mabandla, Sobhuza's last Prime Minister, (who had enjoyed considerable middle class and civil service support,) was replaced in March of 1983. He was replaced by a member of what has come to be called the "old guard," those representing traditionalists in the Executive of the Swazi National Council or Liqoqo. In mid-August, the Queen Regent Dzeliwe was also forced to step down with the naming of a new king, a seventeen year old son of Sobhuza, Prince Makhosetive. His mother, La Dwhala Ntombe will reign as Queen with real power remaining with the Liqoqo, which supervises a joint regency. See "Swaziland: The Post-Sobhuza Power Struggle," Africa Report, (January-February, 1984), pp. 51-54. 2. The nature of the struggle between Prince Mabandla and the Liqoqo was not one of fundamentally different ideologies but was a power struggle between two different sub-sets within the existing ruling order related to the appeal which the Prince had to a wider middle class constituency. "Swaziland, Africa Contemporary Record, 1982-83 p. B842).

83. Government of Swaziland, "Human Resource Planning in Swaziland," Paper presented at the Institute of Development Management Workshop, Gaborone, Botswana, April 11-April 15, 1981.

84. See Picard, "Traditionalism," pp. 27-29 for a discussion of this.

85. Oral Interview, District Education Officer, Siteki, Interview Number 717, September 30, 1981.

86. Oral Interview, District Commissioner, Siteki, September 30, 1981. Oral Interview no. 715.

87. Oral Interview, Senior Agricultural Extension Officer, Oral Interview No. 708, Nhlangano, October 1 1981

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88. Oral Interview no. 725, Mbabane, July 13, 1982.
89. Oral Interview, Chief.(Induna) Lubombo area, Interview no. 721. July 17, 1982.
90. Donald K. Kowet, Land, Labour Migration and Politics in Southern Africa: Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1978), p. 190. See also p. 256.
91. Isobel Winter, "The Post-Colonial State and the Forces and Relations of Production," Review of African Political Economy, (May-August, 1978), p. 29-43.
92. Booth, Swaziland, p. 54).
93. Booth, Swaziland, p.73. Doggett notes that there have been a number of attempts at leasehold Individual tenure arrangements. In addition to the freehold arrangements, a number of farms were leased to individual Swazi at Mpetseni and Umvuvulane. However, according to Doggett, they were often not run on a commercial basis and it is often not easy to distinguish the freehold and leasehold farms from communal farms. Doggett, "Land Tenure," p. 41.
94. Ibid., p. 34.
95. Ibid. p. 38.
96. A.J.B. Hughes, "Some Swazi Views on Land Tenure," Africa, vol. 32, no. 3 (1962), pp. 253-278. This was a survey made of Swazi Land Utilization Officer Trainees.
97. Fransman, "Labour, Capital and the State," (p. 35)
98. Vieceli, "Agricultural Education, p. 8.
99. Doggett, "Land Tenure," p. 36.
100. Fransman, "Labour, Capital and the State," p. 35).
101. Government of Swaziland, Second National Development Plan, 1973-1977 (Mbabane: Government Printer, 1977). p.38.
102. Magagula, "Rural Development Area Programs," p. 255. As Doggett notes, "little overt attempt is being made to modify traditional tenure arrangements in the bulk of this area, although provisions have been made for special settlement schemes for selected Swazi farmers on a leasehold basis. Doggett, "Land Tenure," p. 40)
103. Jones, Aid and Development, p. 255.
104. "Swaziland," African Contemporary Record 1981-82, Colin

Legum, ed. (New York: Africana, 1982), p. B830.

105. Government of Swaziland, A Policy for Agriculture
(Mbabane: Mimeo, 1966), pp. 1-2.

106. Fransmann, "Labour, Capital and the State," p. 38).

107. Government of Swaziland, Second National Development Plan, 1973-1977 (Mbabane: Government Printer, 1972), p. 58.

108. Government of Swaziland, Third National Development Plan, 1978/79-1982/83 (Mbabane: Government Printer, 1978), pp. 75-78.